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## The Hindi Newspaper Revolution: Teaching Reading of Print and Online News Media

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### Abstract

There has been a revolution in Hindi newspaper publication and readership in the last fifty years. This has created new opportunities and challenges in the teaching of Hindi. This article is based on studies undertaken as part of the development and teaching of Hindi courses at La Trobe University from 1997 to 2007. Evident advantages of the newspaper revolution include: current content in classes; comparisons of English language and Hindi language stories; and the study of local level stories. The problems relate to what constitutes 'standard Hindi' itself. The most notable challenge created by the newspaper revolution in India for Hindi teachers is the issue of what constitutes the 'standard Hindi' we are teaching, as new editions of new Hindi papers continuously redefine what is regarded as Hindi. This highly contested area has seen a shift from a highly Sanskritized formal Hindi in the 1950s to constant code-switching between Hindi, Urdu and English elements in contemporary news media. This article concludes by arguing that there is only one way to deal with this contradiction: when teaching students how to read news media, Hindi teachers must also get students themselves to engage in the debate over what constitutes 'Hindi.'

### 1 The Hindi newspaper revolution

Hindi newspaper sales and readership have grown immensely since 1991. Readership had increased from 29 per thousand in 1991 to 69 per thousand in 2001 and has continued to grow up to the present day (Jeffrey, 2007). In fact, four out of five of the top selling Indian newspapers are now Hindi papers (Ninian, 2007, p. 16). The best way to examine circulation and readership figures for Indian papers is from the National Readership survey published by the National Readership Studies Council in August each year. The National Readership Survey in 2006 estimated there were 204 million readers of daily newspapers in India, and that 40 percent (81.6 million) were readers of Hindi papers and 10 percent (20.4 million) were readers of English papers. (Ran, 2007) The top selling Hindi newspapers were the *Dainik Bhaskar* (‘Daily Sun’ with 21 million readers) and *Dainik Jagran* (‘Daily Awakening’ with 21.2 million readers) and *Dainik Bhaskar* (‘Daily Sun’ with 21 million readers). In comparison the biggest readership for an English paper was *The Times of India* with 7.4 million (‘NRS 2006 - Key Findings.’ 2006).

These changes also reflect another dramatic shift in attitudes towards the Hindi press. Prior to this, most educated English speaking Indians tended to dismiss the Hindi press as parochial, badly written, and mostly merely translations of stories from the English language press. Whether such views were valid is not really the issue. The point is simply that, due to such attitudes, there was

little study of the Hindi press, and even less of how to teach students to read it. This situation is exacerbated by the difficulty of getting advanced level teaching materials published for Hindi due to its perceived marginal importance in many people's eyes.

### 2 Hindi newspaper readers

The teaching of how to read newspapers is a well established tradition in foreign language teaching and newspaper readers exist for many languages. For European languages, readers were being published in the early 20th century for languages such as French (e.g. Weill, 1912). Newspaper readers have generally taken the form of collections of articles accompanied by glossaries and notes. Many such readers for Asian languages date back to the nineteenth century, for instance Harter's Indonesian reader (Harter, 1968). There are also publishers in the USA, such as Dunwoody, who specialise in producing materials for less commonly taught languages (LCTL). The Dunwoody catalogue includes newspaper readers for many Asian languages ('Dunwoody Press'). Newspaper readers continued to be published for many languages, sometimes nowadays including material from both print and internet sources, such as in a recent Indonesian newspaper reader (Gale & Lata, 2008).

Materials related to reading Hindi news media including the print press were also being developed during the 1960s. The earliest published Hindi newspaper reader appears to have been the one produced in 1963 by the well known linguist Colin Mactica and published by the University of Chicago (Mactica, 1963). Mimeographed Hindi newspaper and radio reading resources were also available to undergraduates at SOAS in London in around 1985 which took the form of vocabularies to accompany articles about the Vietnam War and bombing along the demilitarized zone and clearly dated back to the late nineteenth century. In 1989, Stone & Kapadia published a further Hindi newspaper reader in the US (Stone & Kapadia, 1990) which consists of around fifty articles with glossaries. The most recent publication of a reader related to the Hindi press was also in the early 1990s when Awadesh Mishra published in India a Hindi magazine reader (Mishra, n.d.).

