



**Department of English
PSNA College of Engineering and Technology, Dindigul-624622
Tamilnadu, India**

***NEW VISTAS IN ELT:
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Editors

**Dr. Joseph Thomas, Ph.D.
G. Vijay, M.A., M.Phil.
Mrs. Shabnam Niher, M.A., M.Phil.**

**Creation of Super-casual English Expressions in/and Stroking
Fond Memories**

Dr. S. Robert Gnanamony

Abstract

The impregnable notion of the eighteenth century British that English language should be fixed for ever, nay frozen in time, gets a nasty beating on all fronts in these contemporary times. Media especially pooh-poohs it. More than the daily-users of the English language, it is the print media and the electronic media that go at a break-neck speed, coining new expressions, new phrases and new collocations to the amusement and

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enrichment of readers and listeners. The birthing of such new expressions reaches its peak in number especially when a great event - sports or calamity or war - is witnessed.

Thanks to its inherent flexibility and durability, English language has evolved into a dynamic communicative medium over the years. Even though there are purists and detractors who argue otherwise, language change is unavoidable; if there is no change, language will be stifled and the growth will be stunted like the bonsai. Whether one likes it or not, English language is changing not only at a rapid pace, but also at a phenomenal creative way. This paper makes an attempt to show how, in the media, especially in the print media, English language helps sport writers in popular newspapers to create fresh expressions and interesting collocations to cover their stories in the most enthralling manner. In order to fully enjoy the newspaper stories, the modern reader has to have a wide reading and exposure to modern communication mediums like YouTube.

The writer of this paper wishes to add that it is not his intention to trace the events of the World Cup Cricket 2015 in the chronological order, but rather to highlight the phrases and idioms old and new that the sports writers of **The Times of India** have used and created in order to bring the sports story engrossingly alive before the audience.

Keywords: English language, dynamic communicative medium, inherent flexibility, language change, print media

Stoked a New Fire in India

World Cup Cricket 2015 “stoked a new fire in India”. **The Times of India** in its Sports Page on February 26, 2015 used this phrase. The phrase was used by Harsha Bhogle, a popular cricket Commentator in his article, “Cover Drive”. The meaning of this phrase is quite obvious to every Indian reader. He also used the word “positivity”, which I believe is a comparatively new-comer.

Form Slump

In the World Cup, until the West Indies’ match with Zimbabwe, and winning the match with 73 run victory, Gaye didn’t score much. And **The Times of India** Commentator wrote, “Despite form slump, Chris remained positive” (**Times of India** Feb 25, 2015). I think “form slump” is a new collocation. “Slump” is normally used in connection with sliding

stock market indices or falling in prices of a stock. In the same page, **Times of India** published boldly, “Windies Marauder Clobbers First Double Ton of the World Cup to Silence His Critics”. Gayle’s 215 runs against Zimbabwe fire-fuels – (well, yes, “fire-fuels” is my coinage) the Sports Writer to coin this phrase. “Marauder” is usually associated with animals human beings that attack fiercely and plunder the others; “clobbers” means “hitting somebody very hard”. So the phrase aptly describes Chris Gayle’s devastating form that day against Zimbabwe. Partha Bhaduri, another Cricket Writer on the same issue, commented that Chris is “Arguably the last great West Indies Cricket legend still standing, can blow hot or cold, be a rum-swiggling, reggae-blasting, party-loving, hash-tag-triggering hedonist or a serial rebel with a cause”. I think Gayle’s powerful come back with a couple of tons, triggers such interesting new phrases as “rum-swiggling”, reggae-blasting” and hash-tag-triggering”. The phrase “still standing” is reminiscent of Arvind Adiga’s second novel **The Last Man in Tower**, where the school master Yogesh Murthy, the central character, is the last man still standing.

Eden Will be Hot as Hell

This expression is found in the sports page of **The Times of India** on March 23, 2015 when the World Cup Cricket teams New Zealand and South Africa would be facing each other for the second time at Eden Park cricket Stadium, Auckland. It is the largest and the most iconic stadium in New Zealand. The ground has been home for the Auckland team since 1910. Interestingly, the phrase prods our memory back to the days of the Creation of the Garden of Eden and the first Man and Woman there. Garden of Eden became very hot with the arrival of God’s adversary Satan. Just as two rival forces fought for the possession of Man I mean, God and Satan, the semi-finals in Auckland’s Eden Park would be fought with all vigour. The same writer also used the expression, “cauldron of Kiwi cricket” to refer to the Eden Park. Ironically, Garden of Eden too was turned into a virtual cauldron due to Man’s disobedience to God and God had to throw His own children out of the Garden.

A Sea of Blue

Shrinivas Rao, the sports writer of **The Times of India** used this phrase in his article referring to the impending semifinal encounter between India and Australia in the famous Sydney Cricket Ground on 24 March 2015. The writer mentioned that all the tickets had been

sold out and most of the tickets were hogged by the Indian fans. It would be a packed crowd and most of the Indians would be sporting their blue jersey and so it would be “a sea of blue”. It is a common sight to see the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) painted blue as Indian fans virtually take over the venue whenever an Indian-Australian encounter would take place.

