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Authentic Texts and Pedagogy: A Model

Asima Ranjan Parhi

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Asima Ranjan Parhi

The Author

Asima Ranjan Parhi teaches English language and literature at Rajiv Gandhi (Central) University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India. Specializing in Linguistics and ELT. Parhi has published a book titled *Indian English through Newspapers* from Concept Publication, New Delhi and a dozen other research articles in national and international journals. He pursues research in the area of print and electronic media apart from his interest in literary theory.

Correspondence: **asim.parhi@gmail.com**

Address: Assistant Professor

Dept. of English

Rajiv Gandhi University

Itanagar- 791112

Arunachal Pradesh.

India.

Phone: +091-360-2278505 (Residence)

Cell: +091-943-604-9121

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Abstract

Authentic texts in terms of the print and electronic media form an alternative model for the ELT curriculum. There is a fast change in this field to accommodate numerous identities and aspirations of the learners in the age of globalization. The paper seeks to identify the relevant areas in this move by the body of newspapers in general and categorises the language events under specific affiliations. It also cites the methods perceived in such usages paving way towards a new model of teaching language and literature. In the context of the global village, words are designed to be saleable and catchy. It has resulted in the pragmatist approach to language teaching and established a new canon.

The paper finds out that the new entries explore fresh avenues for curricular shift with a special emphasis on their alliterative, poetic nature which in turn can get utilized in teaching of poetry in particular and literature in general.

Key words: Authentic text, alternate text, non-canonical, print media, pragmatist teaching/learning, alliterative pattern.

1. Introduction

The paper takes up the task of preparing a model for English language teaching through authentic texts. The entries form a paradigm of language events that can be effective in teaching literature. The print and electronic media form an alternate textual canon. When language achieves the status of a commodity as it has been in the era of globalization, it certainly aspires to be acceptable to all kinds of markets; outside and inside. In the context of the global village, words and the different modes of communication are saleable and exportable. So when such usage gets ample attention; both by the writers/editors of newspapers/ journals substantially influencing the readers, it gets acceptability automatically.

In the IT (Information Technology) age, when the young students flourish more in applied knowledge, management courses; private entrepreneurs who opt for professionally skilled employees having a market based, pragmatic approach to the English language, we can not afford to understand our existence independent of English. And there is a lot of resourcefulness well perceived in the body of the newspaper. It is locally as well as globally motivated, professionalized and catchy.

This paper tries to explore a few areas within the print media affecting such a change in language contributing to new areas of research, curricular shift, using the content of the newspaper as a tool to teach.

2. Key Areas

2.1 Technology

The newspapers respond to innovations in technology and reflect upon them in terms of language. Some articles that speak about such developments seem obscure at first sight. For entrepreneurs, traders of higher status, executives, NRI's and academics the computer has been the store house of almost a separate medium, language which the newspapers also try to have access and put into their features. Here are some examples:

- a) Vajpayee and Co. (Refers Vajpayee and his BJP colleagues; Vajpayee and the allies of a coalition government), The Times of India 16 Nov. '98.
- b) Bangalore's Got IT: TOI news, 7 Nov. '98 (editorial).
- c) 'Swadeshi enterprise', titles Farrokh K R Mehta in his article (7 Nov. '98, TOI).

He also writes 'desi entrepreneur' in it.

It refers to the fact that certain general notions have to be expressed by economic, global connotations as they rule the world now.

- d) Television - Marathon has become 'Telethon' and an unending stream of faxes becomes a 'faxathon'; 'talkathon' (an advertisement of a cell phone, refers to unlimited talk on phone), TOI, 26 Nov. '01.

'e-lancers' are 'free agents who are electronically linked to other soloists for specific projects and move on when the work is done.

- e) The 'electronic mail' that came up in 1977 was shortened to 'e-mail' and so came 'e-bucks', 'e-ticket', and so on.

2.2 Globalization

Globalization has revolutionized language use in the media. Registers from all disciplines jumble together and get validity through the register of journalism. Newspapers in general have been the meeting point of professionals from all departments. The journalist keeps in mind the above fact and creates a medium that can interest the variety of readers. So the technique of journalism has been to an extent analogous to that of fiction. The readers become the market for the product that is the newspaper from the professional point of view. It has to provide space for every type of brain.