### 3 Hindi courses at La Trobe 1997-2007

La Trobe University in Australia was involved in the development of Hindi course materials and from 1997 onwards, materials began to be assembled which could be used to teach students how to read contemporary Hindi news media. These were based on both print copies of newspapers which were available in La Trobe University Library, and online newspaper content which was available in 1997 for the *Dainik Jagran* (‘New India Times’) newspaper. Hindi newspaper online content was not widely available in 1997 and in terms of serving up fairly extensive coverage of its contents *Dainik Jagran* (‘New India Times’) also had minimal coverage of its content online at this time as well. Due to this, most of the online content that was drawn upon was from the *Dainik Jagran* (‘New India Times’).

Materials from newspapers were then introduced into intermediate level (second year) courses and by 2001 La Trobe University was running an intermediate level course specifically on reading Hindi newspapers. The materials in the reader which was produced were based on three main studies:

- First, selections from print and online Hindi newspapers made from 1997 onwards in Melbourne, Australia, intended to contribute to Hindi language teaching materials.
- Second, a study made by Friedlander, Jeffrey, and Seth (2001) of two popular Hindi daily papers, the *Dainik Jagran* (‘New India Times’) and *Dainik Bhaskar* (‘Daily Sun’) from March to June 1998, and the *Dainik Bhaskar* (‘Daily Sun’) from March to June 1998.

- Third, a study of the Hindi press in Bodhgaya during the fall of the years 1998, 1999 and 2000, mostly of *Hindustān* हिन्दुस्तान, *Dainik Jāgrā* दैनिक जागरण and *Āj* आज. There are about fifty or so articles in the reader which was eventually produced and used along with accompanying notes on the context of the article, its vocabulary and grammar issues etc. (Friedlander, 2007a)

During 2006, a further set of teaching materials for the Hindi press was also created between 25th July 2006 and October 14th when a Hindi lecturer and a research student from Delhi, Anandini Dar, made two one hour webcasts a week discussing current Hindi news stories in the online press and how their coverage differed in English and Hindi versions of the stories. The 23 sessions covered about fifty or so Hindi stories and their English equivalents. In addition, in a number of cases, different treatments in various Hindi papers of the same story were examined and how they differed from corresponding English versions. The newspapers, which articles were selected from, included: *The Times of India* and its Hindi stable mate the *Navhārat* नवहारत, *Hindustan Times* and its Hindi version *Hindustān* हिन्दुस्तान, *DVA India* and its related Hindi Newspaper *Dainik Bhāskara* दैनिक भास्कर, and the *Dainik Jāgrā* दैनिक जागरण which has no English equivalent (Friedlander & Dar, 2007). Some conclusions drawn from the contents of the reader were highlighted in a paper at the South Asian Studies Conference in Madison in 2007 (Friedlander, 2007b).

#### 4 Teaching newspaper reading

Hindi newspaper reading courses were taught to small groups of students, typically four or five at a time, about fourteen times over the period between 2001 and 2007 at La Trobe University. The content was based on a mix of materials from the reader prepared at La Trobe and current online content. The principal aim of the classes started out as basically focusing on getting students' Hindi to a level at which they could read Hindi newspapers. The main teaching methodology was based on translation into and out of Hindi. This was actually quite difficult, many students found, as the Hindi press presents several difficulties for learners which are the main subject matter of this paper.

The Hindi used in newspapers uses very long sentences containing multiple clauses which need considerable effort to 'decode' for English speakers back into a meaningful sequence of clauses.

The vocabulary used in Hindi newspapers is drawn from many registers and students need to be able to understand the ways in which new Hindi vocabulary is formed by compounding elements from Sanskrit and other language sources into new words. The interpretation of the meaning of the texts also depends on understanding, in many instances, local circumstances which means that it is hard to understand many stories.

Later, the teaching also started to develop strategies for how to make the students proficient in both reading and discussing Hindi newspaper contents. This was done by getting students to supplement their translation activities by writing their own 'mock' articles based on genres of newspaper articles. It was notable that student's attempts to write articles that described international, or Australian, news tended to be more successful than their attempts to write news stories about events in India. This was often due to the way in which the use of vocabulary and grammar reflected local ideas and the difficulty of learning the nuances in this area provided challenges to students.

A third phase in the teaching was when the teaching started to explore with students what could be understood about the press in India by reading both Hindi and English versions of stories. In many cases, two trends were noted. First, Hindi versions of international stories often represented what was in the story in a way which made it hard to understand in Hindi. Second, English versions of Indian stories often gave only a partial representation of what was in the Hindi media.

