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"Are you wanting a cup of coffee?"

Overuse of the progressive aspect in Indian English

Wissenschaftliche Arbeit für das Erste Staatsexamen

im Fach Englisch

Table of Contents

1 Introduction[1]

> Dear Markji I am not having plai-yur of meeting you saar, but I am hearing stories so many many stories about your good self, that I am feeling I am knowing you already. In India it is like this only. Not knowing, but still knowing. You are understanding everything being more Indian than most Indians, no? Ha! Ha! Not to worry I am joking saar. (Mehrotra 1998: 95)

The text extract cited above appeared in a humorist column of the *Times of India*. In Mehrotra's collection of Indian English material it is listed under the label "stereotype", and indeed its intent is to make fun of some of the grammatical, lexical, phonological and stylistic features commonly considered to be typical when Indians use English. "Indianisms" in the passage include, among others, the difficulty with the pronunciation of / ʃ / ("plai-yur" instead of "pleasure"), literal translations from Indian languages ("your good self") and the use of verbs of perception/cognition in the progressive form ("I am hearing stories", "I am knowing you already").

Especially the latter feature is well-known and wide-spread in Indian English; Mehrotra (1998: 139) calls it "a common error". On the other hand, some peculiarities of Indian English have become so common that they can be regarded as variations following established rules and constituting a new norm (Hansen et al. 1996: 226). After all, English is the most important lingua franca in multilingual South Asia and in constant use in the media, in education, politics and personal communication, and with 25 million speakers of English, India is the largest community of non-native speakers in the world (Mehrotra 1988: 1). Additionally, India is home to a small group of native speakers, the so-called Anglo-Indians.

The following paper will be concerned with the second language variety of English as used in India. The first section (chapters 1-4) will provide an overview of theoretical and practical problems in the study of Indian English and provide a short description of its most important features. The remaining

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chapters will consist of an empirical study of the grammatical phenomenon of using "stative" verbs with progressive aspect (chapter 5) and discuss the most important explanations for the phenomenon (chapter 6).

Whereas the influence of certain factors (such as mother tongue structures) on Indian English phonology seem to be quite accepted, much less research has been done on syntactic and morphological features and their origins. The analysis will draw from a variety of theories of language contact and language change. The theory advanced by Thomason (2001) and Thomason and Kaufman (1988) who propose a framework for the study of language contact that focuses on the influence of historical and social factors will provide the basis for the discussion. Görlach (1991) contributes important suggestions concerning the study of "New Englishes"/second language varieties of English.

Language contact, second language acquisition and language teaching methods are highly interwoven. The Indian peculiarity of using stative verbs in the progressive offers the opportunity to demonstrate and discuss the relevant issues and approaches and their usefulness for the study of the second language varieties of English. The paper also hopes to provide insights into the controversy of whether Indian English features should be considered "errors" or "new norms".

The Kolhapur Corpus, a collection of Indian English material dating from 1978, provides the data for the analysis.

2 Language contact theory and the contact situation of English and Indian languages

Language contact can have a variety of consequences. Thomason (2001: 10) identifies basically three outcomes:

1. *Contact-induced language change* in cases where the influence of one language on the other is comparably weak.

2. *Extreme language mixture* when the intensity of contact increases. Results of high-intensity contacts are pidgins, creoles and bilingual mixed languages. The history of European colonialism, where European languages met the languages of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, especially gave rise to a number of creoles whose vocabulary is based on European languages.

3. *Language death,* i.e. the complete disappearance of one language, in cases of extreme social pressure.

A frequent outcome of language contact in colonial settings is the creation of so-called "indiginised" varieties of European languages, varieties of colonisers' languages that were shaped by the contact with indigenous languages of the population and that are still used in those communities today (in the scheme above an indiginised variety would of course fall in the category of contact-induced language change). The most prominent and most discussed examples are the "New Englishes" in India, Pakistan, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and several African states. Indian English, thus, is a variety of English that was influenced by the contact of English with Indian languages.

The amount of literature on the mechanisms and outcomes of language contact is vast. Contact studies draw on a variety of different approaches to assess and predict linguistic outcomes. The most controversial topics will be described further below in the discussion of the origin of the use of stative verbs in Indian English (chapter 6). As mentioned in the introduction, Thomason (2001) and Thomason and Kaufman (1988) will provide the theoretical background for this paper. The analytical framework Thomason (2001) uses remains essentially the same as the one proposed in the earlier work by Thomason and Kaufman. The newer book, however, is more accessible and clearer about the features of indigenised varieties such as Indian English. Additionally, it provides an

excellent overview of issues associated with language contact studies, such as bilingualism, multilingualism and first and second language acquisition.

2.1 Importance of social and historical factors vs. linguistic constraints in contact situations

What determines the mechanisms of change in a contact situation? Older theories presumed that any possible changes depended primarily on the structure of the languages involved. What sorts of elements a language could import from another, whether phonological, syntactic or morphological, was determined by factors such as typological distance of the languages or the degree of markedness (i.e. how "usual" or "natural" the feature is among the world's languages). Additionally, many scholars claimed that some features were unborrowable, especially inflectional morphology, with the argument that all languages already had highly structured morphological systems that would be less susceptible to influence from other languages.

Both hypotheses, "structures determine outcome" and "some features are unborrowable", later came under attack from studies in historical linguistics and sociolinguistics. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 36) argue that structural properties of the languages are only secondary; instead, they heavily emphasise the priority of the socio-historical context: "Both the direction of interference and the extent of interference are socially determined; so, to a considerable degree, are the kinds of features transferred from one language to another." Consequently, the investigation of the social setting and the historical circumstances must have priority in language contact research in order to predict or interpret the areal diffusion of linguistic features (Thomason/Kaufman 1988: 41). Factors such as intensity of contact (operationalised by the degree of cultural pressure exerted by one group over another), number of speakers and speakers' attitudes override any constraints posed by linguistic factors. If the contact is intensive enough, "anything goes" – any feature can be taken over, even if it belongs to a highly structured system, such as morphology (compare Thomason/Kaufman 1988: 14, and Thomason 2001: 59-94).

2.2 Mechanisms at work in language contact situations

The two basic mechanisms of language contact are borrowing and substratum interference (transfer).

Borrowing is defined as the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language; the native language is changed but maintained. Borrowing can occur on different levels: typically, the process starts with the lexicon. Depending on the degree of long-term cultural pressure the source-language speakers exercise over speakers of the borrowing language, structural elements may be borrowed as well (i.e. phonological or syntactic features, in extreme cases also inflectional morphology).

Substratum interference, on the other hand, results from imperfect group learning during a process of language shift, i.e. speakers abandon their own language in favour of another. The errors of the members of the shifting group spread to the target language (TL) when the original speakers of the TL start imitating them. The result of the learning process is very often dependent on such factors as attitude and availability of the TL (rather than on competence). The sequence of acquired items differs from the process of borrowing: as a consequence of the pressure to acquire vocabulary first in the language learning process, syntax and sounds (and sometimes morphology) are taken over into the TL before words. Lexical items from the shifting speakers' original language are most often culture-specific terms, e.g. for local animals, plants, food etc. (Thomason/Kaufman 1988: 37-39).

The process of transfer is not uncontroversial; there are theories that postulate that the result of a language contact is rather attributable to universal processes of language acquisition than to structural properties of the languages involved or the social context in which the contact takes place. The dispute, however, takes place in the arena of second language acquisition studies and will be discussed in greater detail in the last section of this paper.

2.3 The classification of Indian English

As mentioned above, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) are not very clear about the categorisation of indigenised varieties – in their typology of contact outcomes, they do not mention them explicitly. Judging from the context, they obviously regard Indian English as a case of substratum interference, i.e. interference by shift; they discuss the intonation patterns of Irish English and Indian English in this context (Thomason/Kaufman 1988:42).

At first glance, especially in the context of a theory that so heavily emphasises social factors for explaining linguistic outcome, the parallel between Indian and Irish English seems surprising and problematic. The two contact situations differ considerably from each other: Although both varieties originated in a colonial situation and, largely isolated from speakers of the British model variety, developed a distinct variety of their own, the contact between English and Irish seems to have been more intense. It dates back much longer, and a majority of the Irish population has spoken English for about 200 years as a first language (compare Hansen et. al. 1996: 81). The contact situation was also marked by much higher availability of the target language English (geographical proximity, numerical relationship between speakers of English and speakers of Irish). Today, only a small minority of Irish learns Gaelic as a first language. For most, English is their mother tongue and the original Gaelic substratum is acquired at school.

In India the situation is reverse: English is the language that is acquired in a classroom situation. A local version, the Anglo-Indian variety (see chapter 3.5), is the first language of only a small percentage of speakers. In the light of these differences, it is not altogether clear whether Thomason and Kaufman here refer to the first language (L1) variety of Indian English or to the much more prominent second language (L2) variety.

Indian English, thus, does not fit neatly into the two categories of borrowing and shift. In a shift situation, speakers replace their own native language with the target language but modify the target language with features from their original

language. Indian English, however, was created in a *maintenance* situation, and Indian languages have existed side by side with English over the whole course of the period. In terms of numbers of speakers, the L2 variety of Indian English is far more important than the L1 variety.

Indians did not substitute English for the indigenous languages because there was neither pressure nor opportunity to learn English. First of all, the number of British settlers on the subcontinent was always negligible compared to the number of speakers of Indian languages. As a result, Indians did not have easy access to native speakers: only very few Indians were employed as translators and employees in the British administration or had contact with native speakers in the army. Learning English was also not actively encouraged by the colonial rulers in the first two centuries of British presence in India. Most Indians thus learned (and learn) English from non-native speakers in a school environment. The contact with native speakers in India is still rare, although the exposure to British and American English may well have increased in recent years due to the advent of communication technology and TV (contact of speakers of Indian languages with native speakers of English *outside* India is, however, common, because of increasing immigration from India to the US and Great Britain).

Although the books by Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Thomason (2001) generally work with the same theoretical framework, one important change occurred that is relevant for the description of Indian English. Thomason and Kaufman (1988) remain quite vague about the consequences of a maintenance of the substrate languages. They only make the general assumption that the linguistic results in this case will be quite different from those in a real shift situation because the intensity of contact is likely to vary (Thomason/Kaufman 1988: 47-48).

Thomason (2001: 74-75), however, explicitly addresses the problem of Indian English and writes that because the process of imperfect learning takes place in the same way in a maintenance as in a shift situation, the linguistic predictions are essentially the same for a situation in which the target language is used as a second language and the speakers do not abandon their mother tongues. Accordingly, the processes and results in acquiring an L2 variety of English are

comparable to a shift situation. The parallel between Irish and Indian English is thus clear, even though English plays such a different role in the two societies.

Essentially the same argument is brought forward by Coelho (1997: 562-563) who investigates the speech of Anglo-Indians. Although she works with the scheme put forward by Thomason and Kaufman (1988), Coelho establishes a "hierarchy" of shift processes, in which the acquisition and use of English in India is ranked as "partial shift". Only one ethnic group, the Anglo-Indians, shifted completely to English and now uses it as a first language. In Coelho's view, the most important innovations in South Asian English result from transfer processes in the early stages of acquisition and their transmission to later generations of speakers. Although American and Australian English are also varieties that had their origins in colonial situations and that show some interference features (i.e. from immigrants from non-English-speaking countries), they differ significantly from South Asian Englishes in that they were transplanted, i.e. brought to the new countries by a large proportion of native speakers who settled permanently in the newly-acquired territories, and thus do not show as wide a spectrum of social and regional variation as the New Englishes do.

