The Syntax of Spoken Indian English

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The Syntax of Spoken Indian English
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List of abbreviations

AA	Austro-Asiatic
AEV	Asian English variety
AmE	American English
BrE	British English
CIEFL	Central Institute for the Study of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad
CIIL	Central Institute for the Study of Indian Languages, Mysore
Dr	Dravidian
EFL	English as a foreign language
ENL	English as a native language
ESL	English as a second language
IA	Indo-Aryan
ICE	International Corpus of English
IE	Indo-European
IndE	Indian English
InSAfE	South African Indian English
IVE	Indigenized variety of English
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LD	Left dislocation
NIA	New Indo-Aryan
NNIVE	Non-native institutionalized variety of English
RD	Right dislocation
SAIE	South African Indian English
SLA	Second language acquisition
TB	Tibeto-Burman

Acknowledgments

My first ever visit to India in 2004 took me to Pune, where I spent three months as a guest lecturer in the English department of the University of Pune. It did not take me long to discover a noticeable gap between the constitutional status of English in India as a second official language and the realities out in the streets. Since then, my understanding of English in India has certainly improved, and both the dynamism of contemporary Indian society as well as the aspirations of millions of its people are changing the way English in India is used and perceived.

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Claudia Lange Berlin, May 2012

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 English in India or Indian English?

The very notion of "Indian English" (IndE) has been fiercely contested both by linguists who happen to be interested in New Englishes and by more or less everyone concerned with the teaching of English in India. Braj B. Kachru claims that English is "an Asian Language", "a part of our local pluralistic linguistic heritage" (1998: 91). Many Indians speak English at the level of functional nativeness, and so there is definitely a case for considering Indian English as a variety in its own right as far as Kachru is concerned.[1] Others are more doubtful about the existence of a supraregional or even national variety to be labelled "Indian English":

> From India, Kachru (1986) has given credence to the idea that there exists an 'institutionalized second-language variety of English' called Indian English. This idea is confusing because it begs the question: which institute grants the certificate to 'institutionalize' it? This has never been fully substantiated because Indian English, if such a linguistic species actually exists, will be in at least 18 different varieties that are the regional standards of India. The term 'Indian English' misleads readers into thinking that this is one monolithic whole. (Vaish 2005: 190)

This comment captures a widespread sentiment that is frequently articulated in India: the concept of a unifying and unified Indian English *Dachsprache* is rejected in favour of preponderant "sub-national sentiment and sub-national competition" (Austin 1966: 306). More than thirty years after Austin made his comment, Krishnaswamy & Burde go even further and allege that the concept 'Indian English' defies all scholarly endeavour (1998: 4):

> In spite of some research, writing and thinking in the area of 'Indian English', there is no comprehensive perspective or clarity on the status and meaning of English in the wonder that is India. As in many other areas, in the land of contradictions there are only questions awaiting answers.

Other scholars do not share their epistemological pessimism and continue to assert that there is indeed an entity "Indian English" Sedlatschek (2009) and

1. Kachru's importance for the evolution of the study of New Englishes will be the subject of Chapter 2.1.2.

Mukherjee (2007, 2010) are recent cases in point. However, even though the bulk of Mukherjee's earlier article is devoted to the treatment of Indian English as a stable autonomous system, he still sounds a cautious note: "I firmly believe that English will always remain secondary in processes of Indian identity construction" (2007: 174).

This position supports Schneider's characterization of Indian English as hovering uneasily between stage 3 (nativization) and stage 4 (endonormative stabilization) of his Dynamic Model depicting the evolution of Postcolonial Englishes:[2]

> Given the current situation, Indian English is likely to stay and to defend the compartmentalized domains which it controls, and probably to keep growing further in terms of numbers and competence levels. At present it seems unlikely, however, that the language is going to cross the line and acquire new, emotionally more laden functions in Indian society. (Schneider 2007b: 172f.)

To take stock of what has been said so far: scholars writing both from inside and outside India unanimously agree that English in India is not a national language in the sense that it "has not adopted the function of an identity-carrier", neither does it "signal a pan-Indian identity" (Schneider 2007: 167). In Schneider's terminology, the final stage 5 of his model, namely dialect differentiation, is not feasible yet for Indian English because the socio-political parameters for the achievement of this final stage have not been set. Vaish's reference above to "at least 18 different varieties that are the regional standards of India" should then not be taken as an indicator that dialect differentiation has already set in and that stage 5 has been reached, after all. On the contrary, her comment shows that when it comes to Indian English, there is a curious reluctance to try and see the wood for the trees.