Due to the small number of students involved, it is not possible to present any data in the form of statistics about learning outcomes. Instead, this paper focuses on examining instances of where

translation issues gave rise to discussion of larger issues during teaching. This was part of a process where the students were encouraged to explore the types of issues which caused problems when trying to understand the Hindi press.

#### 5 What constitutes 'standard Hindi'?

It is vital to acknowledge that the Hindi press has always played a leading role in the debate about what constitutes Hindi. The role of Hindi newspapers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in helping to determine what constituted modern Hindi itself was very significant.

A notable figure from the early period was B. V. Paradkar who began work in 1906 on the Hindi publication *Hindī Bāgrāsī* हिन्दी बाग़ासी ('The Hindi [speaking] inhabitant of Bengal'). In 1920, he was involved in the setting up of the Hindi daily paper *Āj* आज ('Today') and in 1924 became its editor, a position he then held for 30 years. He used the paper to campaign for the development of Hindi as a national language *rāṭriyā bhāṣā* राष्ट्रिय भाषा. He influenced not only the grammar of Hindi, but also the choice of words used, inventing terms such as *śrī* श्री for 'Mister', *rāṭrapati* राष्ट्रपति for 'President', and *mudraśeṭi* मुद्राशेति for 'inflation' (Ninian, 2007, pp. 51–52).

After 1974, the Jay Prakash Narayan movement for social equity caused local words to enter Hindi newspapers and from 1977 to 1982, colloquial Hindi began to appear in newspapers. This was partly to distance the views from those of Brahminical, high caste, supporters of Hindi, often called 'Hindi wala' who promoted a high status Sanskritic Hindi lexicon.

In 1982–3, a new newspaper *Jansatā* जनसत्ता ('People Power') began to be published for the Indian Express group with a Marathi editor, Prabhāsh Joshi. He is credited with having introduced a new round of coinages, often based on Marathi words into Hindi. It was during this period that a number of now widely accepted sports terms became current, such as *golāndāz* गोलंदाज़ for bowling, and *gēdbāz* गेंदबाज़ for bowler (Ninian, 2007, p. 61).

Traditionally, it should be noted that, despite Mumbai being a Hindi-speaking area, its Hindi is regarded as 'wrong' by most Hindi speakers from Northern India, as it is viewed as a being from outside the Hindi-speaking area, and to be overly influenced by Marathi and Gujarati. Due to this, normal definitions of what constitutes standard Hindi exclude Hindi, as it is spoken in Mumbai.

After economic liberalization in 1991, the practice of the using English loanwords began to become much more common in Hindi newspapers. Ninian quotes the example of how Babulal Sharma, the editor of *Dainik Bhāskara*, said that "Our Hindi is no longer the Hindi of pandits. It has become modern." (Ninian, 2007, p. 61). This points to the polarity between what is seen by many as having been the failed attempt by pandits, members of the Brahminical elite, to set the agenda for what constitutes Hindi, and the power of the mass media to determine what constitutes Hindi.

#### 5.1 Sanskritized formal Hindi and English loanwords

One of the problems the Hindi press, and its reader, faces today is vividly depicted in Per Stahlberg's study of the workings of the editorial office of the *Dainik Jāgrā* दैनिक जागरण in Lucknow. He quotes the editor in 1997 asking one day in the office, "globalisation – what is that in Hindi?" (Stahlberg, 2002, p. 202). Per Stahlberg does not say what the answer was.

About the same time, that is to say in 1997, I noted that there were three different words being used to mean globalization in the Hindi press. One was *sārvalohaniṅkāra* सार्वलोकिकारण (313) "universal-isation," another was *dhāmanālikāra* धामनालिकारण (37,000) "earth-sphere-isation" and the third was *vaiśvīkāra* वैश्वीकारण (54,000) "world-isation."

The numbers after those words indicate the number of 'hits' for those words in Google as of October 23, 2008. I will use these figures as a kind of rule of thumb indicator of the relative prevalence of many of the terms I shall be looking at in this paper. The searches give a kind of snapshot of contemporary Hindi usage which, whilst it may not be absolute, as the net may not entirely reflect what is available in the physical print media, is at least a rough indicator of the relative frequency of the use of many Hindi terms.

These three coinages then competed for a while in the press, until eventually the first got limited to its literal sense of "universalization" and is very little used, whilst the second continues, but has become less popular and the third, and shortest, has become the standard term for globalization. Moreover, despite the tendency to use English loanwords, "globalisation" has not become a popular usage in Hindi.

