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A Study of Bangalorean Indian English
Project Report

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Abstract

This is a study of the distinct syntactic features of spoken Indian English; specifically, the dialect spoken by middle-class speakers of ages 18-25 in Bangalore, Karnataka. The possibility is considered that these divergences from British English [BrE] are due to the influence of certain Indian languages.

Note on transliteration: Here, lengthening of a vowel has been indicated with a macron (so $\bar{a}$, $\bar{e}$, etc.); aspiration with a following h (so bh, etc.); retroflexion by capitalisation (so T, D, S, and L); and nasalisation by a tilde (so $\tilde{a}$). The Malayalam letter ഠ, pronounced /r/, is transliterated R.

1 Introduction

It is widely (although not universally) accepted that Indian English [IndE] is a distinct dialect of English in its own right. This is the view of Indian English which will be taken in this study. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the term "Indian English" subsumes a number of varieties of English spoken across India, some which differ considerably amongst each other.

The variant of IndE under consideration here has not been studied widely in the existing literature. Two main points will make this claim evident.

Firstly, the data of the present study is taken only from conversation in casual, informal settings, rather than sources like press publications, essays, newscasts and speeches (as in Sedlatschek (2009), Pingali (2009) and Sharma (2001)). Data obtained from such sources tends to be either in written form (which makes for an entirely distinct form of IndE, as will be noted), or, if spoken, carefully regulated and moderated (even if spontaneous), and much more approaching standard BrE than ordinary, day-to-day IndE.
In fact, Sharma (2001) notes that "the use of written rather than spoken data faces the problem of a generally lower frequency of many interesting nonstandard forms" (Sharma 2001:6). In the same study, the reason for adopting written

corpora is that they "represent established domains of English use", and that "the analysis of speech data would be rendered problematic by the range of bilingual proficiency levels"; both these considerations are surmounted in the present study. English is a popular medium for conversation among the social group to be described, which constitutes the source for the data. Moreover, all speakers are known to have acquired English as a native language and speak it at home (see Section 1.3).

Secondly, as noted by Coelho (1997) (which happens to be an exception to the reliance of the studies noted above on text corpora), many studies do not consider (indeed even deny the existence of) nativised varieties of IndE, either "with the intention of deliberately excluding native speakers of SAsE [South Asian English] from their discussions, or because they do not believe that native speakers of SAsE exist" (Coelho 1997:562).

These observations point to the need for a study of nativised (rather than simply institutionalised), spoken (rather than written) IndE, which the present study aims to fulfil partially.

1.1 Questions

The variety of IndE under consideration has already been described, and will be defined more clearly in the next few sections. There are two main questions with regard to this variant that this study hopes to investigate.

The first is the exact extent and quality of the divergences spoken IndE displays from standard BrE. A number of syntactic features unique to IndE (or possibly exclusively Bangalorean IndE) become clear from the data collected, at least three of which do not appear to have been mentioned in the literature before.

The second question is the origin of these divergences. More concretely, the possibility that they arose from contact with Indian languages spoken in and near the location of the study (Bangalore) is considered. Necessarily, however, this question will remain partially unanswered, in the absence of a more complete quantitative study.

1.2 Methodology

The data for this study was collected from casual conversation with family and close friends, over a period of approximately a month, in the city of Bangalore, Karnataka. The topics for conversation vary widely; sentences exemplifying what were thought to be features of IndE were selected. There were eight informants, all of whom belong to the age group 18-25 and have studied in English-medium schools in Bangalore for the majority of their lives.

There are 96 sentences in total. 39 of these are questions (both closed and open) and the remaining are statements. The data can be found **here**.

However, sentences conforming to standard BrE were not collected. Thus it is impossible to give a quantitatively accurate estimate of the frequency of these features. Nevertheless, it is possible to make a rough guess from the frequency of different types of features *within the data*; for example, we can identify the relative frequency of questions made using different types of tags in the data, but not compare them to questions formed in accordance with standard BrE. Qualitatively, they will be considered with respect to parallel features of Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu (predominantly the first three), which are all spoken to a fairly wide extent in Bangalore. The informants are in regular contact with all five of these languages.

