

CHAPTER IV

Some Sense Variations of Indian Elements in English

As we have seen, a large number of Indian words have been assimilated into the English language. However, it is noticeable that the meaning of Indian words in English are not always identical with those in the Indian languages. There is almost always a register-bound restriction of the meaning assimilated in English, as pointed out by Kachru (1975).

The present study is based on a million word corpus of Indian English. We have 1924 Indian words and expressions in the corpus. An attempt was made to find out which of the Indian words in the corpus have acquired currency in the native variety, i.e. occur in the English dictionary (Web). We find that 602 of these Indian words (including derivations) have been assimilated into English (our B category).

Further an attempt was made to find out whether the words in the corpus are used in the same sense as those given in Web. On checking these we found that there is a variety of differences between the senses of several words recorded in the dictionary and those with which they occur in the corpus.

The dictionary has recorded the register-bound sense or senses. Many words thus recorded have just one sense and many others several senses, maybe in the same register or in different registers.

Let us now look at some such items:

I Items that occur in the corpus with a sense not recorded in the dictionary:

1. In Web the word cutcheri occurs with following meaning:

India: a public office for administrative or judicial business

COURTHOUSE; also: any administrative office

In the corpus it occurs with the meaning i) a public office and ii) also musical concert

e.g. i) ...purpose, as stated by the author himself, is to lay bare the corruption and dishonesty of some of the Shirastedars, Karkuns, etc., employed in Kutcheries, under European gentlemen, ... (1810G06)

ii) There was a small dose of top octave singing mounted on the gandhara which did not seem very natural to the vocalist. Perhaps, it was felt that this was a "must" to fulfil conventional cutcheri requirement (0330C02).

2. In web the word Karma occurs with the following meanings pertaining to religion only

1) The force generated by a person's actions that is held in Hinduism and Buddhism to be motive power for the round of rebirth and deaths endured by him until he has achieved spiritual liberation and freed himself from the effects of such force.

- 2) the sum total of the ethical consequences of person's good or bad actions comprising thoughts, words and deeds that is held in Hinduism and Buddhism to determine his specific destiny in his next existence
- 3) a subtle form of matter held in Jainism to develop in the soul and vitiate its purity, to lengthen the course of individual transmigration and to postpone the possibility of final salvation

In addition to religious meaning, karma occurs with a different sense in our data.

i.e. grammatical category i.e. element of sentence -- the object in the corpus e.g.

It may be pointed out that reflexives are made from casuals also and here also the verbal stem selects atmanepada suffixes: Panini describes it as follows:

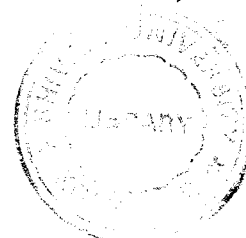
The causal of a root, the object (Karma) of which becomes agent (karta) in the causal (0290J34) = element of sentence.

The word karma also occurs with the general Indian word meaning (duty) e.g.

Sacrifice was regarded as almost the only kind of duty or karma (0380J52) = duty

And of course with the religious meaning e.g.

(i) ...great king, this name-and-form commits deeds,



either pure or impure, and by that karma another name-and-form is reborn (1250D01) = the force generated by person's actions

Web-1

(ii) Karma ...works as a link connecting old and new being and that transmigrated from one being to another. (1480D01)

Web-2

3. In Web word ma occurs with following meaning:

MOTHER

In the corpus it occurs with the meaning (i) mother and (ii) also fourth note of musical scale.

e.g. i) Almost the first thing every infant in the village knew after knowing its ma and ba, was all about the demon, ... (0860N11)

ii) Leaving aside the Sruti interval from ma, or considering the entire gamut as composed of two terachords, the entire sequence is found to be quite harmonious (650J67).

It may be pointed out that in these examples the word ma is spelt in the same way but pronounced differently, (i) /ma/= mother (ii) /mā/ = Fourth note of musical scale.

4. In Web the word ras occurs with the following meaning:
ras also rasa: a manipuri dance-drama enacting the legend of the deity Krishna and his consort Radha

In the corpus it has the following two meanings: (i) dance
(ii) sentiment

e.g. (i) She was told that dances like the garba and the ras, and songs, were available in plenty in Bombay, but they were sophisticated and stylised. (0411N14)

(ii) Hindustani classical music has also some association with the theory of rasa in which Bharat and his followers have attempted to classify the aesthetic emotion generated by a work of art into nine kinds. (1380G46)

Similarly, this word is pronounced different i.e. they are homographs : /ra:s/ and /rəs /.