The factors that influence whether new vocabulary is formed by simply adopting English words, or coinages based on English words are complex; it can be argued, undoubtedly one factor which may have worked against a simple transliteration into Hindi of "globalisation" may simply be it is hard to pronounce in Hindi. However, the term which has eventually gained popularity also has deep roots in Indian thought. Although nowadays in Hindi the term *viśva* is used to mean "world," in Sanskrit it relates to the idea of diversity and vastness, and the related form *vaśva*, as in *vaśvikara*, evokes images of not only the process of "becoming the world" but also of "becoming diversity." In other words, another possible reason for the success of *vaśvikara* – शैविकरण is that it is itself an idea which is easy to map onto corresponding Indian ideas about the nature of the world.

### 5.2 English loanwords versus Sanskrit coinages in environmental issues

If a particular topic in news media is studied, it becomes apparent that new vocabulary is not created on the basis of a whole set of technical terms being adopted from English, nor yet only from Sanskrit derived terms. For instance, in discussions about environmental issues, *grāh* ग्रह *hāus gais* गैस गैस शीत शीत शीत is retained as a loanword, but climate change is a coinage based on Sanskrit *jalvāyu parivartan* जलवायु परिवर्तन "water-air change." The term *jalvāyu* itself for climate in contexts like discussing the weather has been around for a long time, probably since at least the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It seems to have attained new prominence once it was incorporated into the phrase that translates "climate change." However, it is evident that, in some cases like pollution *pracāḍa* प्रदूषण "intense-fault-isation," and environment *pariyāvāra* पर्यावरण "surrounding covering," the terms are relatively new inventions. In the latter case, it began to be used in the popular Hindi press in the late 1980s (Stone & Kappadia, 1990) but does not appear in standard Hindi dictionaries published up to the 1970s (Chaturvedi & Tiwari, 1996).

So why do terms like *global vāmi-g* वार्मिंग शीत शीत and *grāh hāus gais* गैस गैस शीत शीत not get turned into Hindi terms based on Sanskrit sources? In these two cases, I would suggest that it is because the words present conceptual problems for translation into Indic concepts. In the first case, the word "warming" presents a problem as Hindi does not use a word that means warm, as distinct from hot, unless it relates to warmth in a particular thing such as a liquid (*gunḡunā* गुण्गुण). So there is no Indic word to substitute for "warming." It might be quite possible in theory to find Indic words which could provide a Sanskrit equivalent to "global warming" such as perhaps शीत *bhūtapān*. However, it is evident that no such term has actually been coined and succeeded in catching popular currency. My argument is not that it is impossible to create Sanskrit coinages for modern terms. Indeed, Raghav Vira's "Consolidated Great English-Indian Dictionary of Technical Terms" (1952) shows the possibilities for these types of coinages. However, my argument is that what we need to do is consider why some of these coinages succeed and some fail in terms of becoming common lexical terms. My suggestion is that when there is a conceptual gap,

such as the difference between "warming" and "heating" (*tapāna*), the Sanskrit coinages fail to develop widespread currency.

Another clear example of this is "Greenhouse gas." In Hindi, there is neither an Indic term for a "green house," a modern invention, nor for "gas." In everyday Hindi, there is no term for gas (other than "gas" as in "kooking gas") because, in pre-modern Hindi, the terms for gas, air, and wind are not divided; all are aspects of *vāyu* (Sanskrit वायु), or its Persian cognate *hāvā* (هوا).

In relation to discussing such issues with students, it was also notable that it gave a forum for us to talk about these kinds of conceptual differences between traditional ways that Hindi speakers see, or saw, the world, and modern Western ways of seeing the world.

So, despite the tendency for the use of English words to become more extensive, there are interesting limitations on this process. Initially it might have seemed possible that either all words might have been replaced with Sanskrit coinages and calques, or all English vocabulary would be retained as loanwords. However, what is actually happening is a more complex process whereby ideas that have no Indic counterpart are retained as loanwords, but that ideas which can be 'mapped' onto Indic concepts are often replaced by Sanskrit calques. Clearly the press, the reader, and the student need to develop a nuanced understanding of this issue, and for the student in particular, it is important to understand the ways in which Hindi develops new vocabulary to deal with new ideas.