2.4 Multidirectional language contact in India

Language contact situations are often not unidirectional. Although some language contacts come about exclusively through education (so-called "learnèd" contacts), such as the study of Latin used to contribute a large amount of vocabulary to some European languages (Thomason 2001: 20-21), most contacts involve active bilingualism or face-to-face interaction between speakers of the languages of the contact situation. This in turn means that often both borrowing and shift processes occur simultaneously. When the status of English on the Indian subcontinent is considered in its entirety, all processes that generally occur in a contact situation according to the theory are observable in this case:

1. a completed shift (resulting in the creation of the Anglo-Indian speech community that uses English as a first language),

2. a partial shift/imperfect learning in a maintenance situation, with process and outcome comparable to a shift situation (the second language variety Indian English),

3. lexical borrowing from English into Indian languages.

The following section will provide an overview of the peculiarities of English speech communities, the discussion about the status of the New Englishes, and the Indian situation.

3 The role of English in India

3.1 The study of World Englishes

In recent years, linguists have increasingly devoted attention to so-called "non-native" or "new" Englishes, i.e. pidgins and creoles based on English and second languages varieties of English in former British colonies.[2] The status of these varieties is so controversial that the debate has given rise to a new field of sociolinguistic studies under the label "World Englishes". The term takes into account that the global role of English has dramatically expanded in the last decades and that research accordingly should not be confined exclusively to British or American English.

In his article "English as a world language – the state of the art", Manfred Görlach gives a condensed overview of the issues and problems scholars working in the field of World Englishes are confronted with. Following Görlach (1991: 12-13), the English-speaking community can be divided into four groups: ENL (English as a native language) communities, ESD (English as a second dialect) communities, ESL (English as a second language) communities, and EFL (English as a foreign language) communities. The distinguishing criterion is primarily the status of English in society, i.e. the range of functions it fulfils for its speakers.

1. **ENL** communities are those where English exhibits the widest range of functions, i.e. it is used by the larger part of the population for all communicative purposes. Examples of ENL countries include Britain, the United States and Australia.

2. Inhabitants of **ESD** countries use English as a prestige language for all official functions. In spoken discourse and informal situations ESD speakers use a dialect that is historically related to English. ESD countries are

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[2] The English spoken in the Philippines can be subsumed under the heading "New English", too, though its model was of course American, not British, English.

Scotland and countries in the Caribbean, West Africa and in the SW pacific (in the latter group speakers use English-based creoles).[3]

3. English in **ESL** countries, such as India, Nigeria and Singapore, displays a wide range of functions, not only in international, but also in intranational contact. It is the language used in education, administration and nation-wide media. In ESL countries there are practically no native speakers of English, and the proficiency of users displays considerable variation, from native speaker-like fluency to "broken English". ESL varieties are often called "new/non-native" varieties.

4. In **EFL** countries, finally, the function of English is the most limited. The language is learned exclusively in school and does not serve any internal functions apart from as a "book language" in higher education and certain highly specialised domains (e.g. banking). EFL users often show a closer approximation of standard English than ESL users. EFL countries are for example Germany and France.

The typology outlined above, as useful as it may appear for a first categorisation, has its weaknesses, as Görlach points out. Many speech communities cannot be assigned unambiguously to one of the categories because they are mixed, i.e. some speakers use English as their native language whereas it is only a second language for others. Some countries also seem to be in a process of transition from one status to another. Finally, the status of English in a society does not indicate anything about the percentage of speakers and their proficiency level (Görlach 1991: 13).

The situation in India is a prominent example of the developments outlined above: as will be discussed in greater detail below, the English speech community in the subcontinent consists of both ESL speakers and ENL speakers, the so-called "Anglo-Indians" (although the latter represent only a very small percentage of speakers). Although still very important, English has

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[3] As mentioned in the introduction, Thomason/Kaufman 1988 will provide the basis for the present paper. It is therefore necessary to point to their opinion that pidgins and creoles are not "historically related" to their vocabulary-base language (and accordingly certainly not "dialects" of the respective language, as implied by grouping the creole-speaking communities under the label "ESD"). The controversy surrounding pidgins and creoles, however, is not of relevance in the present context.

also been losing ground to indigenous languages such as Hindi/Urdu in the last decades, a result of a language policy that has favoured the usage of Indian languages in official contexts after India gained independence from British colonial rule.

3.2 "Native language" and "non-native language"

Scholars who are themselves speakers of "New Englishes" argue against the clear-cut classification of the varieties into schemes similar to the one outlined in 2.1. The discussion basically revolves around the controversial concept of the "native speaker" and the according division of English varieties into "old/native" and "new/non-native" (for an extremely condensed overview of the differing opinions compare Singh et al. 1995 and Afendras et al. 1995[4]).

Attempts to define what it means to be a "native speaker" range from very inclusive to rather narrow definitions. Representative of a wide definition is the view proposed by Singh (1995: 285) who sees a native speaker as a person "who shares with others in the relevant speech community relatively stable well-formedness judgements on expressions used or usable in the community". Singh's concept aims at including users of New Englishes into the group of native speakers of English; it is nevertheless problematic because very often even *uncontroversial* native speakers of English (for example monolingual Britons) have difficulties determining whether an utterance is grammatical or not. On the other hand, this definition would assign everyone who has learned English as a foreign language (for a relatively limited functional range) and acquired an extremely good command of it to the category of native speaker because very successful learners can be expected to have a native speaker-like ability to judge whether utterances are well-formed or not. The definition therefore seems only of little practical value.

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[4] A note on citation: The articles cited as "Singh et al. 1995" and "Afendras et al. 1995" consist of short contributions (often only one or two paragraphs) of several authors. Differing from the normal practice, the authors will be cited individually in the following section in order to reflect the fact, stressed by the editors, that the comments are not interconnected and represent individual thoughts. In the bibliographical references they can be found under "Afendras et al. 1995" and "Singh et al. 1995" respectively.

Narrower concepts generally define the native speaker as someone who has learned the language from infancy: the defining criterion thus is the time and sequence of acquisition. This definition does not exclude bilinguals or multilinguals who acquire two or more languages from childhood in the family, but does not include speakers of second language varieties because they learn the language in a school environment rather than at home.

Many scholars also object to the method of description of the New Englishes, as the reference point is always its difference from British (and sometimes American) English:

> One of the major drawbacks to any real understanding of the New Varieties of English (NVEs) has been that scholars have all too often tried to fit them into established moulds and in doing so have lost sight of what it is that makes these varieties "new". (d'Souza 2001: 145)

Departing from such a description, differing characteristics in the linguistic subsystems are then often viewed as "deviant" or learners' errors instead of as constituting a stable system and new norms. The distinction between older and newer varieties is thus often perceived as an unjust privileging of the older varieties. Instead, scholars argue, an effort should be made to describe the New Englishes without reference to other systems.

Preisler (in Afendras et al. 1995: 311) criticises these lines of argument as being "more about 'political correctness' than about sociolinguistics." Indeed, the terms "native language" and "native speaker" are often associated with "rights" to a language and a distinction between "correct/good" and "erroneous/bad" versions. Speakers of new varieties regard the description of these varieties as "deviant" as a perpetuation of colonial injustices and discrimination, i.e. inhabitants of former colonies are somehow judged inferior because they "cannot speak English properly". Apart from these questions of attitudes to language[5], questions about standards and norms also carry straightforward economic implications. The teaching of English is an important export product for Britain, the United States and Australia, and the characterisation of Indian

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[5] For further information about attiudes to English in India, see below, 3.4.3.

English or Singapore English as "deviant" or "imperfect learner varieties" prevents their speakers from having access to the huge and profitable market of language teaching.

Even if Preisler's criticism is to some extent justified, one should keep in mind that in ethnically mixed, bilingual or multilingual countries such as India, questions concerning the status of a language in society are of great political importance (to illustrate this point, compare for example Mehrotra 1998:6 on the language riots that broke out in 1965 in Tamilnadu in Southern India because the regional language was not appropriately represented in the educational curriculum).

3.3 Non-native varieties of English: a closer look

Apart from the rough classification presented in the preceding section, four major points can be made for distinguishing Indian, Nigerian or Singapore English from, say, American, British or Australian English:

1. The "new" varieties developed through imposition on a population that spoke/speaks other languages, resulting in widespread bilingualism.
2. The languages of the population have left a mark on the English it speaks in all linguistic subsystems (transfer/interference), especially noticeable in phonology.
3. Additionally, the speakers exploit their linguistic ability creatively, e.g. by lexical or syntactic innovations, making the English remarkably different from the "native" varieties.
4. Finally, British English in particular still serves as a reference point and is generally more prestigious than the nativised variety (Bamgbose 1995 in Afendras et al.:303, see also Platt et al. 1984:2-3).

From a more functional viewpoint one might add that these varieties serve as a medium of interethnic communication in linguistically often diverse countries.

3.4 Indian English as a second language

3.4.1 Historical overview

English in India has a long history. The first English speakers reached the subcontinent at the end of the 16th century. Although the British were not the first European power to establish permanent settlements in India (the Portuguese had set up trade posts already in the 16th century), the British quickly succeeded in gaining the upper hand in India. In 1600, the East India Company was granted the monopoly of trade with India, marking the starting point for 350 years of British dominance in South Asia (see Mehrotra 1998: 2-3). The first Indians to learn English were translators in the important cities where the British founded permanent commercial centres. Soon, Indians were employed as servants in private households and in administrative functions in the East India Company.

The spread of English was supported by an early recruitment of Indians in the British army and the efforts of Christian missionaries who aimed at an evangelisation of India and set up schools where they taught the language as a medium for Christianity (Mehrotra 1998:3). The missionaries also provided teacher training so that Indians relatively quickly took over language instruction.

With British occupation and expanding administration, the need to teach English in Indian schools and universities increased, resulting in the foundation of English-speaking educational institutions mainly in urban areas and centres of British trade (e.g. Calcutta, Bombay and Madras) in the first half of the 19th century. Indian English thus developed largely through the education system.

Today, English is compulsory in most schools of higher education and the major language of university education and research. English serves as an official language in some Indian states and has the (uncertain) status as an "associate official language" on the federal level: it is not recognised in the constitution but is in fact used as the language of the federal administration besides Hindi. Additionally, it is the dominant language used for international contact and also functions as a lingua franca in India, together with Hindi and Urdu. There are

several English national newspapers and radio and TV stations that broadcast exclusively in English (Mehrotra 1998: 1-7).

3.4.2 Regional, ethnic and social variation

Mehrotra calls the Indian subcontinent a "baffling mosaic of multilingualism": according to official Indian figures from 1961, 1652 different languages[6] are spoken as mother tongues by more than 900 million speakers, Hindi and Urdu being the most important and widespread ones. Indian languages belong to four major families: Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic and Sino-Tibetan (Mehrotra 1998: 1, see also table 4, page 48). It is not surprising that English in India shows considerable geographical variation. Depending on the background of the speaker and the dominant language in the area, one can thus identify varieties such as "Bengali English", "Tamil English" or "Hindi English" (sometimes called "Hinglish"). These varieties all have some distinct local features in pronunciation and vocabulary (see Mehrotra 1982: 153).