The perspective from language pedagogy is not identical with an explicitly political, anti- or post-colonial view, but frequently coextensive with it. Teachers of English in India, especially those outside the metropolitan areas, stress the unequal access to English within the Indian education system (cf. Sheorey & Bhaskaran Nayar 2002, Verma 2002). This observation translates into the claim that English in India is an elitist language, a resource that is employed by a powerful minority to assert and maintain their dominance in society (e. g. Annamalai 2004). The journalist S. Anand (1999) is even more outspoken in this respect: he avoids the euphemism *rural vs. metropolitan*, which is frequently used to gloss over the principally caste-based inequalities in the Indian educational system and in society at large. According to him, the debate about Indian English is simply irrelevant for the vast majority of Indians, for whom English is plainly a foreign language without any further qualifications. The question whether Indian English is a native or

2. Schneider's Dynamic Model will be given more space in Section 2.1.4.

a non-native variety remains purely academic except for a tiny Brahmin elite, who squibble with the white man to beat him at his own game (Anand 1999).[3]

Taking account of the frame of reference for English in India as sketched above, we might twist Benedict Anderson's famous phrase around and characterize Indian English as an imagination in search of a (speech) community.[4] Even though a wide range of studies on individual aspects of Indian English phonology, lexicon and syntax are available by now, this work has so far not culminated in a comprehensive grammar of Indian English. Moreover, the mismatch between the actual size of the Indian English speech community and the scholarly activity directed at the study of IndE is striking: Schneider (2007a: 352) reports that only nine out of 64 papers published by *English World-Wide* over the last five years deal with English in Asia (as e.g. compared to 14 contributions on English in Africa). A closer look at these nine papers then reveals that exactly two of these were on Indian English, just as many as on Singaporean English.

Indian English remains quite literally conspicuous by its absence: the most accomplished achievement in the field to date, the massive *Handbook of Varieties of English* (Kortmann et al. 2004), contains a mere sketch of some IndE syntactic features that does not even follow the general format for the syntactic descriptions of varieties which otherwise appear in the *Handbook*.[5] What is worse, IndE and IndE features are not included in the *Handbook's* "Global Synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in English" (Kortmann & Szmrecsanyi 2004). Moreover, even though the Indian English component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-India) has been around since 2002, this rich database features mainly in cross-sectional studies of e.g. article use in New Englishes (Sand 2004) or particle verbs in New Englishes (Schneider 2004). So far, no study has tried to take stock of the syntax of spoken *standard* Indian English as exemplified by the data collected in ICE-India.[6] Such a corpus-based account of IndE usage that moves away from impressionistic notes on IndE "peculiarities" would be a prerequisite for any further considerations of the question whether we are dealing with "English in India" or "Indian English", now or in the near future.

3. The native-non-native distinction and its relevance for the study of New Englishes will be investigated more fully in Section 2.2.

4. Cf. Anderson (2006).

5. IndE has fortunately been given a more thorough treatment in the new *Electronic World Atlas of Vareties of English* (www.ewave-atlas.org).

6. Sedlatschek (2009) is based on a purpose-built corpus.

1.2 Aims and scope of this study

My study is an attempt to partly fill this gap by investigating some aspects of the syntax of spoken IndE on the basis of the conversation files of ICE-India. The speakers providing the data have been chosen to represent the standard usage of their respective variety in accordance with the general ICE-corpus design (cf. Greenbaum 1996). Thus, the picture that will emerge from the study can be taken to be representative of educated spoken Indian English. My justification for focussing exclusively on spoken language and further on spontaneous dialogue is twofold: first of all, it is a sociolinguistic truism that naturally occurring conversation is as close as we can possibly get to the vernacular, the variety unfettered from the prescriptive norms and standards of writing. We might assume that for IndE as well as for New Englishes generally, the written norm is still more or less exonormative, modelled on British English or International English usage. The point of departure for nativization and endonormative stabilization, to use Schneider's terms again, is thus necessarily speakers' actual language use in interaction with other members of their speech community. Further support for concentrating on dialogue data comes from Matras & Sakel (2007: 847–848):