South Africa’s Comedy of Errors is No Laughing Matter

The phrases “comedy of errors” and “no laughing matter” are found in the sports page of **The Times of India** in its March 26, 2015 edition. The phrases “Comedy of errors” and “No laughing matter” are not new phrases, but the way they have been brought back from literature and language is new. The phrase—**The Comedy of Errors** is the title of one of William Shakespeare’s early comedies. It is his shortest and one of his most farcical comedies. In Shakespeare’s play the comedy is created due to the Syracuse Merchant’s mistaken identity of his twin sons and the confusion caused by it. The matter is further complicated by the twin boys’ twin slaves. The Semi-final match against New Zealand on 24 March 2015 and the South Africa’s four wicket defeat in a rain-affected clash at Auckland’s Eden Park - the fourth time that Proteas had made it to the last four and the fourth time they hadn’t reached the final. In 1999, the South African team was defeated due to Australia’s superior net run-rate. But this time a selection decision might have hampered South Africa even before the match started. The other phrase—“No Laughing Matter” brings back to our memory a 1986 book titled **No Laughing Matter** brought out by American Postmodern Novelist Joseph Heller and Speed Vogel.

The Stroll in the Park

Sports Commentator Shrinivas Rao coined this phrase to refer to the ease with which India thrashed Bangladesh by 109 runs on the Melbourne Cricket Ground on March 19, 2015. It was in this match India’s Suresh Sharma made a classy 137. It was the quarter-final encounter and with this win, India would play Australia in the Semi-final. Indians’ performance against Bangladesh was “like a stroll in the park”.

To Lick One’s Wounds for a While

In one of the high-profile league match World Cup 2015 encounters between South Africa and India, South Africa was beaten by an embarrassing 130 run defeat, and a dejected

South Africa captain AB de Villiers said to the media, “We’ll have to lick our wounds for a while” (**Times of India** February 23, 2015). The phrase evokes in our memory of the dogs licking their wounds with their front paws. The tongue’s moist and soft surface makes it naturally an effective wound cleaner. It has been discovered that a dog’s saliva contains ingredients that act as a mild antibiotic on wounds. The antibiotics help heal a dog’s wounds when they are applied through a dog’s licking action.

From Penury to Stardom

Sports Writer Ruchir Mishra used this phrase to write about the rise of the Vidarbha Pacer Umesh Yadav and his inclusion in the World Cup squad in **Times of India** February 8, 2015. When he was practicing Cricket as a boy, he didn’t even have a pair of bowling shoes or even a mobile phone. In 2008, the youngster had no idea that his life was about to change forever. Umesh Yadav’s meteoric rise is strongly driven by self-belief, conviction, persuasion, practice and a passion for the game.

Miracle Worker

Ajit Bezbaruah, Sports Columnist for **The Times India** used this phrase to write about the elevation of Ravendra Jadeja from ignominy to stardom in the February 7, 2015 edition. Son of a security guard, and living a poverty-stricken life in his boyhood days in the by-lanes of Navagam Ghed in Jamnagar, Jadeja had to struggle a lot. He was even contemplating quitting cricket when his mother died in 2005. He was virtually shattered and needed a lot of cajoling from his sisters to continue playing Cricket. He became a different person altogether from then onwards - more focused, more disciplined and more hard-working. He impressed all with his courageous brand of Cricket and was cruising along fast. IPL I in 2008 catapulted him into the big league of glamour, name and fame. A guy, who couldn’t even buy a decent cricket gear once, now commands a staggering 2 million dollars in the IPL. On the field, he is a livewire, a cunning bowler and a handy batsman, and no doubt a miracle worker for the Indian team. The phrase “the miracle worker” evokes in our memory a cycle of 20th century dramatic works derived from Helen Keller’s autobiography **The Story of My Life**. Each of the various plays describes the relationship between Helen, a deaf-blind and Anne Sullivan, the teacher who introduced her to education, activism and international stardom.

Rebel to Reliable Foot Soldier

This is how JAC Gladson describes Indian Cricketer the Hyderabadish stylish batsman Ambati Rayudu in **The Times of India** February 6, 2006 edition. In the phrase there is an alliteration of the consonant “l” sound in the words “rebel”, “reliable” and “soldier”. Rayudu had his debut entry in 2013 at Harare in Zimbabwe in the India-Zimbabwe encounter. He is called a rebel due to some unhappy event he was involved with the KSCA Tournament in Bangalore a few years ago. Rayudu has had a pie in all forms of Cricket—Ranji, Irani, Duleep, Deodhar, IPL and CLT20. “Foot Soldier” evokes the English movie, **Rise of the Foot Soldier** in which, Carlton Leach the hero catapults from football hooliganism to unbounded power as one of the most feared and respected men in Britain. I must hasten to add that Carlton is respected for the wrong reason, but Ambati Rayudu for the right reason.