Socio-cultural variables also have to be taken into account. In some ethnic groups certain attitudes contribute to the establishment of peculiar features. For example, upper middle class Urdu-speaking Muslims perceive the wide opening and rounding of the lips as a sign of "lack of decency and sophistication", so these speakers find it hard to produce some English sounds (Mehrotra 1982: 153-154).

Finally, there is social variation that mainly results from differences in the level of education and exposure to native English. Most scholars distinguish three levels of Indian English: high, intermediate, and lower (or acrolect, mesolect and basilect)[7].

The high variety is the closest approximation to ENL varieties. Spoken by a small internationally mobile elite, it shows relatively few local features and is immediately intelligible to all speakers of English. The intermediate variety is the

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[6] Thomason (2001: 42) states that the number of languages spoken in India is between 100 and 200. The high number mentioned in the official survey is probably due to Indian language policy. Many varieties are regarded as separate languages although they would be grouped as dialects if the traditional criterion of mutual intelligibility were employed in defining the dialect/language border. The problems with this distinction will be discussed further below, chapter 6.2.2.
[7] Examples of these varieties can be found in Mehrotra 1996.

most common one and displays a wider range of Indian peculiarities (as listed in chapter 4 below).

The lower variety, finally (often derogatorily called "Indian Pidgin English", "Butler English" or "Babu English"), is spoken by people who have not received a higher education, or, as Mehrotra (1982: 156) puts it, by "semi-literate or illiterate professionals while talking to overseas tourists not conversant with the local language".

The diversity outlined above makes the term "Indian English" as such problematic. Das (1982: 141), for example, claims that

> one may legitimately ask if it [Indian English] has a set of coherent and homogenous linguistic systems, and if it is describable as the speech of an identifiable social group. Besides, one can have several categories of Indian English [...] Every variety has its own spatiocultural features.

Can, accordingly, all these varieties of Indian English be "lumped together" under the same label? Despite the differences described, some features are so common that they can be used to identify a speaker of Indian English regardless of his or her ethnic, regional or social background (see below, chapter 4 on features of Indian English). The common intermediate variety, which is also the standard used in the Indian education system, presents itself as a good candidate for a description of Indian English. Recent years have also seen attempts to standardise this variety in the form of a so-called "General Educated Indian English". Therefore, it seems not very helpful to abandon a term like Indian English altogether (which, additionally, would mean that a term like American English became useless as well).

3.4.3   Attitudes to English in India

As mentioned above, all New Englishes are being hotly debated in terms of their relationship to other varieties, and the political dimensions of the use of English in India are immense. Language policy is a sensitive issue in multilingual postcolonial states, and the status of English has been a matter of dispute for decades. Whereas some Indian politicians demand the promotion of English in order to provide Indian companies with a better position on the world

market and access to scientific knowledge only available in English, others would like to see English replaced by native Indian languages in the national curriculum.

Mehrotra (1998: 7) describes the controversy dryly:

> The whole approach to the study and use of English in the post-Independence era has been marked by indecision and a dilly-dally attitude which is evident from a variety of terms which have been current in recent years to denote the dubious state of English as "official language", "associate official language", "associate additional language", "alternate language", "subsidiary link language", "library language", "tool language", "language of wider communication", "language of need-filling" and so on.

Even if Indians obviously sometimes feel uncomfortable with granting English an important role in their society, English still is a prestige language and stands for social mobility and advancement. The massive influx of English loanwords in Indian languages, even in rural communities with little or no international contact, can be regarded as evidence for the high status of English: "Even village Maharati, for example, is full of borrowings from English." (d'Souza 2001:147)

The discussion about which *form* of English should be used in India, closer to the British model or accepting the local variety, however, seems to have become less fervent in recent years. India (and Nigeria)

> appear to have gone farthest along the road towards accepting local Englishes, and are seeing the need to equip teachers with a gauge of what is locally acceptable (though not conforming to international rules) as against what must be considered erroneous even by local standards (Görlach 1991: 21).

Indeed, Indian English seems to gain confidence: In October 2001, the *Guardian* reported the foundation of the first Indian school for teaching English as a foreign language in Vietnam:

> English today is no longer British, says Dr Talgeri [the director of the new school]. "There are many non-native varieties of English in the world, and among them Indian English is extremely user-friendly. It is intelligible, communicative and therefore acceptable in most countries." (...) By taking a proactive step of "exporting" Indian English, Dr Talgeri says: "We

are legitimising the processes of Indian ownership of English and demystifying the aura of exaggerated superiority of British English among Indians themselves. English is no longer British, and it no longer belongs to the high cultural gentry alone. Any person can use it as an instrument for communication. Being able to communicate in English is like being able to ride a bicycle" (The Guardian Unlimited, 25.10.2001).

This "utilitarian" or functional approach to English is advocated by many language professionals and scholars in India[8] and goes in line with recent attempts to standardise an Indian variety of English.

3.5 Indian English as a mother tongue

A small group of the population, the "Anglo-Indians", speaks (Indian) English as a mother tongue. The community developed through intermarriages of settlers from Britain and other European countries with Indian women in the early period of colonial rule. The community is situated mainly in the region of Madras in South India, with about 250.000 native speakers, although according to the Indian constitution, all citizens claiming European ancestors are assigned to the group of Anglo-Indians (whether they speak English or not and whether their ancestors were British or not).

The Anglo-Indian variety exhibits some characteristics that set it off from General/Educated Indian English. Most of its speakers in Madras are bilingual in Tamil, the dominant language of the region, and show some interference from Tamil in their English (see Coelho 1997). Research, however, focuses on Indian English as a second-language variety and not on the small number of speakers that have acquired English through an early shift.

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[8] See also D'Souza's article (2001: 149) about the role of the CIEFL (Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad), where she claims that the export of English to non-English-speaking countries, basically Asia and Africa represents the "acceptance of the fact that Indians have the ability and the right to teach the language".

4　Features of Indian English[9]

Indian English differs from British and American English in all subsystems, i.e. in phonology, grammar and lexicon. The following section will provide a concise overview of the most important features of Indian English. Difficulties in the description of all New Englishes originate from the fact that is hard to identify a standard variety (as pointed out in section 3.4.2, there is a continuum of social as well as regional varieties); therefore, a descriptive account risks being extremely simplistic.

Nevertheless, there have been attempts to standardise Indian English ("Educated Indian English") with features that are so common that they can be considered "pan-Indian" (compare Hansen et al. 1996: 220). The following overview is thus based on the intermediate variety of Indian English.

4.1　Phonology

Indian English most obviously differs from other English varieties in phonology. Generally, Indian English shows a tendency towards spelling pronunciation (Hansen et al. 1996: 221).

The most important differences are the monophthongisation of diphthongs (resulting in pronunciation such as [lɛːt] for *late*); a lack of certain contrasts such as between /w/ and /v/; and the replacement of the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ by aspirated /tʰ/ and /dʰ/ respectively. British English dental /t/ and /d/ again are often pronounced retroflex. On the suprasegmental level, Indian English also exhibits important differences from other varieties: not only do Indians use differing intonation patterns for declarative sentences and questions (Hansen et al. 1996: 222); Indian English is also syllable-timed instead of stress-timed. Pickering and Wiltshire (2000: 181) point to the problems of intelligibility that can arise from the difference in accentuation: when Indian English speakers pronounce *defence*, for example, Americans understand *difference*.

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[9] The overview is based on Hansen et al. 1996: 220-227. Shorter descriptions can be found in Trudgill and Hannah 1994 and in the Oxford Companion to the English language 1992.

4.2 Lexicon and style

Indian English has borrowed a lot of words from modern Indian languages (Hindi/Urdu, Bengali, Tamil etc.) and from classic languages (Sanskrit, Arabian, Persian). The terms mostly refer to local culture, customs and religion. Portuguese, the first modern European language spoken in India, also contributed to the lexicon. Indian English has extended the meanings of some English words, e.g. giving the word *alphabet* the additional meaning of *letter of the alphabet*, and added a variety of compounds not found in other English varieties (*office-goer, country liquor*). It is also noteworthy that English morphemes can be attached to lexical stems from Indian languages, e.g. *chaprasihood*, "state of being a chaprasi, i.e. the lowest employee in an office", and *goondaism* "hooliganism" (Hansen et al. 1996: 223-224).

Stylistic peculiarities often mentioned in the literature include a preference for words that are extremely formal or archaic in other varieties and a "flowery style" in formal genres unfamiliar to European and American readers (Hansen et al. 1996: 226). This might have to do with the fact that in India, language instruction often focuses on book learning, reading competence and classic literature.

4.3 Grammar

On the grammar level, Indian English shows considerable difference in the use of the definite and indefinite article, prepositions, modal verbs, and tense and aspect (among them the use of "stative" verbs in the progressive, such as in *I'm wanting*, *I'm knowing,* which will be investigated in Part III). The formation of questions without inversion or do-support (*What this new man is supposed to be?)* and the use of *isn't it* as universal question tag are also noteworthy. Infinitival complements are often replaced by a that-clause (*He wanted that we should come early*) or a gerund construction *(He went to China for learning Chinese).* Finally, the distinction between defining and non-defining relative clauses is given up for the benefit of the former (Hansen et al. 1996: 224-226).

5 The use of stative verbs with progressive aspect in Indian English

The following section will investigate the use of stative verbs in Indian English. The phenomenon was chosen because it is a well-known (and often ridiculed) feature of the Indian variety and offers a good example for demonstrating controversial issues in language contact studies. Additionally, it is, unlike many other documented grammatical peculiarities, such as the different use of definite and indefinite articles, relatively easy to detect in a machine-readable corpus like the one used here, the Kolhapur Corpus.

5.1 What are stative verbs?

Speakers of the New Englishes, and those of Indian English present no exception here, tend to use aspects and tenses differently than native speakers of British and American varieties (see Hansen et. al 1996: 225, Platt et al. 1984: 72-74, Görlach 1991: 25). In English, the meaning of the progressive aspect (sometimes also called continuous or durative) can be separated into three components: (1) the happening has duration, (2) the happening has limited duration, (3) the happening is not necessarily complete (Quirk et al. 1992: 197-198).

In Indian English, however, the extension of progressive aspect to express habituality and the frequent use of stative verbs in progressive forms are especially noticeable, as demonstrated by the following examples, both of which were found in descriptions of Indian English:

1a) I was not knowing these facts.   (Hansen et al. 1996: 225)
1b) Are you wanting anything?   (Trudgill and Hannah 1994: 132)

Stative verbs are part of the aspect system of the English language. These verbs usually express a state or quality and normally resist expansion. If they can appear in the progressive at all, there is often a change of meaning. Compare, for example, different uses of *to see* and *to hear:*

2a) She sees him.
2b) She is seeing him.

3a) She heard a sound.
3b) The judge was hearing a case.

The examples 1a) and 2a) represent the verbs *to see* and *to hear* in their common sense as verbs of perception. In 1b) and 2b), however, the progressive forms add specific sub-senses: in 1b) the progressive expresses the notion "she has a romantic relationship with him", in 2b) *hearing* has the secondary meaning of "investigating the circumstances".

The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1992:985) rightly points out that the border between stative and dynamic verbs is sometimes "fuzzy". Some verbs can fall into both categories, such as *have*:

4a) She has red hair   (stative usage, compare *She is having red hair)
4b) She is having dinner   (dynamic usage)

(Oxford Companion to the English Language 1992: 985).