> any type of language change will begin at the level of the individual utterance in discourse. [...] In order to understand the triggers behind various mechanisms of change in situations of contact, we must therefore explore multilingual speakers' motivations to adopt ad hoc solutions and strategies in response to the communicative challenges that face them when structuring individual utterances in discourse.[7]

This study, then, will attempt to assess some structural properties of the IndE vernacular, with the aim of contributing to a descriptive account of the range of variation pertaining to the norms of spoken Indian English. However, the apparent contradiction between using a corpus of *standard* IndE to get at the *vernacular* is one which is bound to arise in multilingual societies where English is an official language, but not necessarily speakers' first language. As will be discussed in more detail below (cf. Chapter 2), the study of New Englishes in general and IndE in particular has been bedevilled by many ideologically charged debates, prime among them the "native speaker-debate". A corollary of the native-non-native distinction is the classification of innovations in the New Englishes as mistakes, indicative of fossilization in the process of second language acquisition: speakers of New Englishes have just missed the target (language).[8] Singh's (2007) dismissal

7. The theoretical ramifications of Matras & Sakel's hypotheses will be considered in more detail in Section 2.3.

8. For an elaboration and criticism of this view see Bhatt (2002: 84–86).

of this position captures the tension between *standard* and *vernacular* with respect to Indian English:

> speakers (=/ learners) of Indian English are native speakers of Indian English just as speakers of Midwestern American English are native speakers of Midwestern American English [...]. Indian English needs to be studied with all the opposites of standard British and American English, Englishes that are treated as marginal by speakers and sociolinguists of standard British and American English. [...] The only thing to remember is that we are talking about speakers and NOT learners. (Singh 2007: 43)

While it is clearly undeniable that English is a foreign language for the vast majority of Indians, there is a significant community of "native speakers/users" of Indian English (cf. Singh 2007: 38), and it is precisely this speech community which is represented in ICE-India. To put it differently: the speakers who provided the ICE-India conversation files are proficient speakers of IndE in the sense of Mufwene (1998: 117):

> the umbrella term for the arbiter of well-formedness and appropriateness in any community is the proficient speaker, one who is fully competent in a language variety according to the established norm of the community using it. Whether or not such a speaker is typically native will vary from one community to another.

The ICE-India data, then, give us access to IndE usage according to the "established norm of the community". They further allow us a glimpse of the vibrant multilingual contact scenario in which speakers of IndE are immersed, a point that is vital for the present study.

One of the aims of this study is to describe such "established norm[s]" for spoken IndE within a specific domain, namely that of "word order and discourse organization", a category applied in Kortmann et al. (2004). I will investigate a cluster of linguistic features that speakers have at their disposal to express an array of discourse-pragmatic meanings, for example structuring their propositions, foregrounding or backgrounding salient information, expressing their attitude toward the contributions of others in the ongoing discourse. From this perspective, the domain of discourse organization and discourse management comprises two subdomains: the expression of information structure by non-canonical word order and the domain of utterance modifiers, for example discourse markers.[9] The linguistic features belonging to this domain rank high on impressionistic lists designed to capture features that are supposed to be "typical" of Indian English (e.g. McArthur 2003: 323–324, Kachru 1986: 40, Sailaja 2009: 53–59), but have so far not been treated in greater detail, much less from a unified perspective.

9. The term "utterance modifiers" is derived from Matras (1998), cf. Chapters 2.3.2 and 4.6 for a fuller treatment.

More specifically, I will investigate the following features. First of all, I will focus on the non-initial existential *there*-constructions (e.g. *Food is there*, cf. Nihalani et. al. 1979: 177) which are not attested in any other variety of English. Next, both topicalization (e.g. *Preparation of the marriage I'm talking about* (ICE-IND: S1A-095#165)) and left dislocation involving resumptive pronouns (e.g. *Rajasthan people **they** eat lot of pappad*[10] (ICE-IND: S1A-008#94)) have been observed to occur at a higher frequency in the New Englishes. I further treat cleft constructions in passing to complete the overview of syntactic features in the domain of discourse organization.