The Game Breaker

Partha Bhaduri of **The Times of India** gave this scintillating title to India’s opener the cocky, confident, convivial, moustache-twirling, tattoo-exhibiting, cover-driving meteorite Shikhar Dhawan, whose arrival on the international scene was described as a breath of fresh air. The Game Breaker is a popular video game in which you see a gun-wielding guy having extreme fire-power, high accuracy and a high ammo capacity. The Indian team management knows his worth as a game breaker and how much crucial he is for India’s plans; that’s why he has been kept in the team in spite of his poor form at the moment of composing this article.

Gilly the Bully Squashes Sri Lanka

The reader would be amused to read this sentence for various reasons. **The Times of India** in its Sports page on 1 February 2015, nostalgically remembered the feat of Adam Gilchrist in 2007 World Cup who came up with 149 (104balls, 13x4s, 8x6’s) against Sri Lanka. The audience in India know that Gilly is the name of Actor Vijai in the box-office hit of a movie with this title; in the movie, the hero Vijai smashes the villain and his cronies. Interestingly, Gilly is the endearing term of Adam Gilchrist. The ‘Bully’ has no negative tinge here because the ones getting beaten were the opponents, in Gilly’s case the Sri Lankans.

Cracks in the New Wall

It is plain knowledge to every cricket-loving fan that the Indian cricketer Rahul Dravid is the “Wall”, who would stand firm on the crease without showing much emotions under any difficult situation and is reliable. Chateshwar Pujara, a new Indian entry is thought to be heir-apparent to Rahul Dravid. **The Times of India** described him as the “New Wall” and since his weaknesses have been diagnosed by cricket pundits, **The Times of India’s** Partha Bhaduri wrote in his column on January 5, 2015, “Cracks in the New Wall”. He is thought so, as his overseas Test average is as low as 29.40 and that has dented the reputation of Pujara as Dravid’s replacement.

Stop to Smell the Roses

Reporting the four wicket win against South Africa in the semi-final, **Times of India** reporter wrote: “Post win, Kiwis stop to smell the roses” (26 March, 2015). The phrase, “Stop to smell the roses” is an idiom which means, to relax; to take time out of one's busy schedule to enjoy or appreciate the beauty of life. The idiomatic sense of the phrase is positive, telling one to take a break at one’s own pace and enjoy life.

They also Missed the Bus

Referring to the non-inclusion of players in the World Cup Squad—Mohit Sharma, Robin Uthappa, and Murali Vijay, **The Times of India** (January 7, 2015) reported - they also **missed the bus**. The idiom means to fail to accomplish or achieve. Among the fifteen who matter, these players along with a couple of others could not make it to the final squad. The idiom is salvaged from the heap of old idioms and used with a new fervor.

The Middle Path to Glory

The Times of India sports writer K. Srinivasa Rao in his article on March 25, 2015 used this phrase. He contrasted the high octane performance of the Aussies’ openers in Cricket and India’s recent success story through the perseverance of their middle order batsmen sticking to the crease until the very end and hitting deep and earning runs. In other words, the Australian strategy seems to be to give full rope to the opening pair to go after any bowler and break his back and India’s is to rely on the middle order batsmen. The phrase is resonant of Thomas Gray’s Elogy, “Elogy Written in a Country Churchyard”. Here it goes,

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The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Even though Thomas Gray's *Elegy* has a negative feeling of fatality, the phrase "the middle path to glory" doesn't emit any such negative philosophical sentiment.

Don of New Era

The Times of India Sports writer used this phrase in his article on Virat Kohli on January 6, 2015. He titled his article, "**Kohli, Don of New Era**". The etymological meaning of "Don" is "Lord" or "Head of Household". Nonetheless, the immediate meaning that comes to mind is the name of Australian Cricket legend, Don Bradman, widely acknowledged as the greatest Test batsman of all time. Bradman's career Test batting average is 99.94. No other cricketer has rivaled this record yet. The comparison of Don Bradman to Virat Kohli is not a good one, since Kohli has not achieved the same Test batsman fame. But then, nothing wrong, and all is well if Kohli is called a Don (leader) of Indian cricket.

Conclusion

Quality newspapers these days come with a low price tag. Every single newspaper in our country is the cheapest commodity to buy. Some of the newspapers come to us with less than the price of a glass of tea. And invariably, these newspapers not only carry interesting stories, but also freshly created interesting phrases. If a reader makes it a habit to buy and read newspapers, that person's vocabulary will improve at a phenomenal rate if that person has an eye for new phrases, new coinages and new collocations. Teachers in classrooms can introduce newspapers to their students and in the Library hour, they can help the students not only to read stories but also to look for fresh phrases and the coinages that hide a story or myth behind.

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Dr. S. Robert Gnanamony
Professor and Head
Department of English
Kalasalingam University
Krishnankoil 626126
Srivilliputtur
Tamilnadu
India
robertgnana@yahoo.co.uk