1.3 Language Situation

Here, we will consider in a little more detail the language situation of all the informants. As a preliminary remark, note that Coelho (2007) (one of the few studies considering natively spoken IndE) studies the English of the Anglo-Indian community of Madras. However, the speakers under consideration here are Indians who have a considerable exposure to Indian languages on a daily basis, but whose first language (or at least one of whose first languages) is IndE.

This community has grown over the last two decades in major urban centres of India (with a rise in households that speak English often or always at home) but not received attention in the literature, probably due to its small size. Typically, parents speak English at least 50% of the time around the house, and children acquire English simultaneously with (or occasionally to the exclusion of) their mother tongue. The dominance of English is strengthened by studying in English-medium schools, sometimes even leading to attrition of the mother tongue (if it was acquired as an L1).

However, this does not mean that such speakers cannot speak Indian languages (although this is sometimes the case). They receive regular exposure to them, usually as subjects in school (typically Hindi or the vernacular, in this case Kannada), but also in day-to-day situations outside the house, such as in public transport, shops, and so on. In addition, it is ordinary for them to consume both English and Indian-language media (movies and TV shows), although not always in equal amounts.

Of the eight informants whose speech constitutes the data used for this study, all were brought up in Bangalore and studied in English-medium schools. One is aged 19, two 20, two 21, and three 24. The mother tongue (more accurately, heritage language) of five of them is Malayalam; the others speak Tulu, Tamil and Telugu.

All of the informants have English as an L1. Their proficiencies in other languages (including Hindi, Kannada and their respective mother tongues) vary from working knowledge to L2.

Henceforth, we will refer to this variant of IndE as Bangalorean Indian English,

or BIndE.

2 Features

2.1 Interrogative

From the data, three main ways of forming questions are noted that do not conform to standard BrE syntax. Before we look at the data, we note the main rules involved in forming questions in BrE.

For yes/no (closed) questions, there are two (mutually exclusive) standard BrE formats: subject-verb inversion (*You are going home* to *Are you going home?*) and adding a question tag (*You are going home, aren't you?*). The tag is based on the subject of the sentence.

For wh- (open) questions, there is one way, which involves two main processes: subject-verb inversion, and wh-fronting (*Where are you going?*). Both these are compulsory.

While in BrE it is allowed to form questions by rising intonation alone (with no additional morphological or syntactic hints), a study quoted in Coelho 1997 notes that at least among American English [AmE] speakers, these are typically accompanied by a discourse marker such as *so* (Coelho 1997:576). We proceed on this assumption (although we do not commit to its accuracy) and consider "bare" intonation-based questions as characteristic of BIndE.

In BIndE, we note three main divergences.
Firstly, in both closed and open questions, subject-verb inversion does not occur. In the case of closed questions, this means that the questions are intonation-based with no discourse markers, as mentioned above.
Secondly, in closed questions, the set of question tags and their usage rules are significantly different.
Thirdly, in open questions, wh-fronting may not occur. The question word usually (though possibly not invariably) occurs in the position of the corresponding content word.

We will consider all three of these in more detail below (note that closed and open questions are considered separately, so subject-verb inversion occurs in both subsections).

2.1.1 Yes/No Questions (inversion)

This feature of IndE has been previously studied in Coelho (1997) and Pingali (2009). The latter describes non-inversion as "the predominant tendency" (Pingali 2009:56) in standard and non-standard IndE, with rising intonation. Thus we have

(1) You watched the trailer for You?

(2) You don't remember "somersault"?

(3) You saw de Villiers retiring?

Notably, non-inversion may occur with topicalisation (see Section 2.8.1 below), as in

(4) Normal school you have?

However, inversion does occur in IndE speech. Without advancing any guesses towards the "predominance" claimed by Pingali (2009), we note that out of the 30 closed questions in the data, 8 (27%) are plain intonation-based ones; the remaining are tag-based questions. This is a possible indicator that tags are strongly preferred.