- a) On 19 Nov '98, Edward Zurick writes on TOI, "Celluloid Stereotypes of Islam" where he uses an expression like 'Islamically incorrect' that clearly projects the autonomy of the writer as well as putting different subjects (say for example, the world as moral or aesthetic) as if they bear the similar word function and so instead of quoting it as 'Islam thinks it to be morally incorrect' he uses the term as an adverb.
- b) "Biharisation of Politics". Here, 'Biharisation' clearly refers to 'criminalisation'. So the word is first used as a trait and speaks of a distinct stereotype.
- c) e-mail which comes from the discipline of electronics, opens up the application of the usages like; e-text, e-speak, e-money, e-ticket etc.
- d) An advertisement of an iron by Usha Company writes "Steamxpress", which is coined for economy and due to the pressure on the writer to imagine a deviating way to attract all kinds of readers and consumers from all parts of the world. In colonial times the newspaper did not have the role of spreading business and advertising ideas. In the changing times it has become itself a profitable business containing separate sections of advertisement, fashion schemes, and in the process a commercialized medium has taken precedence.

2.3 Personal Style

The columnists work upon their language reservoir depending on the situational, functional exigencies. It is the projection of our linguistic notions that govern some of the writers who are fast using many Indian words and structures. And when the mainstream newspapers use number of such words and structures freely it certainly is a sign of assertion of Indian usage since they are read across the world too. Indians have come of age through such massive mention of the words which are very common to all. And when they are repeatedly used, it seems (as the field study reveals) the newspapers have asserted the Indian self to express itself by the kind of English they are comfortable with. To make one's presence felt outside, such a task serves a great purpose. The newspapers also assert their stand on Indian English by reproducing some of the public speeches, interviews of leaders, artists with mixture of Indian, regional or our own idioms well rooted in our peculiar social systems, ceremonies:

The ex-Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly is referred frequently as 'Maharaj' as he is known at his native place. The need for assertion creates the need for new expression, new lexicon be it peculiar, sounding strange or good. As it has already been mentioned, certain local, dialectical expressions take precedence with the motive of both attracting the category of people who are accustomed with that expression (their local expression) and asserting the local usage in particular and the Indian peculiar variety of English in general as seen here:

'The Rabri gormint': 'Government' in Bihar is popularly pronounced as 'gormint'. Most of the times anything on Punjabi music comes as "Balle balle" as it is a typical catch word of the Punjabi folk. 'Saffron' earlier stood for commitment and sacrifice. Journalism has today turned it to pejorative usage since it has been identified with a particular fundamentalist creed in recent times. So 'saffronising education' has been a catch phrase in journalistic register standing for 'narrowing education' to certain dogmas, communalisation and such a usage comes from an assertion of such creative vigour of the writer.

2.4 Trendy

Rise of journalism as an influential area and various social, scientific changes have created a vast scope for a number of newspapers, periodicals, weekly magazines. All these can only survive through tough competition among themselves. So language as a medium remains at an advantageous position by being healthily contributed out of the individual newspaper's attempts at new structures. As a result a mixture of strange structures and words come into use and gain popularity among common people even.

2.4.1 Spelling

It occupies an important position in attracting attention of even the non-serious reader. The Sun Times started writing 'Cuttack' as 'Katak' and 'Orissa' as 'Odissa' which can be termed as both a regional assertion as well as a trick to survive by establishing its own genre of journalistic innovation. Words like 'Distinkt', 'Kwality', 'Caliber' (new brand of Kawasaki bike), 'Ushafone', 'Splendor' (another bike) etc. fulfill this purpose.

Similarly the advertisement that goes like, 'Kwality Icecream' does not raise the eyebrow of the reader or scepticism of the proprietor of newspapers for display. The media that gives popularity to such deviation in fact popularises such attractiveness of the language.

2.4.2 Idioms, Metaphors & Neologism

The Telegraph has written; 'Nuclear Twins' to mean India and Pakistan (25 Nov.'98).

Jug Suraiya regularly writes for The Times of India and habitually coins Words in jocular vein which show journalistic flexibility and attract readers. One such example from his column is "PIOlogy lesson" (22.11.'98) where PIO stands for Persons of Indian Origin.