Within the domain of utterance modifiers, I focus on two expressions that are almost stereotypically associated with IndE. I will have a closer look at the distribution and function of the invariant tags *isn't it* and *na/no* (cf. Nihalani et al. 1979: 104), and further at the focus markers *only* and *itself* (e.g. *He came here today only* (1979: 132); *Can I come and see you today itself?* (1979: 105)).

Since ICE-India provides social and linguistic information about each speaker, it is possible to correlate linguistic variation with independent variables such as age, sex, education, mother tongue. Such an analysis will then allow tentative conclusions about the future of each structural feature under consideration: if, say, an expression is already firmly entrenched in the speech community, it is more likely to eventually become part of an Indian English endonormative standard than an expression with a less general distribution, e.g. an expression which is restricted to speakers of a specific age and/or region. This is in line with Sridhar's characterization of a future South Asian English

> standard or acrolect that (1) is not too strongly marked by varietal features of one particular region, (2) is free from stigmatized features such as gross agreement violations, and (3) enjoys pan-South Asian distribution, intelligibility, and positive evaluation. (1996: 67)

The domain of discourse organization comprises structural features that are widely attested for New Englishes generally (e. g. topicalization, invariant tags) as well as constructions that are unique to IndE (or Indian Englishes, if we subsume South African Indian English under that label), such as the non-initial existential *there*-construction and presentational focus markers *only/itself*. Four main explanatory parameters are generally invoked in the relevant literature when it comes to innovations in the New Englishes: (a) substrate influence, (b) retention of earlier, non-standard features from the superstrate, (c) universals of second language acquisition, (d) mechanisms akin to pidginization and creolization.[11]

10. *Pappad*: thin, crispy, spicy bread.

11. Cf. e.g. Mesthrie (1992: 152–221) for a thorough discussion of (c) and (d).

I would argue that referring to "substrate influence" merely provides a label, but is nowhere near an explanation. First of all, language contact between Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages in South Asia dates back thousands of years, with considerable convergence as a result.[12] Many syntactic features (e.g. enclitic focus markers) are widespread in both language families, so that it becomes almost impossible to identify exactly the language which served as the actual source language. Moreover, language contact is not only an historical fact, but an ongoing process in South Asia where multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception. Hindi and English are the national link languages or "pragmatically dominant languages" (cf. Matras 1998, 2009) in India, so to speak, with potential for influence or interference with all other Indian languages.

Another problem with the label "substrate influence" is related to what purports to be its outcome: the label is indiscriminately applied to borrowings (from lexical items and morphemes to syntactic categories and structures), calques, and the many other ways in which speakers currently conversing in a target language can make use of a more or less abstract concept derived from a source language. If we subsume all these phenomena under one convenient label, we reduce the dynamics of continuous language contact to something remote and static in the past. We also deprive ourselves of a better understanding of what actually happens in contact-induced change in context: if we indeed take for granted that every language change starts off as a "process of innovation by one or more individuals" (Thomason 2008: 51), then we should also shift our perception of speakers in multilingual contexts who

> are not only receivers and imperfect learners but also creators who use what they find in one language and sociocultural environment to shape another language in novel ways – they do not simply imitate grammatical categories, or produce imperfect copies of such categories; rather, they are likely to develop new use patterns and new categories on the model of other languages. (Heine & Kuteva 2005: 37)

Developing new use patterns on the model of other languages may take a variety of forms, all of them realizations of communicative strategies available to the multilingual speaker. He or she is neither a "slave" of his/her substrate language nor a passive recipient of some version of the target language; rather, the multilingual speaker has an array of stylistic choices at his/her disposal which reflect the interaction between the languages available to the speaker in different ways and to different degrees.

Explanatory parameter (b), retention of earlier non-standard features or superstrate influence, has been highlighted by Mesthrie (2006b: 277) as a possibility that is frequently overlooked in studies of New Englishes:

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12. A brief overview of *sprachbund* phenomena in South Asia will be given in Section 3.2.2.

> the "shape" of the superstrate should not be taken for granted. [...] the notion of a target language (TL) is an idealization: more often, and certainly outside the classroom, the TL was a varied and "moving" target.

Mesthrie's argument "for a less substratophile interpretation of New Englishes variability" (2006b: 279) may take two forms: as he himself stressed in a series of related articles (Mesthrie 2003, 2006a, 2006b), the first speakers and/or teachers of English coming into contact with a local population were frequently non-native speakers themselves or speakers of a non-standard variety of English.[13] Mesthrie points out that linguists would be well advised to first identify the variety of English that served as the target language in any given contact situation rather than to turn straight away to substratist explanations.