### 5.3 Localisation of English loanwords

There are also localisations of English occurring constantly which it is important for the student to understand correctly. *śūṭiṅ* शूटिंग is the everyday way to refer to "filming" as a contraction of "film shooting." Although apparently simply an English word, it should be noted that the Hindi usage is however quite separate for Hindi speakers from the sense of "shooting" in relation to gunfire and is just limited to meaning "film shooting." There were in December 2009 about 355,000 references to *śūṭiṅ* in Google. So, clearly, this was a case where an English loanword had been successful in entering Hindi.

There is also a formal Hindi English-Sanskrit-Hindi compound *fiilmikara* फिल्मिकरण, which means "filmisation," formed in an analogous manner to *drāmān* द्रामानिषण "I have met advocates of Sanskrit Hindi who advocated, incorrectly, the usage of this word to mean "shooting." However, in November 2010, there were around 130 references to *phiilmikara* in Google (and 30 to *fiilmikara*) and it is evident that it is only being used in its primary sense of "filmisation." One feature of this word is that is based on an English word, "film," with a Sanskrit postfix *kara* "isation." There is, however, a second Hindi word for film, a Sanskrit-based coinage *calcitra* चलचित्र "moving picture." One feature of this coinage is obvious: it was made when people called films "moving pictures." However, it survives in Hindi in formal contexts. In November 2009 there were around eight hundred thousand references to *calcitra* on Google, but in comparison there were over three million references to the word *phiilm/fiilm* on Google. You might expect therefore there to be a formal coinage *calcitrakara* चलचित्रिकरण also evident in Hindi, and on Google. However, in comparison to the hundred and fifty or so references to *fiilmikara*, there were only five references to *calcitrakara* चलचित्रिकरण in November 2009 on Google.

The process of shift in the meaning of English loanwords is very common in Hindi. For instance the word *ēśān* शैत (100,000 Google hits in October 2008) is now being used as a word that displaces "worry." *fikr* फ़िक्र (29,000 Google hits in October 2008) to mean "worry." However, *ēśān* शैत is clearly being used in the sense of worry, not tension. So its meaning has

shifted. The popularity of this term points to another vital influence, film, as it came to public notice as the catch phrase of a character in the film *Large Rahn Manna Bhan* in 2006.

However, there is probably yet another factor at play here. The English word *ḥesān* (हसन) is displacing the Persian-Arabic word *fikr* (فکر), which, although it means “thought” or “reflection” in Arabic, came to carry the sense of “worry” in Hindi. However, *fikr* (فکر) itself was also a displacement of the Sanskrit word *cintā* (चिन्ता), which again basically means “thought” but carries a sense of “worry” in many contexts.

Discussing such issues with students allows for an examination of several issues. In particular, a discussion of the process by which Persian-Arabic loanwords in Hindi are being replaced by English loanwords and the ways in which cognate terms now co-exist with inflections of meaning. In this case, *ḥesān* appears to relate to worries in relation to westernised life styles, whilst *fikr* is mostly used in everyday discourse, similar to “worry,” and *cintā* in formal registers of Hindi, in a manner similar to “concern.”

## 6 English words: conceptual categories and products

Different Hindi language versions of stories about the death of Steve Irwin, the Australian personality, made various attempts to describe the stingray that killed him. *Hindustān* described it as a *samudrī jiv* (समुद्री जीव) “sea creature” (“*समुद्री जिव*” 2006). *Navbhārat* (नावभारत) and *Dainik Bhaskar* both called it a *samudrī machhī* (समुद्री मछली) “sea fish sting ray” (“*समुद्री मछली*” 2006). “*समुद्री मछली*” 2006). Hindi is not strong in vocabulary to describe marine wild life, an area in which Hindi has little vocabulary, as it is not part of the lived experience of most Hindi-speaking North Indians, who do not live by the sea. This points to the issue of how Hindi develops vocabulary to relate to new conceptual categories and objects. I think it’s important to discuss with students how often new words appearing in Hindi relate to new objects appearing in Indian culture.

Even older borrowings from foreign languages into Hindi, like “table” *mez* (मेज़) (Portuguese via Persian) and “loom” *kamrī* (कमरी) (Portuguese), actually reflect that these were at one time new objects, and ideas, in India. For instance the conceptual category “chair” meaning a seat with a back (in Hindi *kursī* कुर्सी from Arabic), it could be argued, is not an ancient Indian category, and older words relate to the idea of sitting *āsana* (आसना) “posture” or the shape of the seat *cauhī* (चौही) “small square.” In those cases, however, normally nowadays modern Hindi and English do have similar conceptual categories.