2.1.2 Yes/No Questions (tags)

This is a commonly studied feature in many previous studies of IndE "ever since Kachru (1986, 1994) included the feature in his list of nativized IndE usages" (Lange 2012:195). The use of the invariant *is it?* and *no?* tags is noted in Coelho (1997), Pingali (2009) and Lange (2012). Remarkably, all these studies mention the *isn't it?* tag in the same breath, which does not occur in the data at all (while *is it?* occurs once).
Pingali (2009) describes the use of these tags as "non-standard" IndE, although it is not clear on what basis.

is it? exhibits two interesting divergences from standard BrE – it does not depend on the subject of the statement, and it is not opposite in polarity to it. Standard BrE tags are required to be negative if the main sentence is positive, and vice versa (as in *You are going home, aren't you?* vs. *You aren't going home, are you?*). BIndE, however, does not use it very frequently. Of the 22 tag-based closed questions, only one uses this tag:

(5) You watched Squid Games, is it?

Another common invariant tag is *no?*. Like *is it?*, it is an invariant tag. Lange (2012) believes it to have originated from Hindi *nā?*, which has many of the same functions, beyond simply forming questions.
Of the closed questions, 6 were formed with the *no?* tag. Among these are examples such as

(6) Everything's on the right only no?

(7) That's a pain no?

(8) All three are night races no?

This exemplifies one function of the word. This method of forming questions, however, indicates a good deal more prior certainty in the premise of the question than the use of *is it?*; the latter is usually used when the inquirer is completely unsure about the answer, while *no?* is commonly appended to statements the

speaker already believes to be correct (and is possibly requesting confirmation for). Necessarily, this is only a hypothesis, in the absence of information on the speakers' view of their utterances in the data.
Another one (which may be considered a form of questioning) is an extension of the confirmation-requesting function noted above, but in the middle of sentences *which are not questions*. Thus we have such utterances as

(9) The other cars, Ignis and all no, the brakes were not good.

(10) They changed it last time no, that's why they were super fast.

It may also happen that the speaker is fully certain of the content of the sentence and is only reminding the listener of it. This function can be noted in

(11) She was telling no, there was a rat in there.

where "She was telling" had happened shortly before, in the same conversation.

The last function of *no?* is to soften the force of commands. Although the sentences in question here are all imperative, the use of *no?* is invariably accompanied by a rising intonation. For example,

(12) Get one pair of socks no Abhi?

(13) Just put some on your plate no?

(14) Search no in the chat?

These examples show that *no?* may not always occur at the end, and two of its possible effects are to change the command to a request (as in (12)), and to phrase a command as an alternative course of action (as in (13) and (14)).

In view of usages parallel to these found in ICE-India, Lange (2012) declares *no?* to be fully equivalent to *nā?*. Interestingly, she quotes Columbus (2010), who says that "there is only one meaning for *nā?* which is not shared by *no?*, that is for affirmation or confirmation of a previous statement…" If it can be presumed that the author was referring to the use of *hainā?* ("isn't it?") to agree in Hindi, then this feature, too, can be found in our data, in the example

(15) Yeah, no?

where the speaker was agreeing with what went just before. Lange (2012) goes on to state that she "found no evidence for [Columbus'] claim" (Lange 2012:219). She also quotes Schiffman (1983)'s study of Kannada, concluding that *no?* has a similar function to that of *allavā?* ("is it not?"). In view of the present data, the tag function of *no?* certainly overlaps with the use of this word, but not the others. Schiffman (1983) says *allavā?* is used to "verify all kinds of propositions" (Lange 2012:217).

A final tag – in fact, the most common one – as used in BIndE, is almost never written except in informal text messages, where it is spelled *uh*. It is close to a schwa, but can be lengthened. It occurs in 13 of the utterances in our data, such as

(16) Everyone's wearing shoes uh?

(17) He said "ant" uh?

(18) I need a sheep uh?

(19) My hand doesn't reach, this guy's hand will reach uh?

(20) You have special privileges uh?