Another way of accounting for variability in New Englishes by exploring the input from the model language(s) was pioneered by Sharma (2001) in her study on the pluperfect in Indian English. By drawing on data from parallel corpora of written British English, American English, and Indian English, Sharma was able to show that the categories of tense and aspect display considerable variability in British and American English. She stresses "the importance of taking into account variability and ambiguity in the lexifier or native variety itself when considering possible sources of new form–function relationships in a new variety" (Sharma 2001: 366). In the context of this study, Mesthrie's diachronic superstratist strategy is unlikely to play a role; however, Sharma's synchronic approach to variable superstrate input and her pronouncement that "ambiguity in native English usage represents an important trigger for variability and change" (2001: 370) should be kept in mind.

Explanatory parameter (c), namely processes universal to second language acquisition, is of course a prime suspect for many innovative features that are found in more than one of the New Englishes:

> the large number of similarities across L2 Englishes [...] needs to be explained more carefully than in the past, where the default assumption has often been interference from the substrates. Since there are over a thousand of these substrate languages in Africa-Asia, the explanation of interference has to be considerably fine-tuned. It is *prima facie* implausible, areal linguistics notwithstanding, that over a thousand languages should induce the very same (or very similar) influences. This would be tantamount to claiming that all the languages of Africa-Asia are the same in structure, united in their difference from English. (Mesthrie 2008: 634)

13. The notions "standard/non-standard" should be taken with a grain of salt here, as the global expansion of English began before the standardization and codification of the language was anywhere near its end. The terms "uneducated" or "non-literary" English are perhaps more appropriate in this context.

It is then "the psycholinguistics of second-language processing of a cognitive system like English" (*ibid.*) which should be studied to account for *angloversals*, a label given to innovative features which are found across a wide range of New Englishes (cf. Mair 2003).[14] Again, the realm of discourse organization as outlined above, with some features unique to IndE and some that are common in many other New Englishes, will prove promising for asking a principled question about contact-induced variability and change: why should some areas of grammar be more (or less) susceptible to contact-induced language change than others? Why should, say, different word order patterns be amenable to different explanatory parameters? To take one example: existential sentences with clause-final *there* are unique to IndE, whereas topicalization is very common in the New Englishes generally. Why should speakers resort to an expressive strategy which is highly variety-specific in one case, but not in the other? To put it differently, why do the resources and strategies that are available to speakers in multilingual contexts converge in some cases and produce similar results, but diverge in others? In order to get closer to an answer to these questions, I will analyze the form, frequency, distribution and discourse function of each individual feature in detail, paying close attention to the discourse strategies they may serve within multilingual communicative contexts.

1.3 Structure

In order to address the questions outlined above, this study will proceed as follows. Chapter 2 is devoted to the conceptual background informing all subsequent chapters and will consider some theoretical concepts relevant for this study as they have evolved together with research on New Englishes. The very term "New Englishes" has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, as Section 2.1 will show. Section 2.2 focuses on the theoretical and ideological issues related to the fundamental concept of "native speaker", while Section 2.3 reviews current research on contact-induced language change. Section 2.4 disentangles the related, but by no means identical notions of "norms" and "standard", notions which repeatedly came to the fore in the two preceding sections. Taken together, the four sections will trace the changing concerns and research strategies of the field up to the present.

Chapter 3 will delineate the communicative space in India and the changing position of English within that space. I prefer the notion "communicative space"

14. This rather catchy notion has so far not received much empirical backing, cf. e.g. Hundt (2007).

(which I take from Oesterreicher 2001) to the widely used term "linguistic ecology" (cf. Mufwene 2001). Mufwene's concept is closely linked to his "Founder Principle", i.e. the original contact scenario as the main determinant of the resulting varieties' status and structure. While this is certainly highly relevant for assessing broad macro-linguistic lines of development for a particular variety, the Founder Principle is too blunt an instrument for a more detailed analysis of actual linguistic structures. "Communicative space", on the other hand, has the advantage of encompassing not only the multilingual scenario, but further takes the parameters orality-literacy into account.