However, when trying to translate any passage about rural life from English into Hindi, this process of construction of meaning becomes very apparent. A whole range of English terms have no direct Hindi categories to relate them to, for instance, such apparently concrete English categories as: countryside, farm, fence, hedge and landscape are all culturally constructed concepts.

For “countryside,” Hindi normally uses *dehāt* (देहात), but that actually refers to the hamlets in the countryside, not the countryside itself. Where in English people talk about “farms,” in Hindi, people talk about “fields.”

The reasons for this are to be found in the fact that Western English speaking notions of the countryside were created during the agricultural revolution, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when people were evicted from the countryside in the clearances and the land was privatised and objectified as “farms” in the “countryside.” However, India did not have an agricultural revolution in the same way and until recently, most farming was still carried out in shared patchworks of fields around villages. In Hindi, there are no separate terms for “farms” and “fields,” nor yet separate terms for “settlements” and “countryside.” Instead, the “countryside” is the area of small hamlets; *dehāt* (देहात), in comparison with the village, *grām* (ग्राम), which is a centre of inhabitation in rural areas.

Due to variations in farming infrastructure, there may also be other difficulties in translation, and understanding. The use of fences was not extensive in the Indian countryside. So there is no

common Hindi word for an agricultural fence. The closest term for many Hindi speakers is *dīvār* (दीवार), but that actually means a wall. However, North Indian fields are enclosed by low raised earthen boundaries for controlling water flow called *me* (मे) “*me*” (मे). In 1964, Trivedi in the *Nāgarī Pracāri* (नगरी प्रचारि) “Compact Hindi Dictionary” defined a *me* (मे) in this way: “an enclosure made round some land or a field by piling up earth, a small dam, a boundary between two fields in the form of a path” (Tripathi, 1964, p. 945). In 1970, Chaturvedi in the widely accepted “Practical Hindi-English Dictionary” defined *me* (मे) as “a list: boundary-wall beneath two fields or beds: field ridge” (Chaturvedi, 1970, p. 618).

There is of course no such term in English and I would argue that modern urban Hindi speakers, especially in the Diaspora, are losing their understandings of such traditional terms. In at least one recently produced Western Hindi-English dictionary, a picture of a “hedge” in an American farm landscape is labelled as a *me* (मे) (Sinha, 2008, p. 182). This may derive in part from a long standing English lexical tradition of including the term fence and hedge in the definition of *me* (मे) which goes back to at least 1884 when John Platts defined it in this way: “Fence, hedge, outer boundary or enclosure (of any kind); line, border, rim, margin, edge” (Platts, 1884, p. 121). In 1993, McGregor in his now widely accepted Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary also gave as a meaning of *me* (मे), after field boundary, as “a hedge or fence” (McGregor, 1993, p. 831). Stuart McGregor was working in the same tradition as his forerunner John Platts and in part his work draws on Platts’ dictionary.

I would suggest then that, in part, what we may have here is a modern Western dictionary definition made by an Indian in the West who, when trying to define a Western object a hedge, has referred back to an English work which represents at its source a 19<sup>th</sup> century English understanding of a term, rather than the understanding of Hindi speakers in India.

In the end then, it reflects how a modern Hindi speaker in the West has re-imagined his own tradition and, in attempting to map it onto Western conceptual categories, produced a strange result, using a term that means for most people, “a raised field boundary” to mean “a row of plants forming a fence.” On the one hand, this shows how definitions of words in dictionaries are heavily dependent on the time, place and viewpoint of the dictionary compilers, and on the other hand it also shows how the meanings of words often shift over time from object to object, or idea to idea and the idea of a fixed relationship between ideas and words is illusory.

Moreover, there is a word for hedge in Hindi, which is *bā* (बा) “*bā*” (बा). (Chaturvedi, 1970, p. 512). This derives from Sanskrit *vā* (वा) which has meanings related to an enclosure or a fence (Turner, 1973, p. 669). In Tripathi’s 1964 dictionary, it is defined as a “spiky bush enclosing crops etc. to protect them” (Tripathi, 1964, p. 794) and in Bahri’s 2002 dictionary, it is described as a *jhā* (झा) “bush-enclosure” (Bahri, 2002, p. 308). Despite these associations with the idea of a hedge for some Hindi speakers, it is not now a common word in such a context. A Google search reveals rather that the main newspaper usage related to *bā* (बा) is in relation to barbed wire fences along the Indian border (“*बाँटो काँट*” 2008). In this case then, as with many English words in Hindi newspapers, there has been a shift in the meaning of a word. That a *bā* (बा) is spiky and a boundary line has allowed its meaning to get transferred from hedge to barbed wire fence, and it is now being used mostly in the context of barbed wire fences along an international border.