These examples show that *uh?*, like *no?*, has multiple functions. (16) and (17) show that it is used to indicate surprise on the part of the speaker. (17) shows this more clearly; the speaker was surprised to learn that a friend who recently moved to the US had pronounced the word "aunt" with an /æ/ sound.
(18) shows a function identical to that of *is it?*.
(19) and (20) show a degree of disbelief in the content of the sentence, or alternatively, a sarcastic or rhetorical tone ("this guy" in (19) refers to a particularly short friend sitting next to the speaker).

However, syntactically, *uh?* has the same effect always – the conversion of a statement to a question. The sentiment of the speaker towards the content of the statement may vary, but the effect is uniform. In fact, this effect is identical to that achieved by a particle common to all South Dravidian languages. Although its form (*ā?* in Kannada, Telugu, and Tamil; *ā?* or *ō?* in Malayalam) is distinct from the schwa, it is the principle means of questioning in these languages. It might then be plausible that these particles are the origin of this usage of *uh?*.

We also observe that *uh?* may not occur in a sentence-final position (although it appears that its only other option is the penultimate position, as for *no?*). It may come in between the main sentence and a vocative, as in (21) below, or it may break the sentence itself, as in (22) and (23).

(21) You saw his expression uh mom?

(22) You guys need uh sanitiser?

(23) Dude, we'll meet uh sometime?

It may also be used to form a question out of a single word:

(24) Non-veg, uh?

Both these are features of the pan-South Dravidian question particle as well, lending further weight to the hypothesis presented above.

This tag has not been previously studied (to the best of my knowledge). It is common in South India; speakers who have an Indian language as L1 may even directly use the *ā?* particle in English as well.
Furthermore, the fact that this particle is almost never written (and definitely not in formal writing) or spoken in formal situations, may lead it to be declared as "non-standard". I would argue, however, that its use (more commonly than any other tag) by at least one section of native English speakers should mean it is nothing of the kind.

2.1.3 Open Questions (fronting, inversion)

As we have noted, two main divergences from standard BrE are apparent in open questions; the lack of wh-fronting and the lack of subject-verb inversion.

There are 9 open questions in the data. Examples of these features are found in three of them:

(25) +49 is which country?

(26) For what you've to thank me?

(27) What time you're coming back tomorrow?

The rest are formed in the standard way, with both (these were recorded due to the presence of other features). Thus neither of these is extremely common, but both are used and understood.

It must be noted, however, that in (26), the question word (phrase) does not occur in the default position (such adverbial phrases usually occur at the end). I hypothesise that the phrase is placed in the front for emphasis. Nevertheless, it illustrates the lack of inversion.

Pingali (2009) notes both these features, but distinguishes the first as "standard" and the second as "nonstandard" (Pingali 2009:56). It is again unclear on what basis this distinction is made. She also describes the lack of wh-fronting as "the native pattern", referring presumably to Indian languages' formation of questions with the question word in the same place as the corresponding content word.

Sedlatschek (2009) identifies only the lack of inversion, and highlights the fact that it is an "overall rare phenomenon … which points to a rather low degree of acceptability … in professional writing and speech" (Sedlatschek 2009:296). This may well be true, given that the present data is only taken from casual conversation.

Both the above-mentioned studies consider the phenomenon of embedded wh-questions as well. We will not be looking at such constructions here as the data does not show it – only one utterance exhibits it, but even that has the wh-word in subject position, which does not put us in a position to study its lack of wh-fronting or inversion.

(28) You tell me what all components go into that.

2.1.4 Summary

In summary, we have discussed all divergences of question-forming constructions that are evident in the data. All of them have parallels in constructions in Indian languages.

2.2 Imperative

The imperative in BIndE shows one major divergence from standard BrE – the possibility of mentioning the subject (usually "you") as if the sentence was in the simple present tense.

(29) You just come join us.

(30) You finish your call fast ok.

(31) Y'all carry on.

