BOOK REVIEW

Orsini, Francesca., & Ravikant (Eds.). (2022). *Hinglish Live: Language Mixing Across Media*. Hyderabad, India: Orient BlackSwan, xi + 358 pp., Rs. 1295. ISBN 978-93-5442-028-3.

Reviewed by Kumuda Chandra Panigrahi

English in India has moved far beyond its earlier role as a language of the elite. Today, it is deeply present in everyday communication, especially in the form of Hinglish, a blend of Hindi and English used across media, advertising, politics, and digital culture. This edited volume brings together fourteen scholarly article that examine Hinglish not simply as a language of mixing but as a social and cultural process shaped by globalisation, class aspiration, and changing identities in contemporary India. The volume offers an interdisciplinary discussion on the rise of Hinglish and its growing visibility in public life. The articles cumulatively show how Hinglish operates as a flexible linguistic practice rather than a stable language form. Further, it maps how language blending and code-mixing operate across Indian media, advertising, cinema, and digital spaces. The volume raises pertinent questions about linguistic hierarchy, identity formation, commercialisation, and social exclusion.

Commercial Spaces and Advertising Trajectories

The widespread acceptance of Hinglish, accelerated by market forces and media commercialisation, is a major theme in this volume. Ratnakar Tripathy's article examines Hinglish as a socio-political practice shaped by migration, media expansion, and market forces, using a personal mapping approach. Tripathy argues that Hinglish reflects India's changing cultural identity and should be seen as dynamic rather than fixed. The article is alarmed about Hinglish diluting the structural integrity of Hindi and raises important questions about linguistic purity and the commercial value of English. However, many of its claims remain descriptive and lack empirical evidence. A deeper engagement with debates on language politics would have strengthened the analysis.

The commercial transition is sharply visible in the advertising sector. Santosh Desai's essay on advertising traces the increasing use of Hinglish in Indian commercial culture. Desai explains how advertising moved from elite English-based messaging to more socially accessible Hinglish

communication after the 1990s economic reforms and the expansion of television media. He highlighted two iconic campaigns, like *Humara Bajaj* and *Pepsi-Ye Dil Mange More,* to show how advertisers bridged socio-economic divides to reach a booming middle class. The essay highlights Hinglish's role in democratising ads and captures its form as the language of aspiration and consumption; it pays less attention to the social consequences of linguistic commodification and class division.

Ravi Ratlami's article, *Hinglish is Cool Yaar,* presents Hinglish as a symbol of youth culture, sophistication, and digital modernity. Using personal observation and examples from social media, blogs, and advertising, Ratlami highlights the growing acceptance of Hinglish in everyday communication. The discussion is engaging but lacks empirical grounding, leaving it largely anecdotal. The article would have benefited from stronger theoretical grounding and closer analysis of how Hinglish reproduces social privileges and exclusion.

Rohit Prakash's article on *Navabhaat Times* offers one of the more compelling discussions in the volume. He uses the newspaper as a case study and shows how Hinglish emerged as a market response to India's multilingual readership. Prakash discusses the tension between Hindi purists and supporters of linguistic hybridity. The essays effectively situate Hinglish within the context of globalisation and media transformation. However, the analysis creates an oversimplified binary between old Hindi and modern English, without acknowledging the historical complexities of Hindi itself.

Cultural Production, Cinema and Media Formats

The volume shifts its focus from print and advertising to screen and audio media, where Hinglish serves as a primary tool for storytelling and identity construction. Francesca Orsini's essay on Anuja Chauhan's novel *The Zoya Factor* explores the relationship between language mixing, class, and characterisation in contemporary Indian fiction. Drawing on Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia, Orsini shows how standard English, Hindi, and Hinglish coexist in the novel to represent social hierarchies and urban identity. The article is theoretically richer than many others in this collection. However, its narrow focus on a single text limits the broader cultural implications of the discussion.

Akriti Mandhwani examines the Hinglish publishing culture and its connection to middle-class aspiration and digital consumerism. Looking

at online platforms and popular media content, for instance, Divya Prakash Dubey's TEDx talk and YouTube content, Mandhwani discusses how Hinglish appeals to a young urban audience. The arguments connect Hinglish with nationalist sentiment, but remain insufficiently developed. Therefore, engaging the analysis with sociolinguistic theory and publishing economics could have added depth.