I would suggest that what we can see here is a process of shift in meaning of Hindi words, similar to that which occurs with English words taken into Hindi. What appears to be causing this particular instance is that young urban Hindi speakers are losing awareness of words which relate to agricultural contexts. Indeed, it is possible that, for many such people, the only way to translate “hedge” into Hindi would be to write a phrase that explained what hedge meant, or just say “wall” *dīvār* (दीवार), rather than use an old Hindi word which is now no longer familiar to young urban Hindi speakers.

Working with students translating a passage one day, we also came across the problem of a “dramatic landscape.” Landscape has no Hindi equivalent, you have to explain “view of hills, rivers and mountains etc.,” this turns out to be yet another European notion dating back to the renaissance, in which the urban and the rural become separate categories of thought. However, there is a Hindi word for dramatic *नट-अकृत* *nat-akrta*, but it means “performed in the manner of a drama,” in the sense of “artificial,” which illustrates another thing which students need to bear in mind. Whilst Hindi retains the original meaning of the word, it is in English that the meaning has actually shifted to a secondary meaning.

As well as shift in the meaning of words, newspapers also reflect the ways in which differentiation of terms takes place. A headline during the bird flu crisis in 2004 in Hindustan said, “Poultry price falls as people abandon eating chicken” *पुर्ण के खाते बंद होने से चिकन की कीमतें गिर गईं* (‘पूर्ण के खाते’, 2004). What is notable here is that the word *मिर्गदा* *mirgda* which used to simply mean “chicken” in Hindi is here being contrasted with the *cikam* *chikam* which is being eaten. What is surely happening here is similar to the distinction between cow and beef in English. In English also, the word for the meat of the animal comes from a foreign language, French *boeuf*. What is happening here is just the same sort of code-switching. Hindi is developing a way to distinguish between chicken in reference to the animal, and chicken as meat that is eaten.

Students encountering such issues are challenged by them to realise how culturally constructed their own language and thinking is, and also about what is happening in India at the moment.

## 7 English words in Hindi vs. Sanskrit clones of English words

There is also a phenomena where words like *PIIP* *पीप* (पीप ट्री फ्रु) are appearing in Hindi newspapers. For Hindi speakers, who do not know English, it must be impossible to distinguish between adjectives, such as “*me-elik*,” and proper names, such as “*kris-lyan Lebō-in*,” which all appeared in the phrase “*me-elik kris-lyan Lebō-in PIIP*” *मे-एलिक क्रिस-लियन लेबो-इन पीप* in one Hindi newspaper article (‘पुर्ण’, 2007). Such usages raise questions when teaching students how to read Hindi newspapers. On the one level, how do we distinguish between trade mark names, adjectives and proper nouns in phrases like *elji kē pīrā-dā hāi-se* (‘एलजी के पीएचडी हैसिएटि’) which recently appeared in a Sunday supplement of a popular Hindi daily, the *Amar Ujala* (‘अमर उजाला’, 2008)? On another level, should words like “handset” be translated into Hindi?

One viewpoint was clearly that they should. A strong proponent of this was the 1950s language reformer, and one time director of the Broadcasting commission, Raghu Vira, who is notoriously supposed to have invented terms like *lohp-patha-gaman-gānhi* (‘लौह पथ गगन-गान्धि’) “iron-path-movement-mover” for “train.” Raghu Vira was in fact only one of a group of people who, from the 1940s onwards, were trying to develop a scientific and technical vocabulary for Hindi. Some of the terms they invented did become standard, others did not. For instance, in the 1952 “Consolidated Great English-Indian Dictionary of Technical Terms,” the word for railway is actually *ayonāṅg* *अयोनंग* or *śāyām* *शायम*. (Raghu Vira, 1952, p. 1511), and in the Hindi-English dictionary supplement, a railway train has become a *lohmāṅga śāyām* *लौहमंगल शायम* (Raghu Vira, 1951, p. 734) However, none of these terms ever caught on at all in Hindi, as *ren* *रेन* and *vel* *वेल* remained the standard terms.