This feature has not been noted in any previous studies (to the best of my knowledge). This is possibly because it may be an optional feature of BrE, but not a common one.
In the absence of quantitative data, again, it is impossible to make an accurate estimate, but if this feature is optional in BrE, it is at least much more common in BIndE.

Example (30) shows the use of the particle *ok* with imperatives. Although this is the only occurrence of it in the data, it is typically used to reaffirm a command, or instruct the listener to do something that they already know they must do (even implicitly).
Malayalam has a rough equivalent to this: the particle *kēTTō?* ("did you hear?"), often shortened to *TTō?*. Additional evidence of this is the fact that both these can also be used in a reassuring tone, as in *I'll just come, ok* (although there are no instances of this function in the data).

We have also noted above the use of *no* with rising intonation in imperatives, and its functions, in IndE.

2.3 Articles

Variation in the use of articles is a very frequently studied feature of IndE (predictably, given the lack of articles in Indian languages, which are posited to be substrates for IndE).

We note two main divergences: the absence of the definite article and the absence of the indefinite article.

2.3.1 Definite Article

A small number of data points illustrate the dropping of the definite article in BIndE:

(32) I need bottle, I'll just drink some water.

(33) Full bag went.

(34) Give ID-password and go.

However, no immediate distinction of these environments presents itself, to explain why the definite article is dropped only in these cases. It is possible that it is random, or that it is dropped when the context makes it clear that the NP is definite. In (32), for example, the speaker was gesturing towards a bottle; in (34), the conversation was about the theft of the speaker's belongings which he had in his bag; and in (35), the speaker was referring to the WiFi connection being discussed.

2.3.2 Indefinite Article

With regard to indefinite articles, we notice that they are not usually dropped except in set phrases. For example,

(35) Lot of Kodavas live in Whitefield.

(36) They also have lot of good hotels.

(37) I'll get little tipsy.

This, too, can be partially explained by the disambiguating principle mentioned above. These phrases are common and would be understood perfectly in the absence of an article as well. Sedlatschek (2009) makes exactly the same observation with regard to the phrase *(a) lot of* (Sedlatschek 2009:212). He suggests as an alternate reason the "simplification of the consonant cluster *ts* in *lots of*" (Sedlatschek 2009:213).

An interesting difference is the use of *one* in place of the indefinite article:

(38) Let's take one interview.

(39) Get one pair of socks no Abhi?

which is mentioned, but not observed, by Sedlatschek (2009). He quotes Sharma (2005), whose findings also do not support the "claim that Indian speakers use *one* in place of *a* with specific indefinite NPs".
He also cites Ramamurthi (1991) on interference from the Tamil numeral *oru*, which has a usage pattern comparable to that of *a(n)* in English (Sedlatschek 2009:226-7). I feel this is a tenable hypothesis (especially as the same word *oru* is found in Malayalam as well), but not verifiable, again, in the absence of quantitative data.

2.3.3 Summary

In Sedlatschek (2009), examples are found of articles being both deleted as well as inserted, which pushes him to discard the substrate hypothesis for the usage of articles in IndE (Sedlatschek 2009:197). He cites Agnihotri et al. (1984), who make a similar claim.

However, he does not ignore "the possibility that IndE might have carved out variety-specific usage patterns in certain linguistic environments that should be treated as stable variants rather than errors" (Sedlatschek 2009:198), and quotes

Sharma (2005)'s hypothesis of an "economical, disambiguating principle to the use of overt articles" (Sedlatschek 2009:198), as we have posited above as well. Further conclusions of Sedlatschek (2009) do not provide any further hints, as most of his conclusions are drawn from non-native speech.

Pingali (2009), again, makes this irregularity a characteristic of "nonstandard" IndE (Pingali 2009:52), and observes both missing and extraneous articles (while we observe only the former).

In summary, we do not have as much justification as Sedlatschek (2009) for discarding the substrate hypothesis, since we see no cases of extraneous use of articles. We consider it a possibility that the deletion and replacement of articles is due to influence from one or more Indian languages.

2.4 Adverbs

A number of anomalies present themselves when we examine the adverbs in the data.