In Web the word sahib occurs with the following meanings:

- 1: SIR, MASTER -- used as a term of respect esp. among Hindus and Muslims in colonial India when addressing or speaking of a European of some social status and as a general title affixed to the name or official title of a European or affixed to the title of a man of rank
- 2: European: typically: a European official or settler in a largely non-European population

In the corpus examples it occurs with the meanings:

- i) reference to Indian who has returned from a foreign country.
- ii) reference to a (Indian) high official.
- iii) reference to honourable (Indian) person in society.

iv) reference to European.

e.g.

- i) My shirtfront is as fluffy and starched as that of any England returned sahib. (0180K27)
- ii) He personally carried the file to the Minister sahib for his signature. (0740K10)
- iii) "You mean the article about Khan sahib Karuppiah?" "Yes". "I had seen it before it was published", said Sundaram. (1510K09)
- iv) The British hunter despised the local Shikari. In the sahib's view, the Shikari sat over salt licks and water holes. (0590E17)

6. In Web the word vanaspati occurs with the following meaning: a hydrogenated vegetable fat used as a butter, substitute in India

But in the corpus it occurs with the meanings:

(i) edible oil and also

(ii) voice

e.g. (i) ... Vanaspati, sugar, paper drugs and medicines without exceptions and basic house building materials are exempted from the new Central excise burdens. (1490B08)

(ii) His (Krishnamurthi's) studied renditions of "Pariyachaka" (Vanaspati) and Koniyaade (Kokiladhvani) brought out with clarity the

ragas' colours... (0160C02)

11 Items that occur in the corpus with an altogether different meaning.

1. In Web the word ardhamagadhi occurs with following meaning only:

a Prakrit language of north India
used in a large part of the
Jain canon

But in the corpus it occurs with the following meaning
'kind of song'

e.g. The four kinds of songs or geetis in which the jatis
were applied were magadhi, ardhamagadhi; sambhavita
and prithule. (1860J67)

2. In Web the word baba occurs with following meaning only:

BABY, CHILD

But in the corpus it occurs with following meanings:

i) Hindu saint

e.g. Today we find that there is a rapid growth of babas,
swamis, saints and tantric yogis. (1530F37)

ii) as an interjection expressing impatience

BABA!

e.g. "Who knows" we know baba, she need not teach us
all these... (1090K25)

3. In Web the word bhangi occurs with following meaning:

a Hindu sweeper or scavenger being a member of one of the

lowest untouchable castes.

But in the corpus it occurs with following meaning ' '

e.g. The chauka position and the Bhangis were well-maintained and the abhinaya to the ashtapadis from the Geeta Govinda was performed with dignity.
(0630C05)

4. In Web the word brahma occurs with the following meanings:

1: brahma: an Asian breed of very large domestic fowls having pea combs and featherd legs and occuring in light, dark and buff-color varieties.

2: -s : a bird of the Brahma breed.

2

brahma : BRAHMAN

But in the corpus it occurs with following meaning: i.e. the Creator

e.g. i) ... the five Eternal Entities Jiva, Ishwar, Maya, Brahma and parabrahman. (0810D08)

ii) In the vedi, the bridegroom lights the havan, --- and before the great testifier fire and a terrestrial witness the 'brahma' he takes his marital vows. (1560E11)

Brahma in the sense of the Creator is not recorded in Web.

5. In Web the word huh occurs with the following meaning only:

used typically to express surprise,
disbelief or disgust

But in the corpus it occurs with the meaning 'expressing agreement'

e.g. I said huh to everything and when I ran back
'Kalyani' shouted at me (1590K29)

6. As stated earlier in example No.1 in Web the word magadhi occurs with following sense

the Prakrit language of Magadha

But in the corpus it occurs with the meaning 'kind of a song'.

e.g. The four kinds of songs or geetis in which the jatis were applied were magadhi, ardhmagadhi, Sambhavita and prithule. (1860J67)

7. In Web the word pancama occurs with following meaning:

a member of the lowest caste
group in India: HARIJAN, UNTOUCHABLE

But in the corpus it occurs with the meaning 'one of the seven notes in Indian music'

e.g. The base of all Indian music rests on the seven notes and Bharata named the notes sadja, rishava, gandhara, madhyama, pancama, dhaivata and nishada... (0370J67)

Comments:

The number of items that display sense variation of Indian items in the corpus compared with the dictionary entries is rather limited. But it seems to be a pointer of the fact that Indian items in English do exploit the resources of both the borrowing and the receiving languages.