

Indian English: A New Process for Translation

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OBJECTIVE

To develop a new process by which an India-specific English translation can be created for use in PRO Research

BACKGROUND

India recognizes English as a national language but uses it primarily as a second tongue [1, 2]. Methods to create English for India versions of existing PRO instruments have not been adequately explored in the past; typically an existing UK English translation with minor revisions is used. Several problems may arise when this approach is used since Indian English is arguably its own dialect [3, 4, 5]. Distinctions between dialects can be difficult to identify when creating multiple versions of the same language; additionally, cultural differences can interfere with the linguistic validation process if not properly accounted for in advance [6, 7].

METHODS

In our Phase I study, three alternate methodologies were tested for the creation of an Indian English translation of the Work Productivity and Activity Impairment: General Health Version (WPAI:GH) questionnaire. The translations produced from these methods, and the existing UK English translation, were then cognitively debriefed among speakers of Indian English of varying fluency. The results of the debriefing interviews were compared on the basis of comprehension rates and number of suggested changes.

TRANSLATIONS

6 separate translations were used for this project, 4 of which were newly created. Translations #1, #2, #3 and English UK were debriefed among subjects, while the English (US) and Hindi translations were used only to aid in the creation of other translations and were not themselves debriefed. As a control for this study, the already validated English (UK) version was also debriefed among interview subjects.

Translation	Description	Translator Native Language	Changes from English (US)	
			Words Added	Words Removed
English (India) Translation #1	The translation was created by pairing two Indian language translators, who reported having native languages that differed from one another. A third translator, whose language background was also different than those of the initial two translators, was asked to perform an edit of the harmonized translation created by the first two translators.	Total number of Translators: 3 Harmonizers: Tamil, Hindi Editor: Bengali	35	19
English (India) Translation #2	The translation was created by first translating the original English instrument into Hindi and then providing two translators with the completed Hindi questionnaire to convert into a comprehensive Indian English and harmonize.	Total number of Translators: 5 Language: Hindi	214	183
English (India) Translation #3	The translation was created using a hybrid of the other methods. One translator was given the original questionnaire and asked to adapt it for English in India. Another translator was given the Hindi translation and asked to create a comprehensive English for India translation. The two translators then harmonized with one another.	Total number of Translators: 2 Language: Hindi	9	11

Language	Mother Tongues Represented	Age (years)	Gender (M:F)	Education (years)	English Fluency	Written	Spoken
Translation #1	Kannada, Konkani, Marathi, Telugu, Tulu	22-54	3:2	10-16	Average	1	2
					Good	1	2
					Excellent	3	1
Translation #2	Kannada, Konkani, Marathi, Telugu, Urdu	20-66	3:2	10-17	Average	2	1
					Good	1	3
					Excellent	2	1
Translation #3	Bengali, Hindi, Kannada (2), Urdu	21-54	3:2	10-20	Average	1	3
					Good	3	1
					Excellent	1	1
English (UK)	Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Telugu, Urdu	26-72	3:2	10-17	Average	2	3
					Good	1	2
					Excellent	2	0

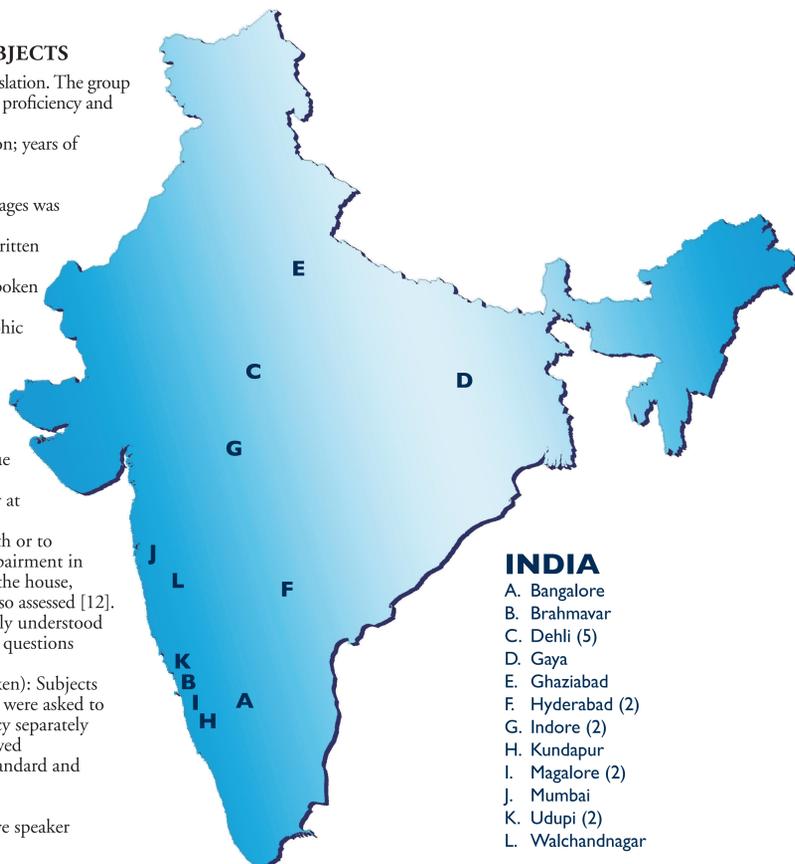
DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS

Twenty subjects in India were interviewed, five per translation. The group was stratified by educational level, self-reported English proficiency and mother tongue.