Firstly, we will consider anomalous uses of four adverbs (more precisely, words which are adverbs in BrE, but not always in BIndE). We also see that when a prepositional phrase is used adverbially, it is possible to leave out the preposition and mention only the NP. Finally we will see how the positions of adverbs in BIndE can differ from those in standard BrE.

2.4.1 Only, Itself

These words are classified as "focus markers" by Lange (2012). She identifies two functions – *restrictive* and *presentational* focus – of which the former is the ordinary BrE sense of *only*, and the latter is an innovation of IndE (and South African English, according to Mesthrie (2008b)). She describes this dual function of *only* as "well-established" (Lange 2012:185), citing Bhatt (2000).

Examples of the latter function in the data are

(40) You only keep doing all this.

(41) Today only I bought.

(42) I lose it at home only.

Of these, (40) can be interpreted in the restrictive sense as well – the speaker is referring to the addressee's tactics in a board game. However, the standard BrE syntax for this would be *Only you…*.
The other two examples are unambiguously presentational.

itself has a similar function to the presentational focus meaning of *only*; they are considered together in Lange (2012), who notes that in IndE, *itself* may focus any part of speech, not just an NP. The data in the present study, however, has only one instance of it, which is with a pronoun:

(43) That itself is four.

Lange (2012) also notes that the two forms appear in similar environments. Sedlatschek (2009)'s observations agree with these two functions of *only* and *itself* (Sedlatschek 2009:303).

Lange (2012) additionally notes that the presentational use of *only* was limited to speakers of South Indian origin, and more common in the speech of younger age groups (Lange 2012:190). As the informants of the present study are exclusively South Indian, this claim cannot be verified immediately. She also notes the presence of emphatic particles in Indo-Aryan languages (quoting Masica (1993)) and Dravidian languages (quoting Krishnamurti (2003)). The polysemy of these particles mirrors that of *only* and *itself* in IndE (Lange 2012:195).

2.4.2 Also

Lange (2012) explicitly excludes *also* and *too* from her study, while Sedlatschek (2009) does not mention them at all. We note here that *also* in BIndE is used exactly like *even* in standard BrE, except that it comes after the element being focused:

(44) If you say it again also, I'll puke.

(45) Pakistan also didn't play this well against their bowling.

Utterance (44) exemplifies a fairly common way in IndE to express *even if X*, that is, *if X also…*.

As claimed for *only* and *itself*, we can posit a calque as the origin of this usage. The additive (inclusive) particle *bhī* (Hindi) and suffixes *-ū* (Kannada) and *-um* (Malayalam and Tamil) mirror this usage of *also*.

However, the question then arises – why was *also* used to mimic this meaning, when *even* has exactly the same function? I hypothesise that *also* was taken to fulfill the need for a particle that came *after* the focus element, as the particles and suffixes of Indian languages do. For example, consider the standard BrE utterance *Even if he had done it…*. In Kannada, without the *even*, it is *avanu māDiddare*; with the *even*, it is *avanu māDiddarū*. Similarly, the Malayalam equivalents are *avan ceytāl* and *avan ceytālum* respectively.
Thus, the phrasing *If he had done it also…* reflects the syntax of the Indian language constructions using particles.

2.4.3 Too

Here, we do not consider the meaning of *too* as an inclusive particle (although it does have that function in IndE). We will consider its use as an adverb that modifies adjectives; in BIndE, it takes on the meaning of *very* or *extremely*, without the negative connotation it has in BrE.

(46) I'm too full.

It is arguable, nevertheless, that this has the same negative connotation as it would in standard BrE. I would say, however, that without the explicit mention of something like *…to eat*, it is only an intensifier. Of course, this remains only a claim in the absence of more instances of the use of *too*.

2.4.4 NPs without Prepositions

As noted above, it is common in BIndE to use an unqualified NP with adverbial function. Some instances of this are found in the data.

(47) Where do you have to go early morning?

(48) Four o'clock we can go.

(49) First day only I went.

