

Rationale

This written task is connected to my study of Part 1: Language in a Cultural Context. As part of our study, we critically evaluated the social contexts influencing code switching in various contexts.

My written task derives from direct experience, but also research into various Indian vernaculars. It addresses the impact Hinglish's popularity has on the language of advertising, and the language of instruction at universities in India. It also considers how, contextually, India's youth, 'bottom-up', altered the public perception of Hinglish; it changed from 'unintelligent' to 'trendy'.

My written task is an editorial that is intended to be published in *The Straits Times*. The intended audience for the text is a reader who is highly literate and (probably) bilingual. Singapore's multilingual population, including a sizeable Indian expatriate population, and the presence of Singlish – a Singaporean non-standard Singaporean English dialect – should make the text interesting to a wide readership.

Moreover, the purpose of my task is to raise awareness of stereotypes associated with Hinglish speakers, as well as the communicative advantages sometimes offered by this hybrid language. Initially, I refrain from overtly revealing my view, giving the reader the opportunity to form their own perspective. However, after discussing competing views, I reveal my opinion. Suggesting that Hinglish can accord advantage on its speakers, I attempt to persuade the reader of this view, using linguistic devices such as rhetorical questions (hypophora), tricolons, and authoritative references. I convey my beliefs by stressing that hybrid languages allow people to elucidate their thoughts, and through discussing Hinglish's contribution to globalization.

Finally, formal features such as headlines, quotations, formal yet simple language, and relatively short paragraphs establish authenticity.

Word count: 274



Written Task

Hinglish, a hybrid of English and Hindi, is gaining popularity incrementally in the Indian-subcontinent and beyond. Whether Hinglish is the vogue adding to cultural diversity or the cause for the corruption of “Standard English” is a controversial topic for several linguists today. Its rapid proliferation can be attributed to the need for a language that can allow communication between English-biased and Hindi-biased speakers to be more convenient.

An article in the *Times of India* stated that Patna University in Bihar, India, has resorted to conducting a majority of their lectures in Hinglish due to the high demand for lectures based in Hindi. The university opted to amalgamate the two languages in order to make lectures more accessible to those whose mother tongue is Hindi while still utilizing “Standard English” to sustain a degree of formality. It was essential to use English for the jargon utilized in some courses at the university. Mr. Balram Tiwary, Patna University department head, said that “mixed language is a product of colonialism” and a “working language [Hinglish] for better governance.” He claims that the prominence of English tapered off after independence and English began to flourish.

Furthermore, Hinglish is perceived to be the contemporary, more causal style of communication. This modern dialect is appreciated by the youth of India and has exhorted them to have Hinglish as their primary language for interaction. Some English-purists disparage this alteration to “Standard English”, while other linguists believe that this form of instinctive “codeswitching” adds spice and flavor to the language. Codeswitching is a technique employed by bilingual individuals. It allows them to be more articulate as some ideas are better expressed in one language than another. Additionally, non-resident Indians living in predominantly English speaking nations like America and the UK use Hinglish as they feel it helps them remain connected with their indigenous roots whilst still being able to communicate in the ubiquitous language of their country of residence, which helps them to assimilate into the local culture.

Moreover, Hinglish has been recognized, expanded and influenced. The British encouraged the use of English in India, which resulted in many Indians adopting English as a first language. However, the spread of Hindi through the popularization of Hinglish commenced during the British rule and caused several words in English to be derived from Hindi. Words like “chutney”, and “bandana”, “mahout are of Hindi origin. The mushrooming of Hinglish grabbed the attention of multinational firms like Pepsi and Coca-Cola. These firms ran advertising campaigns in India that incorporated Hinglish to grasp consumers’ attention with its trendy language. *Toronto Star* online news stated that “Pepsi ran a campaign in India with the slogan “Yeh Dil

Maange More!' (this heart wants more) and Coke followed with 'Life Ho To Aisi!' (life should be this way." The integration of these two languages helps people become more culturally diverse, promotes globalization, and unifies people from different parts of the world.

What is the status of Hinglish? Hinglish is the new, fresh style of communicating and is the chic and more fashionable way of speaking for the youth of India who are proficient in both Hindi and English. Hinglish provides them with a medium to differentiate themselves from prior generations. On the other hand, Hinglish is also used by speakers who are not fluent in English, but like to intermittently use English words as they believe that speaking in English is more sophisticated. Indeed, the use of Hinglish in formal situations can be perceived as colloquial and unintelligent. Advocates who wish to maintain the purity of "Standard English" deem the use of mixed languages and codeswitching to be "inappropriate" in schools and official institutions. People who codeswitch and use Hinglish may be regarded as uneducated and impolite abroad.

But does the use of "Standard English" in formal situations mean that one is smarter than another who uses Hinglish? No. Many Indian professionals today are not fluent in English but remain successful and able to address audiences in both Hinglish and Hindi. Some linguists contend that the use of one language across the globe promotes trade and relations between countries. Nevertheless, I do not think the Hinglish dialect should be eroded. English must be taught in schools and universities, but the use of Hinglish should not be discouraged. People should not be fettered to English or Hindi as their sole language. Language is a tool that allows individuals to express their feelings and social identity.

Today, we live in a world with constant development of products and theories. This stimulates neologisms, which puts pressure on the bureaucracy of India to have the same diction in Hindi. In order to solve this problem, the home ministry of India supports the development of Hinglish. A title from an extract in the *Times of India* suggests "Hinglish is official." It states that the home ministry has permitted "bureaucrats [to] use English words in Devanagari script while making notes, instead of reaching for overly formal Hindi equivalents." The article conveys that the translations for words like "deforestation" and "noise pollution" in Hindi are intricate and unintelligible for local citizens, which again undelines the importance of a hybrid language.

Hinglish has revolutionized language in India and beyond. Despite the claims of pure linguists that coalescing Hindi and English taints the English language and the use of Hinglish can be inappropriate in formal situations, the dialect has brought numerous advantages. Citizens of India, the Indian government and multinational firms have sponsored the growth of Hinglish. Hinglish has provided individuals with the freedom

to experiment with language, to express their thoughts lucidly, and has promoted the growth of Hindi too. It is also a sign of cultural diversity and globalization. David Crystal, a British linguist, predicts, “Hinglish speakers [will] soon outnumber English speakers”. As mentioned in the *Times of India*, “the world is taking note of India’s linguistic vivacity.”

Word Count: 975

