

## prestige dialects Re: Why is Hindi perceived as being more refined than Punjabi?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-12/msg01821.html>

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- *From:* "Peter T. Daniels" <[grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Thu, 22 Dec 2005 15:03:14 GMT
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Seán O'Leathlóbhair wrote:

>  
> Peter T. Daniels wrote:  
>> Brablo wrote:  
>>>  
>>> Brilliant answer! Thanks for your time and dedication to enlightening  
>>> us all!  
>>>  
>>> An analogy would be why Southern Dialect English (spoken in Alabama,  
>>> for example) is perceived as being less refined than Washington DC  
>>> English.  
>>  
>> What do you mean by "Washington DC English"?  
>> --  
>> Peter T. Daniels [grammatim@xxxxxxx](mailto:grammatim@xxxxxxx)  
>  
> I would guess that it was an attempt to indicate a prestige AmE  
> dialect. In many countries, the dialect of educated speakers from the  
> capital is, or is close to, the most prestigious dialect. The writer  
> may have supposed that this applies to the US. Can you suggest a  
> convenient short label for the most prestigious AmE dialect(s)?

"General American." I.e., "accentless" American. Americans recognize varieties as regional, not social.

The variety heard in the speech of such as Katharine Hepburn, William F. Buckley, Jr., Nelson Rockefeller, George Plimpton, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, and (until recently; she may have been working at suppressing it since she has started making public appearances) Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg is the dialect of arguably the "most prestigious" Americans, i.e. the wealthiest old-money families, but it's definitely not a prestigious dialect; it's apt to be either unrecognized or mocked.

> We have had a similar discussion on BrE before. Many use RP but some,  
> such as you, reserve this for a very small and rather artificial  
> dialect. "The Queen's English" used to be a popular term but seems to  
> have fallen out of favour. "BBC English" is a moderately good term but  
> not as clear as it used to be since there is much more dialect

prestige dialects Re: Why is Hindi perceived as being more refined than Punjabi?

- > variation among BBC presenters than there used to be.
- >
- > Note, there is no intended suggestion that "prestige dialect" is a
- > linguistic concept.

It certainly is one!

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Peter T. Daniels [grammatim@xxxxxxxx](mailto:grammatim@xxxxxxxx)

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• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ ***Re: prestige dialects Re: Why is Hindi perceived as being more refined than Punjabi?***  
◇ *From:* Christian Weisgerber
- ◆ ***Re: prestige dialects Re: Why is Hindi perceived as being more refined than Punjabi?***  
◇ *From:* Seán O'Leathlóbhair
- ◆ ***Re: prestige dialects Re: Why is Hindi perceived as being more refined than Punjabi?***  
◇ *From:* Vanya6724
  
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