- Overall, 40% of subjects had <12 years of education; years of education ranged from 10 to 22.
- 60% of subjects were male; 40% were female.
- The average age of subjects was 40.6; the range of ages was from 20 to 72 years.
- 30% of subjects self-identified as having average written English proficiency, 30% good and 40% excellent.
- 45% of subjects self-identified as having average spoken English proficiency, 35% good and 10% excellent.
- Respondents hailed from a wide variety of geographic locations, as shown in the figure to the right.

VOCABULARY

- The Work Productivity and Activity Impairment (WPAI) Questionnaire: Selected for this study due to its complexity and wide-use. It measures work time missed (absenteeism), impaired productivity at work (presenteeism), and work productivity loss (absenteeism + presenteeism) due to general health or to a specified health problem in the past 7 days. Impairment in performing daily activities, such as work around the house, shopping, child care, exercising, studying, etc. is also assessed [12].
- Item comprehension rate: The number of correctly understood items divided by the total number of items (both questions and directions)
- Self-Reported English Proficiency (Written/ Spoken): Subjects (or the persons who referred them to the project) were asked to assess their written and spoken English proficiency separately based on the criteria below before being interviewed
 - Average – speaks “Indian English”, usage is standard and acceptable
 - Good – very fluent in English
 - Excellent – uses English everyday, a near native speaker



LINGUISTIC VALIDATION

Linguistic Validation is a process that is conducted to confirm that a Patient-Reported Outcome (PRO) questionnaire is acceptable for use in different languages and in different cultural contexts. Without this careful development of a translation and subsequent cognitive debriefing, one could not be reasonably certain that the adapted instrument is both conceptually equivalent to the original and can also be clearly understood by the average individual. The linguistic validation process begins with two translators independently translating the instrument into the target language. The translators then exchange drafts and work together to develop one reconciled or “harmonized” version. At that point, the harmonized translation is provided to a third translator who translates the text back into English without access to the original English. Both the harmonized translation and the English back translation are reviewed by a project manager and a survey research expert; adaptations to the translation are made as needed. Once the final translation has been approved, it is debriefed among in-country native speakers of the language, with varying demographic and educational backgrounds, to check for conceptual equivalence and clarity [8, 9].

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Item comprehension was at or near 100% for each translation (99.4% for Translation #2). Overall the multiple translations were easily understood by subjects and deemed to be culturally appropriate. Although subjects had the fewest suggested revisions for the UK English translation, Translation #2 was judged to be the most uniquely tailored to the population.

CONCLUSIONS

If available, a UK English translation will generally be acceptable for use with English speakers in India. Although spoken English differs significantly between the populations of India and the UK, reading comprehension may be very similar. If a UK English version is unavailable, creating an Indian English translation from an Indian language instrument is also a desirable method since it is uniquely customized for the population. Although translations created by this new method are more tailored to the population of India, we do not recommend their use over that of native Indian languages, such as Hindi, Telegu and others. English in India is used more commonly and fluently by the upper classes. To favor English and restrict the creation of questionnaires in other languages would lead to sampling error and an inability to adequately reach less educated populations [10, 11]. In subsequent research, we intend to refine our Phase I results in order to further determine whether the clarity of UK English or the customization of Translation #2 is more desirable for use in English (India) settings.

Translation	Questionnaire Item	Problem Text	Revised Text
#1	2. During the past seven days, how many hours did you miss at a job because of your health problems	at a job	from work
#2	by health problems we mean any physical or emotional problem or symptoms	problem or symptoms	problems or symptoms
	please fill in the blanks as per the indication or encircle any number	as per the indication or encircle any number	circle a number as indicated
#3	The next questions are about the past seven days, except today	except today	excluding today
	during the past seven days, how many hours did you actually work at your job	at your job	(problem text removed)
	other than work at a job/ while you working at a job (3 places within the translation)	at a job	(problem text removed)

Translation	Original Item	Translated Item*	Problem Text	Subject Suggestions
#1	1. Are you currently employed (working for pay)?	Are you currently employed (working for money)?	working for money (2)	working for salary/ pay/remuneration
	3. During the past seven days, how many hours did you miss from work because of any other reason, such as vacation, holidays, time off to participate in this study?	(translation is same as original)	hours (1)	days/day/ half a day
	6. During the past seven days, how much did your health problems affect your ability to do your regular daily activities, other than work at a job?	During the past seven days, to what extent did your health problems affect your ability to do your regular daily activities, other than work at a job?	at a job (2)	(suggested deleting text)
			regular daily activities (2)	(suggested deleting “regular”)
#2	By health problems we mean any physical or emotional problem or symptom.	By health problems we mean any type of physical or emotional problems or symptoms.	or symptoms (1)	(suggested deleting text)
	If health problems affected your work only a little, choose a low number.	If health problems had only a marginal effect on your work, then select a small number.	marginal (1)	negligible
		During the last seven days, apart from employment-related work, how much did your health problems affect your ability to carry out your routine daily activities?	routine daily activities (2)	(suggested deleting “routine”)
#3	2. During the past seven days, how many hours did you miss from work because of your health problems?	(translation is same as original)	miss from work (1)	miss work
UK		During the past seven days, how much did your health problems affect your ability to perform your normal daily activities, excluding your job?	normal daily activities (2)	(suggested deleting “normal” or “daily”)

*terms in blue differ from that found in the original document

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