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This is a contribution from *Exploring Second-Language Varieties of English and Learner Englishes. Bridging a paradigm gap.*

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Introduction

Bridging a paradigm gap

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The present book goes back to a workshop on “Second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes” at the First Conference of the International Society for the Study of English (ISLE-1) in Freiburg in October 2008, which brought together scholars from all branches of English linguistics. The general topic of this inaugural conference of ISLE was “The Linguistics of English: Setting the Agenda”; the great interest among the conference participants in the workshop on “Second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes” was triggered by the wide-spread feeling that it is necessary to develop an integrated view of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and to put this on the agenda of English linguistics. All the papers in the present collection, most of which have emerged from selected presentations at the ISLE-1 workshop, thus aim at bridging what Sridhar & Sridhar (1986) have called the ‘paradigm gap’ between research into learner Englishes (e.g. English produced by learners of English in Germany and Japan) in the tradition of second-language acquisition (SLA) research on the one hand and research into institutionalized second-language varieties (e.g. Indian English and Nigerian English) in former colonial territories on the other. In spite of Sridhar & Sridhar’s (1986) plea for an integrated approach almost 25 years ago, these two objects of inquiry have continued to be treated as fundamentally different and unrelated areas of research ever since – notwithstanding some early attempts at comparing the features, functions and the underlying acquisitional processes of second-language varieties and learner Englishes (e.g. Williams 1987) as well as a few notable recent publications (e.g. Nesselhauf 2009).

The rigour with which researchers from both lines of research have abstained from taking the other group of non-native Englishes as a product of a different, yet not entirely dissimilar language-acquisition process into account also has to do with linguistic taboos, especially on the part of researchers interested in second-language varieties of English to establish these New Englishes as full-fledged

varieties with the potential to develop endonormative and local standards and norms. These emerging local standards and norms should not be conflated, in their view, with the error-focused description and analysis of foreign language learners' output as a deviation from an exonormative norm; consider, in this context, for example Kachru's (1982) clear distinction between deviations (in ESL) and mistakes (in EFL). However, since both learner Englishes and second-language varieties are typically non-native forms of English that emerge in language contact situations and that are acquired (more or less) in institutionalized contexts, it is high time that they were described and compared on an empirical basis in order to draw conceptual and theoretical conclusions with regard to their form, function and acquisition. Such descriptive studies and comparisons were not possible on a large scale in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s as the relevant computer corpora of second-language varieties of English (e.g. many components of the *International Corpus of English*, ICE) as well as learner Englishes (e.g. the *International Corpus of Learner English*, ICLE) have only become available recently.

This book thus aims at bridging the afore-mentioned paradigm gap by:

1. presenting empirical, in particular corpus-based, case studies of features of learner Englishes and second-language varieties of English, e.g. with regard to the use of formulaic routines;
2. discussing similarities and differences against the background of theoretical models and conceptions, e.g. stages in the second-language acquisition process and stages in the evolution of New Englishes;
3. analyzing forms of English that sit somewhat uneasily on the boundary between ESL (i.e. the Kachruvian 'outer circle') and EFL (i.e. the Kachruvian 'expanding circle'), e.g. English in Cyprus and South Africa;
4. assessing the suitability of categorial labels such as ESL and EFL as well as traditional distinctions such as the one between native and non-native speakers;
5. sketching out the future agenda of an integrated approach to non-native Englishes including both institutionalized second-language varieties and learner Englishes.

An integrated and comprehensive approach to non-native Englishes is particularly relevant to the future agenda of English linguistics because today the English language is used to a much larger extent as a non-native language (ESL/EFL) than a native language (ENL) – be it as the global language of science and technology, as a link language in multilingual postcolonial societies or as a lingua franca between speakers with different mother tongues, to name but a few examples of contexts in which English is used routinely by many L1 speakers of languages other than English.