The Assam Tribune writes "Swadhin Ahom". (means Independent Assam) since the 'Ahom Kingdom had been a significant ruling class in this area and there has been continuous fight for independence of the state of Assam. This is how one strange word gets validity in normal usage. We can say competitiveness creates a deviation which looks attractive initially and becomes a part of normal usage. Deviation in the language structure effectively attracts

readers either due to its uncommonness or because of opening new avenues for language users.

An interview with Mira Nair, film maker, on 24 Nov.'98 in The Times of India is titled as "Salaam Masala Mira" which comes from her film Salaam Bombay, Mississippi Masala and her name Mira. On 25 Nov.'98, Pranay Sharma writes in The Telegraph: "Vajpayee reloads Bofors gun." A magazine article writes in bold letters: "Sexpress Yourself". The coinage 'Sexpress' certainly means 'Sexually express'. Whether the term 'Sexpress' gains legitimacy or not is a question for future. At least it attracts, is read and so is acceptable. It is acceptability that guarantees the validity of a language. In turn the world of language validates such needs and legitimizes the deviations in a sphere beyond the textual, strict academic one thereby displaying our assertiveness.

2.5 Cultural/Socio-political affiliation

Every writer is aware of the socio-cultural milieu and ethos he consciously and unconsciously associates himself with. The Assam Tribune writes (6 Dec.'98): "Mamta's new avatar". The article is on Mamta Kulkarni (film actress) and her new, traditional role which contradicts her earlier off the guard roles. The word 'avatar' is well known to all Indians, especially from our myths which talk of incarnation of gods. Presenting it justifies the cultural identity of the editor/writer.

"The Business Times" of The Times of India on July 14 '98 writes, "How will the economy escape from the Chakravahyu?" The word 'Chakravahyu' is very much an old Indian practice of war strategy that engulfs the enemy. This kind of a metaphor used in the corporate and business sector is clearly a clean chit to the journalist's cultural ethos getting fairly represented.

The Times of India on its entertainment column (30 March '98) uses names from Mahabharata like Yudhishthir, Draupadi, Panchali not just as names but it seems the writer deliberately wants to force upon the reader his obsession with the cultural ethos he wants to represent and his sense of the past and myth that he wants to share with the reader. Example: "Draupadi's Passion in Kathak and Verse".

Newspapers like The Times of India also have created space for our ethos separately on special columns like 'The Speaking Tree'. Devdutt Patnaik on 2 April '98 on this column writes "A Hanuman for all seasons" and fills his article with plenty of Indian words like 'brahmacharya', 'Siddhi', 'Stri-rajya', 'bhakti-marg', 'maryada-purushottam', 'jivatma' etc.

On 29 May '98 The Times of India in one of its articles writes "A Nuclear Lesson from Bhasmasura" (Siddhartha Varadarajan). The 'Bhasmasura' episode is known to the Indians (especially the Hindus) from their childhood which is interesting to share with.

An editorial in the same paper on 27 June '98 writes "Madonna's Mantra" which seems to point out so many things simultaneously.

- i) there is alliterative use of the language
- ii) juxtaposition of the western pop star with Indian hymns
- iii) the real message; that of Madonna learning Sanskrit.

A journal, *Politics India* (vol-11, No.12, June '98) on its cover page boldly writes "Awakening the Kundalini" on the Pokhran tests where the use of the word kundalini is synonymous with the magician, saint of earlier days and the rituals related to them highlight a cultural affiliation. Under the distinct social identities the customs, fashion, entertainment, sex, sports related issues come up to contribute new models of word and structural changes.

On 25 Oct. '98 Anita Katyal (The Times of India) writes, "RSS propagating Hindutva through Text books". "Murli Manohar Joshi fails to lend a Saffron halo to the education system" and again, "One of their deepest desires is to go to Mecca for a darshan of a Shivling". All the above deviations both come out of the social, cultural context in which these news items, articles are designed. A drive against polluting vehicles in Delhi (the bullet driven auto-rickshaws) was termed in these terms:

'It is end of the road for the 'phatphati'. The Indians only understand what 'phatphati' means. Jerry Pinto writes in "Sunday Review" (TOI), 20 Sept.'98: "Sleep well Mantriji" on Indian politicians being more involved in sex and social corruption than Clinton (Ex-President, USA) as the issue was raised then. The socio - cultural sector is a very broad field which covers the fashion and entertainment norms of changing times too which gets reflected in the use of the English tongue as a natural progressive phenomenon in the register of journalism.