5.2 The progressive aspect – an instance of language change in progress

A grammatical description of stative verbs is further complicated by the fact that the use of the progressive in general seems to become more frequent in English and thus probably represents an instance of ongoing language change. Quirk et al. (1992: 202) rightly point out that because of the grammatical extension the progressive aspect has been undergoing in the past few hundred years it is difficult to account for its use in terms of semantic generalisations. Indeed, the verbs commonly described as "stative" are very heterogeneous and there is ongoing controversy about useful categorisations. The only characteristic everyone can agree on is that these verbs do not express a real activity (which is so broad that it does not seem to be particularly helpful; after all, that is why these verbs are called "stative").

Vissen (1973) discusses several grammarians' solution to the systematic grouping of those verbs and presents an extensive list of stative verbs. Sometimes it is suggested that "private" verbs, defined as those referring to activities that the speaker alone is aware of, occur in the non-expanded form, whereas their "public" counterparts can appear in the progressive (Vissen 1973: 1969-1970). This distinction, however, cannot provide a satisfactory explanation for why relational verbs such as *to contain* also do not normally appear in the progressive; apart from that Quirk et al. (1992: 203) show that private verbs can be used with both progressive and nonprogressive with little change of meaning.

Because of these difficulties, Quirk et al. (1992) reject a comprehensive description of the circumstances where the progressive can be used and rather present a list of "normal uses" and exceptions. For example, the progressive aspect can add affective meaning (Quirk et al. 1992: 202). This is the functional difference between

     5a) I hope you will come

and

     5b) I'm hoping you will come,

where the latter is perceived to be more tentative or polite. The progressive can also turn the stative meaning into a process meaning, such as in

     6a) Tina is resembling her sister more and more

as opposed to the stative quality of

     6b) Tina resembles her sister.

Even verbs of perceptions such as *see, hear* and *smell* can be used in the –ing-form if the process of perception is treated as an ongoing process, although Quirk describes this as "unusual":

7) My scarf is no longer smelling of lavender.
8) I need some spectacles. I'm not seeing things so well these days.

Mair/Hundt (1995), in an attempt to verify the anecdotal evidence collected by many scholars, show that in both British and American contemporary corpora, the progressive form is more frequent than it was thirty years ago. The authors suggest that both a "stylistic" explanation (the progressive, a form more often employed in the spoken language, penetrates the written language as part of a well-known process of "colloquialisation") and a grammatical explanation (the progressive is on the way to becoming the unmarked form) could account for the statistically significant rise in the use of the continuous. The authors prefer (for unclear reasons) the first explanation (Mair/Hundt 1995: 118).

Vissen (1973: 1971-1983) also confronts his readers with a selection of real-life examples of native speakers using those verbs in continuous forms in written material. It is to be kept in mind that most of these verbs can in some context appear in the progressive; it seems preferable to speak of stative *uses* of verbs than simply of stative *verbs*. Many of these verbs have developed certain specialised sub-senses or have undergone a "reclassification of the verb as dynamic" (Quirk et al. 1992: 202).

Despite these difficulties and exceptional uses, the progressive with verbs such as *want, know, belong, contain* etc. is still considered to be unusual enough to serve as a distinguishing feature of regional English dialects. Especially in writing it is certainly still less observable than in the spoken language.

5.3 Corpus work on the grammar of Indian English

Most of the notable features of Indian English (as described in chapter 4) appear predominantly in the spoken language (Hansen et al. 1996: 220). Nevertheless, some grammatical innovations can already be observed also in Indian writing: linguistic changes usually start in the spoken language and appear much later in writing where people are normally more self-conscious about the grammar they use and accordingly employ a more conservative style.

Whereas the Indian usage of stative verbs in the continuous is well known and frequently mentioned, the feature has obviously not been investigated with the help of systematically collected material. In general, very few studies on Indian English can be found that actually have an empirical basis.[10] Krishnaswamy and Burde (1998: 32) criticise the fact that many scholars rely exclusively on fictional material to demonstrate the features of Indian English, although creative writing deliberately uses these peculiarities to create a certain local (in this case Indian) atmosphere and thus cannot be taken as an example of natural speech. Mehrotra's 1998 collection of Indian English is a valuable exception and provides a good overview of the diversity of English usage in India, but it is too small and too randomly compiled for a comprehensive study.

The following section will thus investigate the distribution of this feature in the *Kolhapur Corpus,* a corpus of Indian English (for a description see below, 5.4). Guiding questions of the analysis will be:

- Which verbs are used with progressive aspect? Is there a restriction on the usage of the continuous, i.e. are there some verbs with which the progressive is also not used in Indian English?
- In which sorts of texts does the feature appear predominantly?
- How can the occurrence of stative verbs in the progressive be explained?

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[10] An exception is, for example, d'Souza's 1999 study of Anglo-Indian speech.

A selection of 58 stative verbs was drawn from Quirk et al. (1988) (for a list see table 1). Quirk et al. (1988:96) subdivide the class of stative verbs into two groups, "verbs of inert perception and cognition" (e.g. *desire, hate, prefer*) and "relational verbs" (e.g. *belong to, require, resemble*). They also include *be* (+ noun or adjective) in their list, in constructions such as:

3a) She is rude.	(= a quality of her character)
3b) She is being rude.	(= behaviour at a certain time)

This construction (where the complement consists of an adjective or a noun, cf. *She is being such a bore today*) is not to be confused with the – relatively frequent – passive construction in the present continuous (e.g*. The house is being built*). The list offered in the smaller edition of the Quirk Grammar was chosen for its comprehensiveness, but certainly the selection Quirk et al. 1988 present is comparably conservative and some verbs on the list are debatable (especially some verbs of perception such as *recognise, realise* would probably not be categorised as stative any more today).

Table 1: List of verbs used for the corpus analysis

admire	adore	appear	astonish
be	believe	belong	concern
consist	deserve	desire	despise
detest	dislike	doubt	envy
exist	fit	forget	guess
hate	have	hear	imagine
impress	include	involve	keep
know	lack	last	like
love	matter	mean	owe
own	please	possess	prefer
reach	realise	recognise	remember
resemble	satisfy	see	seem
sound	smell	stop	suppose
surprise	survive	suspect	understand
want	wish		

5.4 Data: The Kolhapur Corpus

The Kolhapur Corpus was compiled in 1978 and modelled on the already existing American Brown and British LOB corpora. Subdivided into 15 categories, it contains written material from a wide variety of genres. The bulk of the 500 texts consists of articles from the national and regional press and scientific writing. Further material is taken from government documents, transcripts of political speeches, specialised magazines and popular writing and fiction.

Although the number of words (approximately 1.100.000) is comparable to that of the British and American corpora, the proportion of the text genres differs from the distribution in the model corpora. Some subgenres of popular writing (such as science fiction, adventure and romance and love stories) are not represented to the same extent because the compilers lacked a sufficient amount of material. This deficiency was partly compensated for by an inclusion of a higher number of texts in the category "General fiction" (Shastri 1986: Sources and Sampling Techniques, Table 1).

Obviously, not much work has been done so far with the Kolhapur Corpus; actually, not a single study could be found that is based on the material.

5.5 Results

Only five undisputed examples could be found in the corpus (an undisputed example being defined as one that native speakers of either British or American English rejected as ungrammatical or "wrong"). Another nine examples are ambiguous. In general, the examples in the corpus show that the feature tends to appear in genres that are relatively informal, especially fictional texts; another source of the feature in question are government documents and the written transcripts of government debates.

Table 2: Results of the corpus analysis

Category	Number of occurrence	Examples
Press	1	(1)
Fiction	6	(5), (6), (7), (8), (12), (13)
Government documents	4	(2), (4), (10), (14)
Learned and scientific writing	2	(3), (9)
Skills, trades and hobbies	1	(11)

At least fictional texts and the transcripts of the debate are categories that show more resemblance to the spoken language, although it is likely that in the last case the texts were at least partly corrected when they were transcribed. Fiction often aims at a natural representation of spoken language, such as the dialogues in examples (08) and (05). The only instance where a stative verb was used in the continuous form in the category press (example 01) was a letter to the editor, i.e. written by a reader and not by a journalist; it probably did not undergo an editing process.

In the unambiguous examples (1) to (4), *have* and *be* clearly describe a state but nevertheless appear in the ing-form. Native speakers also objected to the use of *know* in the progressive (5).

01. The Government, <u>which is having the entire cost data</u> of the industry, has considered it satisfactory if the retail price does not exceed Rs. 3 per kilo. (0830B09-0850B09)
    [Category: Press, editorial, national daily, letters to the editor]

02. They are fully corrupted. <u>They are having vindictive motives</u>. For example, they give land to those who give vote to them. (1630H31-1640H31)
    [Category: Miscellaneous, state government documents]

03. To construct the network, we draw from any particular node 3A, one line for each variable that <u>was not having a value of 1</u> in the solution represented by the node 3A. (0650J18-0670J18)
    [Category: Learned and scientific writings, mathematics]

04. It is observed that in general the various depth to water zones are roughly aligned in a NE-SW direction. With the deepest zone in the extreme SE corner the depth to water gradually gets shallower towards north-west up to

Bhamin where <u>the water table is being less than</u> 10 m.b.g.l. (0520H10-0550H10)
[Category: Miscellaneous, central government documents, reports/department publications]

05. Then even the most potent drug may not be effective...." He then looked straight into Dinesh's eyes and said, "Of course, <u>you must be knowing better....</u> It's for you to infuse in her the will to live... the will to fight back..." (1420P14-1450P14)
[Category: Romance and love story, short story]

The following examples are less straightforward and were marked as ambiguous by some native speakers of English. (09) is ambiguous because it is unclear whether we are actually dealing with a progressive construction; others seem to be acceptable but rather unusual. It is noteworthy that the ambiguous cases often involve the verb *have,* which, as was mentioned in the discussion about stative verbs, can have both a dynamic and a stative meaning and is thus a good candidate for confusion and errors (see examples 10-12).

(06) is acceptable, but unusual according to Quirk (1992: 205), because the use of the progressive with *smell* points to a focussing on the process of perception (compare also example 7 in section 5.1). The same thing could be said about *remembering* in (07).

06. Unworried, she went about landing a sound kiss on my head, as I swung round on the piano stool to greet her and that Musk perfume <u>she was smelling of.</u> (0840R01-0860R01)
[Category: Humour, short stories]

07. This perhaps is the result of our meeting. <u>I shouldn't be remembering it</u> though, for I am not much interested in my past. (0690K14-0700K14)
[Category: General fiction, short stories]

(08) is interesting because in the small section of the text, the verb *want* is used once in the simple form (first underlined part) and once in the continuous by the same protagonist of the novel, which suggests that there is a functional differentiation. Two other stative verbs appear in their usual simple form (*doesn't wish to go, we know).* Unfortunately, this is the only example that exhibits such a varied use of the two forms and the data thus is insufficient for drawing conclusions on this very interesting question. It appears that the

second use of the verb *want* probably has an affective meaning, such as a polite insistence on the statement (Quirk et al. 1992: 203 point out that verbs that express "state of emotion or attitude" can sometimes be used in the progressive if temporariness or tentativeness is being emphasised).