Chapter 3.2 therefore presents a brief typological survey of the Indian languages with particular emphasis on *sprachbund* phenomena apparent in the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages. These typological considerations will be helpful in contextualising possible substratist explanations in later chapters. The Chapters 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 will extend the notion of *sprachbund* to include convergence phenomena that are pragmatic rather than phonological or syntactic, the traditional preoccupations of areal typology. Chapter 3.3 will touch upon some aspects of the dynamics of the Indian communicative space and the position of English within it.

Chapter 4, then, is devoted to the corpus-based analysis of the domain of discourse organisation in spoken Indian English. Sections 4.1.2 to 4.1.4 give an assessment of the data used for this study, namely the "private dialogue" files of ICE-India (S1A 1–100). The general format of the ICE-project is too well known to be repeated here; but since conditions for collecting and processing data for the individual ICE-corpora necessarily vary from country to country, it makes sense to consider the ICE-India data in more detail. Obviously, the input to any corpus-based project crucially determines and also constrains the generalizations to be made that are based on the analysis of the data.

Each of the following subchapters devoted to discourse-pragmatic features of IndE will include an analysis in terms of quantificational sociolinguistics: are there discernible patterns of variation along the external variables sex, age, educational level, mother tongue? Do such patterns hold for more than one of the features? But even though this part of the investigation will be highly informative when it comes to the diffusion of features throughout the IndE speech community, it is clearly not sufficient, for both theoretical and conceptual reasons. Quantifying features undoubtedly has its merits, but it also neglects the interactive multilingual contexts in which these features are actually made meaningful. As said above, the multilingual speaker is not a "carrier" of features whose occurrence is largely predetermined by age, sex, etc.; rather, he or she makes choices within the immediate communicative situation which, in turn, is placed within a specific communicative space. Such choices may include borrowing, calquing, or using a specific construction in

contexts which go beyond the original syntactic or discourse-pragmatic constraints that were originally associated with it. The pertinent question here is whether we can reconstruct speakers' cognitive processes in choosing the forms they did, and if these cognitive processes in turn tell us something about borrowability in language contact situations.

Chapter 5 is an attempt to summarize and generalise the findings from the preceding chapter, and to project them into the future. My aim here is twofold: first of all, I turn to the theoretical implications of my findings, trying to asses which explanatory parameters outlined above account best for speakers' choices in multilingual settings. Speakers' individual solutions may give rise to new usage patterns which in turn, under specific conditions, may spread throughout the speech community: in a final step, I will attempt to evaluate whether the features identified for spoken IndE will eventually become part of a future standard Indian English.

CHAPTER 2

Conceptual background

The aim of this chapter is to spell out the theoretical assumptions and methodological choices which inform the present study. In doing so, it touches upon some of the most pertinent theoretical concepts that have developed along with the study of New Englishes. This chapter is therefore partly a history of ideas in the field, ideas which were paramount in advancing research on the topic but which have, perhaps inevitably, come under increasing pressure from alternative approaches.

As stated in the preceding chapter, this study gives pride of place to the multilingual Indian speaker of English, examining the communicative strategies which arise naturally in multilingual verbal interaction. It thus draws on current concepts in the field of contact linguistics, where a host of new perspectives, theories and methodologies for studying the outcome(s) of language contact situations have been advanced in recent years. It was possibly Thomason and Kaufman's *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*, published in 1988, which sparked the renewed interest in motivations for and particularly constraints on contact-induced language change – "renewed" because Weinreich's 1953 monograph *Languages in Contact* has to be given due credit, even though it stood more or less alone in its time. To the contemporary student of New Englishes, it may appear somewhat odd that the tools of contact linguistics are only now being applied to their study – after all, New Englishes are contact languages *par excellence*. Section 2.1, a short historical tour through the field of New Englishes, and concomitantly Section 2.2 on the concept of "native speaker", provide a partial solution to this puzzle: it simply took some decades before New Englishes gained recognition as varieties in their own right, rather than as fossilized stages of imperfect language learning. Section 2.3 briefly introduces some of the notions of contemporary contact linguistics that are relevant for the study of New Englishes and that feature prominently in the present study. Finally, Section 2.4 focuses on models of standardization and their application to the New Englishes.

2.1 New Englishes and outer circles

If it is a sign of maturation for a (sub-)discipline that its original assumptions, the key distinctions it fought to establish, are slowly being discarded in favour of