Journalism in India has been more drawn into the politics everyday rather than that of the western counterparts. The writers, proprietors and editors in course of time have directly identified themselves with certain parties and wings and represented their points of view. So every writer has had to respond to any political turmoil from his angle modeling the language accordingly.

i) On Clinton's extramarital relationship one clip comes "Yatha Praja, Tatha Raja". Feb 28, '98 (The Times of India, editorial).

ii) "UP's Bhul-bhulaiya"; relating to Kalyan Singh's sudden ouster and coming back to chief ministership(TOI, 28 Feb.'98).

March 2, '98 TOI; Ratan Manilal (columnist) hints at 'Mandalisation' and 'Yadavisiation' to denote the conflicts in UP and other places. The words come out of the politics of caste.

iv) When Chandrababu Naidu flies to Delhi to support the BJP government, the Times of India writes (March 8, '98) "Flying Alliance Air to Delhi".

v) Kofi Anan's talks with Iraq are reflected in the newspaper as "Toasted Kofi" (March 2, '98 TOI).

vi) Terms like "Janata Darbar" (PM's Janta Darbar) and "Sangh Parivar "are popularised by today's journalism only which comes from the political wings.

vii) 'The Onion-way' became a catch phrase after the unprecedented price rise of onion (29 Oct.'98, TOI) "ONION-POLL-ITICS" becomes the title of a columnist on the same day. It referred to the opposition's agenda to win the people.

viii) The concept of foregrounding is not new to language practitioners. Newspapers also practise it in their convenience and even with abnormalities. But it is nonetheless attractive and contributory in nature. One newspaper wrote the name A.B. Vajpayee in the wake of the nuclear tests; "A (tom) B (omb) Vajpayee". Similarly Raja Menon writes (Aug 1, '98, TOI) "Exploding myths: Power and the gory of Nucleonics".

ix) Structurally certain sentences have adopted the current political turmoil and upheavals which are exposed through the linguistic foregrounding of Indian words.

Example: Madhu Kishwar in The Times of India, August 2, '98(Title of the column - "Making a home of hell") writes: "Being Indian also demands living at the mercy of a whole army of 'Sarkari Parasites'. Our 'Maibaap Sarkar' understands only two codes: a 'ghoos' from below or a 'Sifarish' from above".

3. Methods in Trend

3.1 Alliteration

Most of the captions, titles of news items and especially the editorial heading are found to be deliberately alliterative, containing a specific patterning, rhyming sound between the words. This poetic use of the words in news papers is certainly fulfilling the purpose of an alternative text which can be best manipulated to teach the methods of poetry and music. The factual register of newspapers as it is supposed to be is not so in practice which is exploiting a subjective, poetic syntax that influences the readers from all spheres of life. Though the usages do not hint at completely new structures, it is observed that such

deliberate musical pattern reflects Indianness as Indians have been more kin on music, melody. Our Vedas, Upanishads, Purans and Scriptures have been musical and follow a poetic structure. The English newspapers in India retain that medium and tone which in return teaches certain poetic, alliterative modes of English. It tries to establish the fact that the new entries match well with a poetic, patterned model which can be well utilized for teaching literature and in particular poetry to young learners.

We here note down (by random sampling) a number of such usage in our newspapers:

Items	Sources
1. No Deal for wheel	Editorial, TOI 17 Aug '99
2. BJP Springs Sushma on Sonia in Bellary	TOI, 19.8.'99.
3. Sushma Surprise to Sonia Suspense (N+N+N+N)	The Telegraph, 19.8.'99
4. Poll Panel Props PM Press Party Class: N N N N N N	The Telegraph, 19.8.'99
5. Song of the shirt	Editorial, TOI, 19.8.'99
6. On the Bomb with Aplomb	TOI, 19 Aug '99
7. Kareena too has got the Karisma	TOI, 20 Aug '99
8. Sense and Censorship	Editorial, TOI 27 Aug '99
9. Policing the Police	TOI, 27 Aug '99
10. i) Poll and Push	Editorial, TOI, 24 Aug '99
ii) Cop in clover	Same as above
iii) Sony Shine Days in India	Same as above
11. Cyber spice	Editorial, TOI 6 Aug '99
12. Gingrich Grounded	Editorial, TOI, 26 Jan '97
13. Muse and Machine	Editorial, TOI, 25 Jan '97
14. Frightening Figures	Editorial, TOI, 24 Jan '97
15.i) Sentinel to Saviour	Editorial, TOI, Dec '96
ii) Raj to Riches	Editorial, TOI, Dec '96
16.i) Oil's not well	Editorial, TOI, 17 Jan '97
ii) Star cross'd story	Editorial, TOI, 17 Jan '97
17. i) Bad vibes from virar	Editorial, TOI, 15 Jan '97
ii) Middle Diddle	Editorial, TOI, 15 Jan '97
18.i) Fear of Flying	Editorial, TOI, 14 Jan '97
ii) Carry on, Clio	Editorial, TOI, 14 Jan '97.
19. Jamboree in Zail	Editorial, TOI, 2 Feb '97
20. Trying Times	Editorial TOI, 1 Feb '97
21. i) Misguided Move	Editorial, TOI, 30 Jan '97
ii) Advantage Akalis N N	Editorial, TOI, 30 Jan '97
22. Lament Literature N N	Editorial, TOI, 29 Jan '97
23. Gift of Greeks	Editorial, TOI, 1 Jan '97
24. Azza Razzmatazz	Editorial, TOI, 31 Dec '96
25. Frozen for future	Editorial, TOI, 27 Jan '96
26. i) Catch the Crooks	Editorial, TOI, Dec '96
ii) In water writ	Same as above
27. Person and Persona	Editorial, TOI, 15 Dec '96

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|-----|--|----------------------------|
| 28. | i) Odd man out | Editorial, TOI, Dec '96 |
| | ii) Eating out | Editorial, TOI, Dec '96 |
| 29. | Gowda vs Gowda | Editorial, TOI, 30 Jan '97 |
| 30. | i) Jaya in Jail | Editorial, TOI, Dec '96 |
| | ii) Pope and Pop | Editorial, TOI, Dec '96 |
| 31. | Beauty and the Best | Editorial, TOI, 30 Nov '96 |
| 32. | Pacific chic | Editorial, TOI, Nov '96 |
| 33. | Calcutta crawling | TOI, Nov '96 |
| 34. | i) Liquor in Quicker | Editorial, TOI, 26 Nov '99 |
| | ii) Battle of Britain (both columns of it) | Editorial, TOI, 26 Nov '99 |
| 35. | Boot for Boutros | Editorial, TOI, Nov '96 |
| 36. | i) Beauty and the Bench | Editorial, TOI, 22 Nov '96 |
| | ii) Gender Mender (both columns) | Editorial, TOI, 22 Nov '96 |
| 37. | Plato and Pop | Editorial, TOI, 20 Nov '96 |
| 38. | Critique of critics | Editorial, TOI, Nov '96 |
| 39. | Doctored Degrees | |
| | Luckless Laloo | Editorial, TOI, 17 Nov '96 |
| | Pop goes Politics (all three columns) | |
| 40. | Paying a price | Editorial, TOI, 5 Feb '97 |
| | capital costs | |
| | Bulls and Bears (all three columns) | |
| 41. | Downhill from Davos | Editorial, TOI, 6 Feb '97 |
| 42. | Leading in Letters | Editorial, TOI, 7 Feb '97 |
| 43. | Dil Does Dhak Dhak | Interview with |
| | for Madhuri Dixit(film actress), | |
| | (with code mix) | Editorial, TOI, 29 Dec '98 |
| 44. | Dance with the Dragon | V.V. Paranjpe, |
| | | Editorial, TOI, 5 Feb '99 |
| 45. | Pawar Play | Editorial, TOI, 10 Aug '99 |

visible.