> 08. "Suleiman wanted to marry his own daughter to the tailor from Bombay. My father suspects that Suleiman got someone to do this so that the wedding of my sister would be called off." "But that's no reason not to go to the police. He can't shield a criminal simply because he is a cousin." "That's not it, sahib. You see, if my father goes to the police he will have to state his suspicions. Then they will question my uncle and if, after all that, my uncle turns out to be innocent, it will leave a terrible rift in the family. My father doesn't wish to go to the police till he is sure it isn't his cousin. It would be a public scandal, you see. That's why I haven't been allowed to tell anyone else about this yet. If that is so, then we know that the attacker went back to him to report. My brothers would go and beat up my uncle and, after all, he's an old man, too. We are only wanting to know if the trail of the attacker leadsa o [sic] my uncle's hut and farm." (1070L11-1200L11)
> [Category: Mystery and detective fiction, novel]

Whether example (09) is wrong or not depends on whether we want to interpret *concerning* as the present participle of *concern* or as a preposition.

> 09. The second comment that I wish to make is concerning the following para: If harmonious happiness can be truly affirmed to be the moral standard it must so agree with human nature and the circumstances of human life that men can adopt it by education, persuasion, and choice (1770J54‑1800J54)
> [Category: Learned and scientific writing, philosophy]

(10) to (12) are typical for what the Oxford Companion to the English language describes as "fuzziness" of the notion of stative verbs (see above, 5.1).

> 10. As per the Railways' perspective, all the long-distance mail/ express trains in the country will be having, in the next two to three years, second class 3-tier coaches, with padded cushions and improved amenities, which will greatly wean away most of the passengers from the first class to the second class [...] (1640H21-1680H21)
> [Category: Miscellaneous, central government documents/other government documents]

> 11. With her profound love for animals, Mahrooqh Master has been having pets ever since she can remember, not only dogs, but birds, horses, lambs and even a donkey. (0280E14-300E14)
> [Category: Skills, trades and hobbies, pets]

12. [...] There are no banks there" explained Jagoo, "and especially now that it is harvest time the Office <u>must be having</u> its maximum balances." (1390L19-1400L19)
[Category: Mystery and detective fiction, short stories]

The next two instances (13-14) illustrate the problem of simply listing verbs as "stative" (rather than talking of stative uses of verbs); additionally, they also display other typical characteristics of Indian English. In (13), the –ing form of *admire* seems appropriate because the verb is used in its dynamic meaning: the continuous adds the sense of actively looking at the sculptures mentioned and probably touching them. Nevertheless, the example is interesting because the following (clearly incorrect) use of the verbs in the simple forms (*talks, proceed*) gives the impression of a generally inconsistent use of tense/aspect. The verb *proceed* is also a good example of the archaic style often attributed to Indian English (where a native speaker would probably use *go* or *walk*). Just as in (13), *is realising* in example (14) is once again acceptable because it "splits" the cognitive process into distinguishable parts. The example also shows another feature of Indian English, namely the lacking definite article ("government" instead of "the government").

13. The sculptures are exquisite. It is a different world. <u>An American couple is admiring the sculptured figures</u>. A fourteen-year-old boy, their guide, talks to them rapidly in English. I proceed to the abode of the deity. (1280N13-1300N13)
[Category: adventure, short stories]

14. Government itself is proposing many things. I do not want to get myself involved in that problem just now. <u>Government is realising the gravity and seriousness of the rate of growth in population.</u> (1300H16-1310H16)
[Category: central government, debates]

5.6 Evaluation

The disappointing infrequency of the feature can be explained by two reasons: the age of the corpus and the composition of the corpus. As mentioned above, the Kolhapur Corpus was compiled in 1978. In the last 24 years, the acceptance of Indianisms even in more formal sorts of text may well have increased (see section 3.4.3 for the new "self-assuredness" of Indian English). The late seventies also saw the first attempts of a standardisation of the Indian English variety, as illustrated by the writing of dictionaries and grammars; the creation of the Kolhapur Corpus itself is a part of a general movement towards the establishment of a local norm.

Today, Indian pupils work with textbooks that contain material mainly written by Indians (d'Souza 1997: 94); maybe in the meantime, the British norm has lost its status as *only* prestigious variety in formal genres. Only a study of comparable contemporary material could of course clarify the assumption that today, Indianisms are more frequent in Indian English texts of all sorts.

Unfortunately, the small number of examples does not make it possible to draw conclusions regarding the question of whether there is a functional difference in the usage of stative verbs in the progressive and in the simple form other than the one often employed in British and American English (where the progressive can be used for such varied functions as tentativeness/politeness, distinguishing a permanent quality from behaviour in the case of *being*, or turning a stative meaning into a process meaning).

As mentioned in section 3.4.2, Indian English has a wide fluency range: there are highly educated speakers that practically reach native speaker fluency (the acrolect or high variety), whereas others use a mesolect or basilect.

The vast majority of texts in the selection of the corpus represents the acrolect. The mesolect and the basilect are – if ever – present only in the fictional texts and the written transcripts of the speeches. Syntactic interference resulting from substrate languages and syntactic deviations, however, are most likely in the language of less educated speakers who are less exposed to written English material.

The fact that most of the material in the corpus certainly underwent an editing process (it is unlikely that the newspaper and journal articles were not proof-read to avoid syntactic deviations) is very important as well. Görlach (1991: 25) reminds us that syntactic deviations are probably the most stigmatised among all possible deviations of New English varieties (as opposed, for example, to the acceptance of a typically Indian accent or lexical peculiarities). Tolerance towards the use of stative verbs in the progressive is thus certainly low in formal text genres.

6 The Indian use of the progressive form: Possible explanations

Most linguistic changes have multiple causes (Thomason 2001: 62). It is likely that the Indian overuse of the progressive cannot be traced back to one single source; instead, several factors might work together. The following section will review three major hypotheses. Following Hansen et al. (1996: 221) and Platt et al. (1984) , the overuse of the progressive can thus can be attributed to

1. processes at work in any language contact situation, i.e. transfer and/or universal processes of simplification and overgeneralization (a debate lead in the field of language contact studies and second language acquisition) or
2. certain methods and techniques in language instruction (resulting in "overteaching" of grammatical structures) or
3. a particular linguistic input that was typical in colonial situations, i.e. the influence of certain dialects and non-standard varieties of British English in the early stages of acquisition of English on the Indian subcontinent.

6.1   Language contact and second language acquisition

6.1.1   The study of second language acquisition and its usefulness for Indian   English

Thomason and Kaufman point out that studying second language acquisition is a "potentially valuable source of information about interference through shift". Learners' errors, they claim, are directly comparable to shift-induced language change. Studies in this field, however, are unfortunately rare, possibly because the framework of contrastive analysis became unpopular and was replaced by approaches such as error analysis and approaches that stress the simplification of the target language's structures by learners. A further problem in employing methods of second language acquisition is that the investigated "interlanguage" phenomena are ephemeral, putting time pressure on the investigation. Thomason and Kaufman thus advocate the study of "fossilised intermediate or advanced stages" in second language acquisition, such as Irish English (Thomason/Kaufman 1988: 145-146).

In this paragraph, Thomason and Kaufman only hint at the relationship between the study of language contact and second language acquisition and introduce several terms that were coined by competing approaches in the field. Although language contact studies and second language acquisition studies are often regarded as separate entities, there are important overlaps. Both, for example, are concerned with various aspects of bilingualism. But whereas historical linguists (such as Thomason and Kaufman) are interested in bilingualism only in so far as it provides explanations for contact-induced language change, L2 acquisition research is interested in the process of acquisition of proficiency in a second language (Romaine 1996: 572-573). Bilingualism, and of course also multilingualism, have long been treated as a special case or deviations from the norm especially by European linguists; from a global point of view, however, typical European monolingualism is relatively exceptional. Romaine points out

that even monolingual societies are not monolithic: social, regional and stylistic varieties of what is considered to be "one language" abound[11].

The study of second language acquisition investigates language learning from a variety of different theoretical angles: Both internal (cognitive) and external (social) factors contribute to the process of language learning. Sociolinguistically motivated studies, for example, are concerned with the influence of the social situation in which a language is acquired (a naturalistic vs. an educational setting), or the connection between linguistic input and learners' output. On the other hand, studies that approach L2-acquisition from a perspective of cognitive psychology put the emphasis on the mental processes at work in language learning.

Approaches also differ in the object of their research: some studies focus on the process of learning and try to find explanations for the general acquisition process. Others pay attention to the individual learner, i.e. they want to explain why some people are more successful in second language acquisition than others and identify the individual factors responsible for this (Ellis 1994: 16-17).

The relevance of these different approaches to the topic of the present paper is neatly summed up by Görlach who claims that most grammatical peculiarities in the new varieties (and thus also the use of stative verbs in the progressive in Indian English)

> can be seen to fall within the discussion about 'substrata versus universals': are syntactic 'errors' primarily owing to transfers from the native language (or to compromises between L1 and L2 structures) or do they reflect more or less universal learners' strategies having to do with concepts such as naturalness, markedness, least effort, and cognition that seem to remain constant [...], or can the relative weight of the two be defined where they coincide in a specific case? (Görlach 1991: 25-26)

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[11] The concept of "bilingualism" is as controversial as the notion of the "native speaker" (see chapter 3.2). In particular, scholars do not agree about the question of whether learners of a foreign language should be considered bilingual, or what role the sequence of acquisiton of the languages plays. Some bilinguals acquire both languages simultaneously from childhood, others learn languages in a sequential order either in their childhood or when they are already adults, and the linguistic consequences are still unclear. See also Görlach (1991: 17-18) who claims that multilingualism presents a "challenge to the European concept of monolingualism", provoking the need for further study in such fields as code-switching, language mixing, the mutuality of contact phenomena, and questioning concepts such as bilingualism, native speaker, and diglossia.

The usefulness of studies in second language acquisition is not uncontroversial, though: Fundamental criticism comes for example from Klein (1986: 167). In his discussion of the relevant approaches, he remarks scathingly that research in the field cannot give "conclusive evidence on any important question" and fails to reach its highest aim, i.e. to serve as a solid foundation for language instruction. A general problem of L2 acquisition research is also that studies (and accordingly results) are often hard to compare because the experimental designs differ significantly from each other and a critical discourse about methodology is still rare.

The aim of the following section is to disentangle the basic different theoretical approaches and viewpoints and to discuss their usefulness for the analysis of the use of aspect in Indian English. Two extremely influential approaches, contrastive analysis and the competing cognitive approaches, will be introduced in greater detail because their assumptions have shaped the whole field and set the stage for further research.

6.1.2   Contrastive analysis

Contrastive analysis was the dominant paradigm in L2 acquisition research in the 1950s and 1960s. It relied basically on a comparison between structures of the target language and the learner's first language and identified two kinds of processes: positive and negative transfer. Proceeding on the structural comparisons between L1 and L2, scholars predicted positive transfer where the structures were similar, i.e. the L1 would facilitate the acquisition of L2, and negative transfer where the structures differed from each other, i.e. the L1 pattern would impede acquisition of the corresponding pattern in L2.

The relationship between the study of language contact and contrastive analysis is an intimate one. Contrastive analysis borrowed the concept of "transfer" from studies of language contact. The original, "strong" version of contrastive analysis (the version that attributed all errors to a process of transfer) was based on the findings of Weinreich's influential 1953 study on language contact (Ellis 1994: 306-307). But whereas language contact studies

were concerned predominantly with macro-phenomena (language change on a larger scale), the chief aim of contrastive analysis was the preparation of teaching material designed to help learners with problems that were caused by the interference of their specific mother tongues (Ellis 1994: 29-30).