Ravikanth's article on cinema provides important insights into the role of Hinglish in shaping popular culture. Ravikanth challenges the idea of linguistic purity and examines the relationship between Hinglish, middle-class aspiration, and cinematic representation. Films such as *English Vinglish* and *Hindi Medium* are used effectively to show changing language politics in urban India. Ravikant challenges the notion of linguistic purity as a historical myth. Still, the essay gives limited attention to regional and rural experiences of language use. Similarly, Helen Ashton and Rachel Dwyer's article on the film *Jab Tak Hai Jaan* examines the relationship between language, accent, and identity in Bollywood cinema. The authors discuss how Hindi, English, Punjabi, and Urdu are strategically mixed in dialogue and songs to construct intimacy and cosmopolitan identity. Their analysis of performative multilingualism is insightful, though the broader claim that Bollywood cinema is now fundamentally Hinglish speaking appears overstated and lacks comparative examples from a wider range of films.

Visual Landscapes, Regional Alternatives, and Social Hierarchies

Beyond mainstream media, the book looks at how language mixing appears in public spaces and regional industries, highlighting social hierarchies. Ravikant's second contribution to the volume is very interesting, using a visual approach to document Hinglish signage in small-town bazaars. Through photographs of shop signs and advertisements, Ravikant captures the everyday presence of Hinglish in public spaces. However, the article remains largely descriptive. The absence of sustained interpretation limits its analytical contribution. Akshay Kumar's study on Bhojpuri media expands the discussion beyond metropolitan Hinglish. He examines how Bhojpuri music and cinema negotiate Hindi, English, and regional identity through linguistic hybridity. Kumar presents Bhojpuri media as both aspirational and resistant to linguistic domination. This is an important intervention, though the article sometimes becomes too descriptive and leaves several concepts underdeveloped.

However, Mohini Gupta highlights the dark side of this linguistic mixing. Gupta critically engages with language and power, uncovering how Hinglish reinforces social exclusion on reality television shows like *MTV Roadies* and *Big Boss*. Gupta introduces the concept of 'linguistic humiliation' to explain how Hinglish becomes a tool for inclusion and exclusion in programmes like *MTV Roadies* and *Big Boss*, and contestants face downward humiliation for lacking English skills, or upward mockery for sounding overly pretentious. This article convincingly demonstrates how language performances reflect class hierarchy and postcolonial anxiety in urban India. A stronger connection with media theory and audience reception studies could have further enriched the argument.

Institutional Spaces and Comparative Perspectives

The final chapters move into political communication, institutional training, and global comparisons. Vineet Kumar's essay explores the use of Hinglish in political communication, especially in FM radio campaigns after 2014. The discussion on the Aam Aadmi Party's use of Hinglish as the language of the 'common man' is particularly significant. Kumar shows how political communication increasingly borrows from advertising culture to appear relatable and modern. However, the article gives limited attention to rural audiences and regional language politics.

Sazana Jayadeva examines spoken English coaching institutes in Bangalore and their role in producing middle-class identity. Jayadeva captures the anxieties surrounding 'good 'and 'bad' English and shows that language training becomes tied to employability and social mobility. Jayadeva shows how English functions both as a source of empowerment and as a form of exclusion in urban India. However, a deeper engagement with structural inequalities and educational access would have strengthened the analysis.

The final article by Friederike Lüpke shifts the discussion to Senegal and critiques colonial language ideologies imposed on African multilingual societies. The article disconnects from its Indian focus and its key topic of Hinglish, broadening the discussion to multilingualism and linguistic hierarchy, cutting across regional and social boundaries. Lüpke's critique of rigid ethnolinguistic categories is thoughtful and theoretically important, even if the comparative connection with India feels uneven at times.

Overall, *Hinglish Live* makes an important contribution to the study of language, media, and identity in contemporary India. Its strength lies in showing Hinglish as more than casual code mixing. The essay reveals how language is deeply connected with aspiration, class mobility, cultural performance, and power. However, the volume suffers from uneven theoretical depth and limited empirical engagement, particularly in terms of insights from fieldwork. Many articles remain descriptive and focus heavily on urban middle-class experiences, whereas rural and marginalised linguistic realities are less explored. Despite these limitations, the volume succeeds in opening critical discussion on linguistic hybridity and cultural transformation in India. It will be valuable for readers interested in sociolinguistics, media studies, cultural studies, and contemporary Indian society.

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Sultana, S., & Sah, P. K. (Eds.). (2026). *Translingual Practices in English Language Education in South Asia: Inclusivity and Equity* (Language, Education and Diversity, Vol. 8). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/SULTAN8455

Reviewed by Prerana Mandal

The book *Translingual Practices in English Language Education in South Asia: Inclusivity and Equity* (2026) is a dynamic and crucial addition to the domain of applied linguistics and English Language Teaching. This book, being a part of the *Language, Education and Diversity* series, unites various voices from the South Asian countries and delves further into the multilingual realities at the ground level. Along with that, the articles reflect on the number of classroom practices in these countries. In essence, this book strongly argues against the dominance of English-only ideologies and instructions by bringing awareness to the translingual practices used by the learners. The translingual practices are essentially