The papers in the present volume address a range of hotly debated issues involved in – and arising out of – the empirical description, analysis, comparison and modelling of second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes. The authors were asked to address some or all of a number of lead questions in their papers, be it in setting the research context, in the discussion of the descriptive findings or in the concluding remarks. These lead questions were the following ones:

1. How can we distinguish the description of systematic features of a variant/variety from the analysis of errors? Is that distinction relevant in the first place?
2.
 - a. To what extent can similar “routes of development” (cf. Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008) and/or stages of acquisition be posited for English as a second language and English as a foreign language?
 - b. Is it useful and/or possible to provide for an integrated model for second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes, e.g. in a framework based on the notion of contact phenomena/varieties?
3.
 - a. Are traditional distinctions such as the well-established distinction between ENL, ESL and EFL and/or the related Kachruvian distinction between the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle still useful and viable?
 - b. What about the hotly disputed distinction between nativeness/native speakers and non-nativeness/non-native speakers?
4. To what extent are corpus data and corpus-linguistic methods relevant to the joint description and modelling of English as a second language and English as a foreign language?

All the authors have combined their own objects of inquiry with answers to some or all of these lead questions. In the first paper, **Carolin Biewer** analyzes the use of modal auxiliaries across a wide range of Englishes in Africa, Asia and the South Pacific on the basis of comparable corpora. Her results trigger some interesting questions with regard to the suitability of the ESL-EFL distinction in general and the gradient nature of the second-language status of New Englishes in particular. **Christiane M. Bongartz and Sarah Buschfeld** look at English in Cyprus and assess to what extent it can be viewed as a second-language variety and/or as a learner English variant. Their sociolinguistic description and corpus findings make it clear that English in Cyprus is best viewed as a hybrid case, for which a *variety spectrum* offers a suitable descriptive tool. **Gaëtanelle Gilquin and Sylviane Granger** look at the use of the preposition *into* in the Spanish, French, Dutch and Tswana components of ICLE and compare it with native British English. They show that individual learner Englishes are more or less similar to native English with regard to different aspects of prepositional use, the emerging complex picture corroborating the adequacy of the label *learner Englishes* (rather than *learner English*);

Tswana English even defies classification as either an ESL or EFL variety. **Sandra Götz and Marco Schilk** provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of lexical bundles in native, second-language and learner language corpora. From their findings a very detailed picture of differences in the use of 3-grams between the three types of English speakers emerges, which indicates, *inter alia*, different degrees of formulaicity in ENL, ESL and EFL. **Ulrike Gut's** paper focuses on a core issue in research into non-native Englishes, namely the question of how to categorize structural changes in New Englishes: are they innovations or (learner) errors? She argues that the answer to this question depends essentially on speakers' attitudes and the status of the new variant or variety of English at hand. The non-standard use of inversion is at the heart of **Michaela Hilbert's** paper. Specifically, she analyzes interrogative inversion in Indian English, Singaporean English and Irish English; she argues convincingly that structurally identical forms and patterns may be based on vastly different processes, depending on the individual characteristics of the contact variety of English. **Marianne Hundt and Katrin Vogel** start off from a very detailed quantitative analysis of the use of the progressive in ENL, ESL and EFL forms of English on the basis of comparable corpora. Their findings lead them to call into question the seemingly neat divides between the three types of English, especially in the light of the complex interaction between globalization and localization of English on the one hand and cross-varietal influences between Englishes on the other. In contrast, **Benedikt Szmrecsanyi and Bernd Kortmann** argue that institutionalized second-language varieties and learner Englishes can be distinguished very clearly from a typological perspective. In particular, they analyze and compare the degrees of grammatical analyticity and grammatical syntheticity across a wide range of components of ICE and ICLE. Finally, **Bertus van Rooy** zooms in on New Englishes in Africa and discusses to what extent errors and innovations interact in the formation of new norms in this specific context. On the basis of three case studies, he introduces the notions of *grammatical stability* and *grammatical acceptability* as two essential criteria which allow linguists to identify emergent norms.

In the present book, we have tried to not only collect a selection of papers that have emerged from presentations at the ISLE-1 workshop on "Second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes" but also to capture the essence of the highly inspiring and at times controversial discussions after the presentations and in between the sessions. To this end, we have included a discussion forum in the final section of the book. All contributors were confronted with a selection of theoretical or methodological core statements from the articles (i.e. the starting point for the discussion forum) and were asked to comment on them. The discussion brings together and reviews the key strands of argumentation and the major points of convergence and controversy throughout the papers, and it sheds light on a

wide-ranging debate of the state of the art in research into second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes, some of the major concepts (and also some of the wide-spread myths) as well as potential avenues for future research.

We hope that the present selection of papers and the discussion forum will trigger off a renewed interest in an integrated approach to second-language varieties of English and learner Englishes – another step, hopefully, on the way to bridging the still existing paradigm gap.

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