Contrastive analysis was challenged in the 1960s and 1970s by approaches such as error analysis and "interlanguage" theories. Indeed, contrastive studies often could not accurately predict the mistakes learners made, and several studies showed that learners essentially made the same mistakes, regardless of the properties of their native languages. Klein (1986: 25) attributes the failure of contrastive analysis to predict transfer phenomena to the fact that scholars did not understand that structural similarities and dissimilarities and the processing of these in actual production and comprehension were two different things. Contrastive analysis in its pure form, thus, can be said to fail because it does not account for the circumstances in which learning and language use take place and instead exclusively relies on an abstract comparison of structures. Structures, however, have no uniform effect on individual learners.

6.1.3   Cognitive approaches: universal grammar, interlanguage, and the similarities between L1 and L2 acquisition

The major rival approach to contrastive analysis came from scholars working in the field of psycholinguistics in the 1960s and 70s. These new studies either rejected the influence of the speaker's first language on the acquisition of the second language altogether or claimed that it was limited to certain superficial domains. The properties of learner language were evidence of cognitive processes comparable to those during the acquisition of a first language, and these processes again were similar across languages. Learners of a foreign language thus would all make similar mistakes, regardless of their individual linguistic background, and transfer was not necessary to explain features of learner language.

6.1.3.1 Interlanguage theory

Interlanguage theory is probably the best known of the cognitive theories. It works with "interim grammars", i.e. it hypothesises that during the learning process the learners build up a (stable) grammatical system that is different from both the grammar of L1 and L2. This "interlanguage", then, is constrained by the same "universal principles" as native speakers' grammars (Ritchie and Bhatia 1999: 7-8). Two specific processes are identified to be at work: extension of an L2 rule to a context in which it does not apply in the target language (overgeneralization) and the reduction of the target language system to a simpler form (simplification) (Ellis 1994: 30). The interlanguage can also fossilise at some point, i.e. the L2 acquisition process will stop at a certain point and learners will not achieve native speaker fluency (compare the comment of Thomason/Kaufman 1988, section 6.1.1).

6.1.3.2 Primacy of Aspect in L1 and L2 acquisition

The topic of the acquisition of tense and aspect is widely studied; a variety of articles is reviewed by Andersen and Shirai (1996). Many researchers claim that in L1 acquisition there is a "Primacy of Aspect" (POA), i.e. the "phenomenon of limiting a tense-aspect marker to a restricted class of verbs, according to the inherent aspect of the verb" (Andersen/Shirai 1996:529). For an understanding of this hypothesis, it is necessary to distinguish between two types of aspect (Andersen/Shirai 1996: 530):

1. grammatical aspect, which refers to "aspectual distinctions that are marked explicitly by linguistic devices, usually auxiliaries and inflections". (In the present paper, this would be represented by the –ing morpheme.)
2. inherent lexical aspect/Aktionsart, which denotes the characteristics that are "inherent in the lexical items that describe the situation. For example, know is inherently stative, whereas jump is inherently punctual (i.e. momentary and having no duration)".

Departing from a four-way classification of the inherent semantics of verbs (achievement, accomplishment, activity, state), the POA studies find that in languages that use a progressive aspect, L1 learners do not incorrectly overextend progressive markings to stative verbs (Andersen/Shirai 1996: 531-533).

For L2 acquisition, however, most studies find that the use of progressive marking on stative verbs is quite common. The authors of the review are careful in suggesting that a variety of factors should always be considered to be at work simultaneously. They find that transfer from L1 is insufficient in explaining the phenomenon, but that attention should instead be directed toward the *interplay* between linguistic universals and L1 factors. Additionally, the overuse of the progressive might also suggest "that the universal capacity that may be available to children is no longer available for adults, or at least it is weakened or mediated by the L1 tense-aspect system." (Anderson/Shirai 1996: 545-547) Other studies make the linguistic input received by children and adult L2 learners responsible for the difference in production.

The distinction into four Aktionsart classes seems to appear in all languages:

> States, as the name implies, are predicates that denote properties (e.g. *to be yellow* and *to be broken)* or nondynamic circumstances (*to see* and *to exist*). [...] Regardless of how the four classes are evinced in a language, they tend to have certain aspectual categories associated with them. For example, states resist being placed in the imperfective because they are nondynamic. Therefore, in American English it is awkward to say "the banana is being yellow" or "I was seeing the movie" (Whaley 1997: 215-216).

The quite heterogeneous list of stative verbs in English and the corresponding difficulties of finding a common characteristic of all of them reveal that some of the verbs cannot be assigned unambiguously to one of the categories. *Recognise*, for example, is nondynamic, but it can be employed in the progressive, which suggests that speakers use the verb with a process meaning, i.e. there is a re-interpretation of the inherent semantics. The association with one of the four classes of Aktionsart is obviously becoming

weaker, which also accounts for why a larger number of examples found in the corpus analysis were marked as ambiguous.

In the light of these changes, more attention should be directed to linguistic input, because it is likely that learners of both L1 and L2 English are increasingly exposed to changing linguistic input.

6.1.4   Evaluation

Overgeneralization and simplification, the processes identified by psycholinguistic and here especially interlanguage theory, are helpful in explaining the Indian use of the progressive: the application of the -ing form to all kinds of verbs (not only those that are inherently dynamic in English) could be regarded as applying a general rule to all instances, without restrictions and exceptions, thus simplifying the English grammar. This explanation seems plausible; over the years, studies have collected an impressive amount of evidence for the claim that regardless of their linguistic background, L2 learners tend to overuse the continuous. Additionally, Indian English is also not isolated among the "New Englishes": for example, West African and East African English are reported to display use of verbs of state with progressive forms, too (compare Hansen et al. 1996: 187; 208; see also further below, chapter 6.4). Unfortunately, the unsatisfactory results of the corpus analysis could not give answers to the question if all verbs can be used both in continuous and simple forms in Indian English or not. A collection of contemporary spoken material would be necessary to draw more confident conclusions.

Cognitive approaches in general have the merit of presenting an alternative to the strong version of contrastive analysis, i.e. to an approach that exclusively relies on the comparison of structures. The *strict* denial of the influence of the first language of the learners is, however, problematic: interference is in many cases so obvious that it cannot simply be ignored.

This is especially the case in phonology: cognitive approaches would certainly encounter some difficulties when they tried to explain the replacement of the dental pronunciation of /t d/ by the highly marked Indian English retroflex /t d/ as a universal process of simplification. The counter-argument that phonology

differs from other subsystems in that it is a "superficial domain" and therefore receives interference features more easily, is very unconvincing. Why should transfer be asymmetrical, i.e. why should morphology and syntax be less susceptible to L1 influence than phonology, which is also a core component of any language?

Another problem with psycholinguistic theories is that not all features of learner language can be considered simplifications. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 23) point out that the result of contact can also complicate the grammar of the receiving language considerably (or that a simplifying change in one subsystem might very well trigger a complicating change in another). Additionally, the concept of "simplification" is not a very clearly defined notion: sometimes it can be difficult to assess what is "easier" and what is "harder" to learn (this question is closely related to the problem of "markedness").

Finally, cognitive approaches, in their pure form, make the same mistake as contrastive analysis: they neglect the potential influence of the learners' environment on linguistic outcome. Learners' output, however, varies with the social setting.

As can be seen from the discussion above, the extreme versions of both contrastive analysis and cognitive studies have not been able to supply satisfactory explanations for all processes that are at work in L2 acquisition. Transfer has in recent years been acknowledged once again under the influence of evidence gathered by language contact studies, and because it is too obvious to be ignored, although it is easiest to prove in phonology (the learner's "foreign accent").

Additionally, it has become clearer that transfer does not have to manifest itself as straightforward errors, but also through avoidance of certain difficult patterns, overuse of certain structures, and facilitation. Learners seem to be more likely to transfer unmarked features of their native language than marked ones (Ellis 1994: 29-30). Transfer is probably only one of several processes at work, interacting with a tendency for overgeneralization and simplification of certain grammatical structures. Sociolinguistic studies, thus, put the emphasis on the

environment of the learner, i.e. under which circumstances the language is acquired.

Table 3: Summary: two paradigms in L2 acquisition research

Theory	Key terms/hypothesis	Explanation of overuse of progressive form	Main weakness
Contrastive analysis	• Transfer • Learners' errors reflect mother tongue structures	Comparable structures in Indian languages	• Predictive power not very high, as structures do not have uniform effect on learners • Ignores social context of learning
Cognitive approaches	• Over-generalization • Simplification • Fossilisation • Interlanguage • Learners' errors reflect universal principles underlying every language	Indian learners behave like all L2 learners in that they overuse the progressive (unlike L1 learners). Extension of rule for the use of the progressive to non-stative verbs because universal grammar not accessible for L2 learners	• Ignorance of obvious transfer • Learners' output does not always simplify grammar • Definition of simplifying change is difficult • Ignores social context of learning

6.2 Interference by substrate languages

The concept of transfer is highly controversial in L2 acquisition studies. The preceding section discussed the mechanisms of transfer, simplification and overgeneralization and argued that only a combination of these factors can satisfactorily account for linguistic outcomes.

Transfer/interference is, however, accepted in language contact studies: For scholars working in the field, one of the most likely and most convincing explanations for deviations in Indian English (and, of course, in other non-native varieties) would accordingly be the influence of the substrate languages, i.e. a transfer of the structures of the first languages of Indian English speakers, provided that certain social and linguistic factors can be shown to be at work.

6.2.1   When is a contact explanation appropriate?

Interference is often hard to prove – many changes in a language may also be caused by internal developments. Thomason (2001: 93-94) suggests that a number of requirements must be met to "make a solid case for structural interference in a (proposed) receiving language." Even if interest is focused on one single grammatical construction (such as the question of whether the overuse of the progressive originates from corresponding structures in Indian languages) an argument for a contact origin is only likely to be valid if other characteristics of the language display signs of interference, too. In this case, it is necessary to identify a source language which must be shown to be, or have been, in contact with the receiving language, and that the intensity of the contact was/is strong enough to make structural interference possible. A comparison of the linguistic structures of the languages follows. The last two conditions for establishing a change with a contact origin then involve showing that the feature was *not* present in the receiving language but *was* present in the source language.

6.2.2 Multilingualism in India

The first requirement is easy to fulfil for Indian English: numerous phonological features (compare section 4.1) can be traced back to Indian languages. Therefore, syntactic and morphological interference are also likely. The identification of a source language, however, is complicated by two things: multilingualism in India and a lack of systematic information on Indian languages.

The linguistic situation in India is complex: bilingualism and multilingualism are the norm, and not only do the Indian languages belong to four major language families, but they also form a so-called *Sprachbund* (linguistic area) which means that even typologically distant languages share certain marked features that were spread by frequent contact over thousands of years. A well-known example is the occurrence of retroflex consonants in many unrelated Indian languages, a feature originating from the Dravidian family (see Thomason/Kaufman 1988:139-144) and also a phonological marker of Indian English.