For radio, the 1951 dictionary says that it means the same as “wireless,” and should be translated as *vītanika* *वितानिका* or from Marathi *nabhovā-i* *नाभोवा-ई* “heaven-speech” (Raghu Vira, 1952, p. 1510). The 1950 dictionary also simply has no word for Television but by the 1951 supplement to the dictionary there is *dhīdās* *धीदस* for television and *dhīdāśan* *धीदशान* for teleview. (Raghu Vira, 1951, p. 164) In the end the government tried to popularise *dhīdāśan* *धीदशान* “far-vision” for television, and *dhāśvān* *धाश्वान* “sky-speech” for radio. Naturally, the state Hindi radio and TV companies were then called by these names. However, their meaning never expanded for most Hindi speakers beyond the names of the state companies. So, nowadays,

in everyday discourse you watch Durdarshan on *-IVI* *दीवी* and listen to Akashvani on the *redio* *रेडीओ*. So, in these cases, the attempts at Sanskrit versions of the English words worked, but not in the way intended. However, there is an odd disjunction in this, where in schools in the Indian Diaspora, in some countries such as Singapore and Australia, you still have to say *dhīdāśan* for *-IVI*.

As opposed to this artificial attempt to create Sanskrit-based Indian equivalents to English words there is also a very longstanding process in Hindi where English words are adopted and maintain their meaning, but their sound changes and becomes ‘Hindi-ized.’

For instance, by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the English word “tragedy” had become Hindi *nāṣṭr* *नाष्टर*, and most Hindi speakers would not think of it as an English word at all. More recently, such changes sometimes take the form of adopting a noun, but using it as an adjective – for instance, the use of balance to mean balanced in *baiṭas* *बैतस* “balanced diet”

Yet another way in which English words are adopted into Hindi is the opposite, the sound is unaltered, but the meaning changed. Two instances of this which appear in newspapers, are *pol* *पोल* meaning electricity pylon as well as pole, and *fidar* *फीडर* meaning electricity transmission cables (‘पोल के फिदर’, 2000). I also vividly recall that for many years in Banaras people said *matik* *माटिक* when they meant a loudspeaker.

There is also one other sort of change in meaning which is both interesting for the students when they encounter it, and also quite perplexing for some native speakers. Some words have one meaning now in English for Hindi speakers and one in Hindi for them. A clear example of this is jungle. This is originally a Sanskrit word that meant uncultivated dry scrubland. In Hindi it then came to mean uncultivated land and, when the British arrived in India, could refer to any wild country, forest, mountain, desert, or rainforest. However, in English, it then became limited in its meaning to rainforest. Many Hindi speakers who also speak English use it to mean rainforest in English, but still use it to mean uncultivated, wild, or wasteland in Hindi.

These kinds of shifts in meanings of English words in Hindi are important for students when they are reading Hindi newspapers. Students learn that English loanwords in Hindi often have different meanings from their original English meanings.

## 8 Mistranslations from English into Hindi and ‘bad’ Hindi

There are also more instances appearing of misunderstandings of English in Hindi. One article on the Hindi language pages of the Indian news website *Stip.com* in 2007 reported “There is no reason why Hindi films are not made with Hollywood style budgets” (‘बॉलीवुड’, 2007). However, the original article said, “no reason why they *should not* be ...,” which is a very different matter (‘Bollywood’, 2007).

It is also possible to suggest that some of the expressions formed on English models could fall into the category of bad Hindi. Several newspapers called the 2007 APEC meeting in Sydney a *mit* *मीट* *ka* *parihar* *मीट का फरार* “a milestone” (‘पुर्ण’, 2007). However, what they did was directly translate the English into Hindi, which created a meaningless Hindi phrase “a stone of a mile.”

It is also clear that the mixed language origins of the journalists and readers are allowing much more of what could simply be called ‘bad’ Hindi to be published. In some cases, these instances of bad Hindi may be related to content being generated outside of India. In 2006, students encountered on the Deutsche Welle website an article in which the gender of “speech” was incorrectly shown to be masculine by the way in which a possessive particle *ke* *के* appeared before *bā* *बात* “speech,” whereas in standard Hindi it should be *ka* *बात की* *बात*, and such articles continue to appear on the Deutsche Welle website (‘पुर्ण’, 2008). Most of the students thought it was due to the person writing in Germany. However, there are currently over 10,000 hits for the ‘incorrect’ phrase *ke* *ba* and around 700,000 for the correct *ka* *ba* on Google in October 2008. This suggests