3.2 Semantic Excess

Certain specific advertisements teach the imperative usage which is catchy, poetic and provide a non-canonical, alternative text rather than subscribing to the strict teaching of grammaticality, accuracy and conformity. By deliberately making the entries ambiguous they mark a departure from the traditional reliance on a canonical language use and open up fresh, fertile avenues to be utilized by language learners:

Items	Companies
1) The Time Keeper of the Nation	HMT Watches
2) The Milkman of the Country	Amul
3) Take home the leader	Videocon
4) Get a king	Computer
with his two princess	advertisement

- (MITI - Ministry of International Trade and Industry).
- 4) Stree Shakti Editorial, TOI, 28 May '98
It refers to the bargaining of J.Jayalalitha and Mamata Banerjee(politicians) as political partners.
 - 5) i) Will stable Atal now be Able Cover story, India Today, 18 Oct '99
ii) Awesome Twosome
(On Mulayam Singh and Mayawati; two politicians).
 - 6) Your home is your pride Advertisement of Hawkins
with Hawkins by your side Pressure cooker, TOI, 26 Oct '99
 - 7) Those boot-button eyes "Saturday Times",
have melted many hearts The Times of India, 29 Nov '97
 - 8) Maha trouble in Malaysia Abheek Barman, TOI, 6 Sept '98
(‘Maha’ comes from Mahathir Mohammed, politician from Malaysia).
 - 9) Waste NOT, want NOT Sudha Palit, The Statesman, 20
Nov'98
 - 10) Dyke Didis Special report, TOI, 22 Nov '98
Dilli Billis
Gucci guys
(The above structures have been put into the normal sentences which project a rhythmic, deliberately patterned discourse).
 - 11) Bargain Bazaar Advertisement of a Cyberspace unit,
TOI 29 Oct '99
 - 12) Gyan and Vigyan Editorial, TOI, 23 May '98
(On India's nuclear test)
 - 13) Homeless, hungry Orissa on The Telegraph, 2 Nov '99
hair trigger
 - 14) Highway to hope littered with hell holes The Times of India
 - 15) Dhak Dhak Dixit ties the knot TOI, 5 Nov '99
(‘Dhakdhak ...’ is a song picturised on Madhuri Dixit, the actress)
 - 16) "Should you worry? Atal Behari?' Jug Suraiya, TOI, 27 July '98

- 17) Causes of conversion M.D. Nalapat, TOI, 29 Sept '99
- 18) Platitudes are no substitute for Paani K.C.Shivaramakrishnan, TOI, 29 Sept '99
- 19) Greeting Grooms V. N. Kakar, TOI, 29 Sept '99
- 20) Pretty woman, Prettier man Nikhat kazmi, TOI, 10 Oct '99
Picture imperfect

We find that the mode of expression in our English dailies has resorted to such a tendentious appeal. Now since the usage points out a flexible, less strict poetic medium, we can say that such a mental make up (both of the writers and the editors which also influences the readers) has contributed enough for the possibility of a specialised Indian way of structural change. And apart from the alternative expression we may observe a lot of code mixing independently getting incorporated into the structure to mark the autonomy of the author. So no doubt this deviation has been in the positive interest of our English using community, contributing a lot to the kind of English we get comfortable with and has become an alternatively easy way of teaching English to the learners going in the direction of an anti-canonical system of language acquisition. Learners get acquainted with different Englishes all around them rather than being confined to the rigid grammatical patterns of their curriculum.

We again observe that such usage is not new in its origin as all newspapers worldwide follow the same pattern. But we are concerned about the benefits and applicability of it in the Indian context, giving Indian English the freedom to use it for flexibility in language learning system (to establish the user friendly situation).

4. Conclusion

It can be observed that the data collected above along with the strategy utilized in their incorporation create a valid method in teaching of English non-canonically. We as Indians are local and cosmopolitan, ethnic as well as mainstream; subaltern and elitist. The kind of English floated in India today is reflective of our potential for our chase into the world, into power and stability. Writers as well as readers are subject to numerous factors,

affiliations. They are tendentious and subjective. There has been a movement deliberately to explore new boundaries of a language. There has been tremendous effort on the part of the writers to cater to all kinds of readers, especially people who find strict academic notion of a language too conservative and restrictive. The readers are crazy for new knowledge, ideas, fresh language for variety and fashion. English is no more the formal, institutionalized medium. It is cooked for the mass and takes a flexible shape to accommodate all kinds of aspirations of the trendy modern reader. The print media offers innumerable avenues in terms of further research which will certainly pave way for broader curricular change and description of Indian English linguistically.

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