Table 4: Indian language families

Language family	Most important languages (numbers of speakers)	geographical distribution
Indo-Aryan*	all dialects of Hindi/Urdu (230 million speakers) Sindi Rjasthan Gujarati Bengali Singhalese	Northern India, (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka)
Iranian*	Pashto (11.000) Afghan (not available)	North West India (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran)
Dravidian	Telugu (54 million speakers) Tamil (50 million Malayam (27 million) Kannada (27 million)	South and East India, (Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Africa)
Sino-Tibetan	About 3 million speakers Dafla (one million) Minyong (one million)	North East India (Tibet)
Austronesian	About 6 million speakers Santali (3 million) Khasi (300.000)	South India (Pacific Islands)

*Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian form the Indian sub-branch of the Indo-European family.
Table based on: Kachru 1990, Mallikarjun 2002, Mehrotra 1998

The massive number of substrate languages and dialects therefore complicates the comparison and analysis considerably. The fact that speakers of Indian English are multilingual (with the possible exception of Anglo-Indians, although they are not focus of the present analysis) means that transfer can occur simultaneously from all languages the speakers know (see Odlin 1989: 27). Unfortunately, the description of Indian languages is not as extensive as that of European languages. Available grammars are usually pedagogical rather than descriptive, with the consequence of a considerably simplified description of the grammar. Additionally, the available material is often methodologically unsatisfactory or outdated.

Hindi/Urdu is the most important South Asian language in terms of numerical strength and political importance. It is also among the best documented. Schmidt's 1999 grammar is a valuable source for information about Urdu, as it is targeted to the needs of European learners and especially those with English as their mother tongue. Considering these facts, it seems reasonable to use Hindi/Urdu as a basis for comparison between English and Indian languages and the investigation of interference of L1 structures in Indian English.

Indo-Aryan languages are spread over the whole Northern part of the Indian subcontinent (including Pakistan, see table 4). They represent a dialect continuum; as Masica (1991: 25) notes, the classic definition of dialects as mutually intelligible varieties of the same language is not very useful in describing the linguistic map of India (it should be added that this definition is also not always appropriate for the dialects of Europe, for whom it was originally developed).

The most prominent example of the difficulties with this terminology is the situation of Hindi and Urdu that, although by their speakers considered to be two different *languages*, are only two different *literary styles* of the same Indo-Aryan dialect. On the colloquial level and in terms of core vocabulary and grammar they are practically identical; on formal or literary levels, though, they differ considerably. Hindi draws its higher lexicon from Sanskrit, whereas Urdu uses a mainly Arabic and Persian lexicon. Additionally, Hindi and Urdu are written in two different scripts (Masica 1991: 27).

The following analysis, however, is concerned only with verbs that belong more or less to common vocabulary. For our discussion of the role Hindi and Urdu play in the Indian usage of English stative verbs, therefore, both grammars of Hindi and Urdu can be used as evidence.

Regarding its social status, Hindi/Urdu is the single most important language besides English. Politically, Hindi occupies a special position in its function as the official language of the Union of India. Furthermore, it takes first place before English in book and newspaper publishing and competes with English as the primary instruction medium in secondary education (see Mehrotra 1998: 7-11). Indians are obliged to learn Hindi at school and must be proficient in it if they want to work for the federal administration (Thomason 2001: 43). Because of this, pan-Indian English features can be attributed to interference from Hindi/Urdu even for speakers of other languages.

6.2.3   Habitual and progressive aspect in Hindi/Urdu

The complex aspect system of Hindi/Urdu contains both continuous tense forms for actions or states that are incomplete and in progress, and habitual tense forms for actions or states which occur generally or regularly (see Schmidt 1999: 87-142). The distribution and usage resembles the English system, so that the forms translate relatively easily into English.

The most striking feature in verb formation in Hindi/Urdu is the existence of compound verbs, i.e. verb forms composed of two usually finite verbs or a verb and a noun. Examples of the formation of these verbs (taken from Kachru 1990: 65) are

p∂s∂nd hona   "liking be" = *to like*
svikar k∂rna   "acceptance do" = *to accept*

In his short overview of Indian English grammatical features, Kachru (1983: 78) suggests that because verbs such as *hear* and *see* can be used in the progressive form in Hindi/Urdu, a process of transfer/interference can account for the Indian English use of otherwise stative verbs in the progressive.

Most of the verbs from the list that was used for the corpus analysis can be translated into Hindi/Urdu only with the help of a compound construction (i.e. a combination of two usually finite verbs or a verb and a noun)[12]. Others have constructions with genitive subjects. Simple verbs comparable to the English constructions are only *admire, be, forget, hear, know, reach, resemble, realise, recognise, sound, see, stop, keep, want, wish* and *understand.*

Of the simple verbs, all can be used with both habitual and continuous aspect. Continuous tenses of simple verbs are formed in Hindi/Urdu with the following rule:

verb root + *raha/rahi/rahe* + inflected auxiliary verb (*hona*)

raha is the perfective participle of *rahna* "to stay, to remain"; it is delexicalised and functions as the continuous participle (comparable to the -ing of the English verb form).

Example:

| Vo | kar | raha | | hai. | ("He is doing.") |
| He | do | [progressive marker] | | is | |

(Schmidt 1999: 112)

In the analysis of the Kolhapur Corpus, some of the simple verbs that can take progressive aspect in Hindi/Urdu appeared in the progressive in English (examples were found with *admire, be, realise, want,* see section 5.5). The similarity of the structures might thus facilitate a transfer from Hindi/Urdu to English. The compound construction, however, and accordingly the larger part of the verbs in question, do not follow the usual habitual/progressive routine of the simple verb. The correlation between the possible use of the progressive for some verbs (such as Kachru's *see* and *hear*) thus seems quite weak.

But as was demonstrated in the preceding chapter, it is useless to postulate that a "one-to-one relationship" between the grammars of contact languages is necessary for a transfer to take place:

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[12] Most of the information about Hindi/Urdu was gathered in personal communication with Dr. Miriam Butt of Constance University.

> The shared features need not be identical in all respects, and often they will not be. It is well known that interference features often have different form or different distributions or different functions from the source features in the donor language (Thomason 2001: 93).

It is possible that an original transfer took place for the verbs that correspond to simple verbs in Hindi/Urdu and that later the feature was extended to other verbs, creating a new and stable rule, i.e. "use the progressive with all verbs". The status of English as a lingua franca then ensured that in frequent interactions between speakers the use of stative verbs in the progressive could be spread in the speech community and create a new norm (a process that would meet more difficulties in a country where English is a foreign language and is used only in certain special domains; in these communities, an approximation to British or American standards is more highly valued).

As mentioned above, many languages of the Indo-Aryan family resemble each other closely so that it is also possible that the overuse of the progressive can be a result of transfer processes from other languages. A contrastive comparison of more languages is of course unfortunately not possible within the limited scope of the present paper.

The last requirements for a contact origin are harder to satisfy. Hindi/Urdu exhibit the possibility of using the verbs in question with both habitual and continuous aspect. We would, however, also have to prove that English (in India) did not exhibit overuse of progressive before, i.e. that an internal explanation for the change is unlikely. This is difficult if we consider that the progressive seems to be in a process of change also in other varieties. It has experienced grammatical extension in the last few hundred years (compare the discussion in chapter 5.2) and is also commonly used with stative verbs in some dialects. Possibly, the extension of the progressive aspect to verbs of state is thus a natural, normal development. On the other hand, although the analysis of the Kolhapur Corpus has, for a variety of reasons, not delivered more information on the feature and we still have to rest our claims on more or less anecdotal evidence, the use of progressive aspect with stative verbs is known to be so common in Indian English that speakers of other varieties often use it to identify Indians. The ing-form is certainly more pervasive in the Indian variety

than in ENL varieties and does not correspond to the development in other dialects.

All of the requirements that make an explanation involving interference from substrate languages have been more or less met. The overuse of the progressive can thus be satisfactorily explained by the influence of L1 structures.

6.3 Seeking explanations in the classroom: language instruction in India

"Applied linguistics" studies the influence of teaching methods and material on the production of the learner. These explanations should not be ignored: After all, most Indians learn English at school; the Indian variety is thus to a large extent a product of the classroom. Nevertheless, references to applied linguistics are rare in the literature on World Englishes.

Platt et al. (1984) state that the use of the progressive with stative verbs might be attributed to "overteaching". With this term they refer to the possibility that teachers "stressed the -ing form of the English verbs as an essential part of the verbal system and therefore speakers began to use it with every English verb." Additionally, speakers might have extended the progressive form to stative verbs because some of these verbs can have a dynamic meaning, such as *I'm having a meal.* (Platt et al. 1984: 72-73; see the description of stative verbs in 5.1).

Unfortunately, this claim cannot be scrutinised. In general, information about teaching methods, teachers' attitudes and material used in language instruction in the early history of education in India is scarce. Law (1915) describes the efforts made by missionaries in educating children of European settlers and Indian employees of the East India Company at the elementary level. He rates the standard of education in India in the 17th and 18th century as generally not very high (Law 1915: 134).

Instruction was first and foremost given in local languages or the Portuguese-based Creole that was used in India. The Portuguese had been the first colonial power that settled permanently on the Indian subcontinent, see above, chapter 3.4.1, and a Portuguese-based Creole was in use for trading purposes when the British arrived. Only at the end of the 18th century, schools were founded that employed English as the exclusive medium of instruction (Law 1915: 65-66).

Early British teachers in India obviously used Indian schools as an arena for testing new methods of learning that were modelled on the Indian tradition of schooling. Law (1915: 45-61) gives some indication of the methodology

employed in elementary schools in Southern India: a Scotsman named Dr. Bell founded a school in Madras that was highly successful and subsequently served as a model for others. The institution became famous in India and beyond for the "Bell method", an adaptation of an already existing Indian method in which more advanced pupils served as teachers of the less advanced. It seems plausible that in such a system, which relied heavily on oral teaching instead of book learning, a linguistic feature can be spread quite quickly. Native speakers of English were not available to Indian students; they were themselves taught by their peers.

6.3.1   Contemporary language instruction in India: aims, methods, problems

The situation in the education system in India today is better documented. Two authors were reviewed for the following section: Tickoo (1996), who gives a general overview of language teaching in postcolonial Asian countries, and Chelliah (2001), who investigates Indian language books. Both are united in attesting language instruction in India a poor quality, but attribute this failure to different reasons. Whereas in the early stages of language instruction oral methods prevailed, teaching today obviously relies heavily on book learning and self-study.

Tickoo (1996: 232-234) gives a condensed overview of the methods employed in Indian schools and the problems associated with them. The major failure of the way English is taught in India, he writes, is that the methods were developed for monolingual learners and often especially for immigrant workers in industrial countries, so the primary aim of the teaching was "social survival through effective oral communication"; Tickoo himself obviously favours the teaching of English only for the specific purpose of giving learners access to resources of knowledge and information. Literacy, he writes, should be promoted with the help of the first language.

Chelliah (2001: 161), on the other hand, attributes the "creation and sustenance of English interlanguages in India" mainly to the use of outdated methods of language teaching, examination-centred evaluation of students' progress and the poor quality of the teaching material. She compares seven "language guide

books" that were written especially for Indian learners of English to help them avoid common errors. Interestingly, she finds that these guidebooks suffer basically from the indecisiveness with which they treat question of norms in Indian English. The books written by Indians tend to reject several documented features on the ground that their use might make Indian English unintelligible for speakers of other varieties. Thus, employing the progressive with stative verbs is marked as error. On the other hand, the corrections presented for certain structures involve a progressive use (and are ungrammatical in British as well as in Indian English). Chelliah gives the following example (where "I" stands for "incorrect", "C" for "correct"):

I: I am have a new bicycle tomorrow.
C: I am having a new bicycle tomorrow.

The author concludes that the quality of the material is so poor because "in addition to being less than proficient in a foreign variety of English, the authors are not fluent in Indian English either." (Chelliah 2001: 169-170). The books are not helpful in the acquisition of English and lack genuine learner errors and contrasts of English with regional Indian languages (Chelliah 2001: 172). Their popularity is mainly a consequence of the fact that Indians have to pass government-set exams after graduation from school as entry exams for jobs and colleges and that the books present themselves as a self-learning aid; on the other hand, Chelliah writes that the make-up of these error books also reflects the Indian prejudice against the use of English for communicative purposes: Indians learn English to pass exams, but not in order to communicate in social life (Chelliah 2001: 173-174).

6.3.2   Evaluation

The studies about teaching are not very helpful in explaining the Indian overuse of the progressive – they can probably rather contribute to an explanation of the *maintenance* of a grammatical feature than to one of its *origin*. Certainly a new local norm could develop quickly in a system that replaced native speaker teachers with local teachers relatively early. And although it seems that all local

peculiarities, among them the Indian use of the progressive, could be spread by teaching methods such as the Bell method (see above), evidence is insufficient. There is no further information available about where the Bell method was used outside Madras, and how especially language instruction was influenced by it.

Additionally, the two studies reveal two quite different and contradictory judgements on language teaching and aims of language instruction: Tickoo criticises that English was taught with methods that aimed to establish oral competence, whereas in his view it is necessary to teach English to give Indians access to advanced knowledge. Chelliah argues just the other way round: she states a disadvantageous preference for non-communicative methods.

Language teaching in India today is faced with the problem of distinguishing errors from local norms. Especially Chelliah's analysis of the Indian error books (that in her opinion reveals that the Indian consider English a language that is basically learned for passing exams) hints to the fact that although many authors claim that India has come quite far in accepting local standards, this is not unambiguously the case.

It should also be kept in mind that in a country as large as India, sweeping statements about the quality of teaching need to be treated with caution. Certainly, the quality of teaching depends to a large extent on the financial situation of the region and the money invested in teacher training and material. To the present day, India's social and economic problems have not been resolved; it remains one of the countries with the highest income gaps in the world. In 1997, 44,2 % of the population were below the poverty line; only 77% of the population visited at least the (theoretically obligatory) elementary school; 54,6% of the women and 31,6% of men were illiterate (Spiegel Online August 2002). Indian English as described here is, after all, the language of a small privileged class.

6.4 Linguistic input: Influence of British dialects

In his article "English as a world language – the state of the art", Manfred Görlach claims that the research on historical aspects of ESL countries are insufficient to date and that it is necessary to examine the linguistic input Indian speakers received. Differing from other colonial powers such as France, the British were "traditionally little concerned about the quality of the English used by non-native speakers overseas [...]. How close to British standard learners intended their English to be has therefore always been very much a matter of their own choice" (Görlach 1991: 19-20).

Could the use of the progressive be explained by the linguistic input Indians received? Which version of the target language English were they exposed to in the early years of colonialism?

6.4.1 British dialects in India

Many authors stress that the first input of English in India did not necessarily come from speakers of the standard variety. The early history of colonisation in India suggests that the presence of three important groups could have influenced the linguistic development of Indian English: the employees of the East India Company, the missionaries who were the first to offer systematic English teaching for Indian children in their schools, and finally the army that opened up relatively early to Indian soldiers.

Thundy compares some semantic, syntactic and especially phonological peculiarities of Indian English with American dialects (use of tense/aspect is not among his examples). He finds similarities that he traces back to the influence exerted by Northern dialects of British English (Scottish, Irish and Northern English varieties) on both American English and Indian English. Additionally, he identifies some characteristics of the "vulgar London dialects" of the 19th century (i.e. Cockney), such as the replacement of /θ, ð/ by /t, d/ (Thundy 1976: 30-34). Although his examples seem to be quite arbitrarily collected, Thundy succeeds in showing that there are striking similarities between features of Indian English and the British dialects. A look at the history of the East India Company and

early missionary activities in India reveals that indeed Scots and Irishmen were actively involved in the colonisation process: they served as officials in the trade organisation and founded missions and colleges in important Indian cities such as Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. The Scottish and Irish missions also exerted important cultural influence and helped shape the religious beliefs of Indian Christians (Thundy 1976: 36).

The missions were the only important setting of formal language instruction before the foundation of secular schools in the 19th century. In the 19th century, the British government increasingly made available financial means for the Indian education system; in 1835 English was declared the official language of the administration and became the chief instruction medium in the newly-founded higher schools and universities in the Indian cities (Hansen et. al 1996: 212-213).

The contact that Indians had with Cockney, on the other hand, took place mainly in the ethnically mixed army. Whereas the Scottish and Irish varieties contributed to the development of Indian English in all linguistic subsystems, the influence of Cockney seems to be confined to phonological features (Thundy 1976: 35-37).

Thundy concludes that the English language in India was strongly influenced by Northern British dialects and Cockney in the 17th and 18th century, whereas in the 1930s and 1940s (the period immediately preceding Indian independence and thereby ending the permanent presence of English speakers on the Indian subcontinent) the influence of RP was important (Thundy 1976: 34).

Confusingly, Thundy obviously refers to accent/phonology with this last remark, as indicated by using the term "RP" ("Received Pronunciation"). The term denotes the standard *pronunciation* of English in the Southeast of Britain that is also employed in language teaching, but does not refer to grammatical features. Hansen et al. (1996: 221) also point out that early dialect influence of Scottish or Northern English speakers might be an explanatory factor for some features of Indian English *pronunciation*, together with the influence of Indian substrate languages and the teaching of English mainly with the help of written material. That the authors mainly stress the phonological influence of the dialects on the new varieties of English is not surprising in that these differences are easily detectable.

Nevertheless, the use of stative verbs in the progressive form is a well-described feature of the mentioned dialects. For Scottish English, Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 98) point to the usage of stative verbs such as *want* and *need* in the continuous form, e.g. *I'm needing a cup of tea,* although these constructions are (not surprisingly) more common in informal spoken Scottish English than in the written mode.[13]

That the feature already existed in the 18th and 19th century, the period where the influence of Scots was greatest in India, is attested by Joan Beal (1997: 372-373). She points out that especially with the verbs *to think* and *to doubt* , but also with *to see* (compare her cited example *She was seeing a very bonny family of bairns*, 373) there are examples of the progressive usage in the earlier history of Scots. Restrictions on the use of verbs in the progressive as they exist in Standard English do not apply in Scots, even in educated speech. Irish English also knows the use of the expanded form with stative verbs: Hansen et al. (1996: 92) give the following examples: *Is this belonging to you? And what is it you'll be wanting?*

6.4.2   British dialects and other New English varieties

Interestingly, the missionary activities of Northern British religious societies were not confined to South Asia; Platt et al. (1984:3) point to the fact that for example in the early West African mission schools teachers and missionaries came from the north of England and Scotland and that the influence of their speech on some features of the local variety at least "cannot be ruled out". Influence from non-standard varieties of English thus is a phenomenon that can be observed also for other New English varieties.

Ghanaian English, for example, shows some similarities in the usage of stative verbs in the progressive, such as *The car is belonging to my uncle* and *He is having many houses in Accra* (Sey 1973: 34). In the Ghanaian case, this phenomenon cannot be easily traced to the influence of the substrate language (in this case Fante) because the usage of simple and progressive forms in

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[13] For further evidence, see also Miller/Brown 1982:9 on the realisation of *need to* forms with the progressive construction, and Aitken 1979: 104 who calls the favouring of the progressive form in constructions such as *I'm hoping* a "common Scotticism".

Fante resembles the standard English distribution. Sey (1973: 35) instead makes the teaching method responsible, i.e. "the notion formed very early at school that any English verb may collocate with –ing to express the continuous tense." Here, as in Indian English, one might nevertheless suspect that the varieties the early teachers brought to Ghana might have played a role, too; Sey himself discusses briefly the possibility of Northern British dialect influence on Ghanaian pronunciation but does not attribute Ghanaian grammatical features to this road of influence (1976: 148).

7 Conclusion

The corpus analysis conducted in this paper clearly shows that the main problem of studies in the field of World English is a lack of sufficient data: keeping in mind that in Indian writing, the approximation to the British standard is still relatively highly valued, a systematic collection of contemporary *spoken* Indian English is urgently needed. Otherwise, any conclusions about the use of grammatical features (such as aspect) and a proper description of the changes that occur and occurred in the contact situation between English and Indian languages seem relatively unreliable. Many of the controversial issues (e.g. the definition of a native speaker or a bilingual) could certainly be decided more confidently, too, if there was appropriate material on which scholars could rest their claims.

It would be particularly interesting to find out if there is a functional difference between the usage of verbs of state in simple and progressive form. The results in the corpus yield no support for a functional differentiation other than the usual British/American pattern where progressive forms can sometimes be used for tentativeness/politeness or in order to turn the stative meaning into a process meaning. Some other instances rather show a generally inconsistent use of time/aspect. Matters are further complicated by the ongoing change in the use of the continuous in varieties other than Indian English; the progressive aspect has experienced grammatical extension in the last centuries. A proper description of the New Englishes requires that we tackle the question whether we should consider them "*learner* varieties, characterised by 'deviations' or 'errors', as distinct from differences of a dialectal nature characteristic of the fully developed *native* varieties" (Saleemi in Afendras 1995: 309, emphasis in original). For the particular feature that was analysed here, the extension of the use of progressive forms in ENL varieties suggests that the development of progressive use in the new varieties might be part of or at least similar to a general development the English language is undergoing. Features of Indian English could thus display the same characteristics of those of an English dialect or other national variety and would not be qualitatively different from, say, features of Scottish or Irish English.

The approaches that were discussed regarding the origins of the feature all have some reasonable contribution to make. It is likely that linguistic input from British dialects, transfer from Indian native languages and a general tendency of learners to overuse the progressive work together in shaping Indian English grammar – in fact, the Indian linguistic situation provides an ideal environment for the development of such a feature. Unfortunately, it seems that this paper cannot fulfil the demand that Manfred Görlach makes (see chapter 6.1.1) and decide which of the three factors discussed here is the most influential one. In all likelihood, this demand can hardly ever be fulfilled because the investigation of language contact and change is a matter more of probabilities than of certainty.

The paper also compared the advantages and limits of two basic paradigms in second language acquisition: contrastive analysis, which attributes features of learner language to the influence of mother tongue structures, and purely cognitive theories, which investigate the influence of cognitive capacities on learners' output. Both approaches have been shown to be insufficient on their own. In consequence, modern theories generally acknowledge that only a combination of these factors can account for the output of learners of a foreign language and that the learners' environment must be taken into account as well. Second language acquisition studies in general, however, often suffer from a lack of agreed-upon methodology and are hard to compare.

India is one of the most multilingual places in the world; the high number of possible substrate languages makes the English-Indian contact situation notoriously complex. The comparison between Hindi and English shows that there are similarities in the aspect system of the two languages. Hindi is also a likely source of interference. Transfer can generally occur from all languages speakers know, and as Hindi enjoys the status of being the official language of the Union of India, all Indian pupils are obliged to learn Hindi at school. However, establishing transfer/interference is still difficult without intimate knowledge of (at least the most important) other Indian languages and a lack of reliable descriptions of the grammars of these languages. Research needs to fill

this gap, too. In particular, the impact of the numerically strong Dravidian languages on Indian English should be examined.

In the light of these difficulties, the "linguistic input responsible" explanation (i.e. influence of British dialects in the first two hundred years of British colonial rule) seems most plausible because it is supported by historical facts and does not pose the methodological problems of second language acquisition studies.

8 List of tables

9 Bibliography

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