These are all constructions that would be expressed with a preposition (and sometimes an article) in standard BrE. Notably, except (47), all such examples have the NP-adverb in the first position. This might indicate a preference to elide the preposition in this manner when the phrase is topicalised (see Section 2.8.1).

A possible origin for this is the way such adverbials are handled in Indian languages; frequently the postposition in the adverbial is replaced with the null morpheme.
In Hindi, the adverbial may be indicated by usage of the oblique form; for example, consider the translation of (49), *pahale hī̄ dina gayā mãi*. Here, the use of *pahale* instead of *pahalā* clarifies that it is a contraction of *pahale hī̄ dina ko* ("on the first day"). Similarly, (47) might use *savere-savere* ("early in the morning"), whose base form is *saverā* ("early morning").
However, this explanation is not complete, since Dravidian languages require postpositions in some cases (such as the time expression, as in (48)). The elision may simply be a consequence of topicalisation as well; but this leaves us with the task of explaining the deletion in (47).

This phenomenon, too, has not been studied (to the best of my knowledge).

2.4.5 Position

We have two examples of adverbs being in a different position from their place in standard BrE:

(50) I used to always say Navishtrix.

(51) I thought in college you played.

However, it is hard to draw conclusions from these as they do not have anything in common. Example (51) shows that the article may be in the middle of the verb phrase; possibly it is a rule to always place it immediately before the main verb, but in the absence of further data, this is unverifiable. Example (52) is most probably an instance of topicalisation of the adverbial phrase *in college* in

the quoted clause; the speaker is clarifying that he thought the addressee had played badminton in college. The stress pattern of the utterance also emphasised the adverbial.

2.5 Adjectives

Adjectives do not show much divergent behaviour in the dataset. One, however, is noted to behave in a way different from BrE.

2.5.1 Full

The use of *full* in this variety of IndE is distinctive; it can be used in the sense of *the whole*:

(52) Full bag went.

where the speaker is saying that his entire bag was stolen, not just his watch and wallet; or in an emphasising sense:

(53) Full three kilos I lost.

where the speaker is expressing his surprise at the amount of weight he had lost. Note that this second example also employs topicalisation; it is possible that *full* is used additionally to reinforce it.

A possible source for this phenomenon is the word *pūrā* in Hindi, which usually translates as *full* in its literal sense, but is also used in both the senses above.

2.6 Conjunctions

Remarkably, we have two innovations in our dataset when it comes to conjunctions. One is the positioning of *but*, and one is the use of *means* to express conditions (and some other functions).

2.6.1 But

In standard BrE, *but* can only come in the beginning of a clause. It may be the first word in a sentence fragment (e.g. *But he didn't go home*), or a true connector (e.g. *He left school, but he didn't go home*). Under no circumstances, however, can it come at the end, as in the following instances of BIndE:

(54) I have five-six trophies in KK, but.

(55) Why did he refer but, immediately?

(56) [It's] Very dry, but.

Example (55) presents an especially interesting usage: like *no?* and *uh?*, it may not, in fact, be the last word in the sentence. In this case, it was followed by the adverb in its normal position. It is possible that the adverb was added as an afterthought.

In these examples, the use of *but* is identical to *though* in BrE. For instance, (54) may be equivalently expressed as *It's very dry, though.*

This conflation of usages is possibly because of the flexibility inherent in the words usually used to translate *but*, *however*, and *though* – *magara/lekina* in Hindi and *pakSe* in Malayalam. A potential hole in this theory, however, is the fact that the corresponding words in Kannada (*ādare*) and Tamil (*ana*) cannot occur at sentence-final positions.

2.6.2 Means

The only mention of this word as a characteristic of IndE is in Lange (2012), where it is characterised as a "discourse marker" and categorised with *like*, *you know*, and other such phrases. While it may also have this function, here we will consider its use in BIndE as a conditional conjunction (usually, but not always, equivalent to *if*).

(57) They personalised the message means it's damn sick to send same thing to everyone.

(58) Coke is there means why can't they give this?

(59) You've taken my card means you have to move it to my area only.

All these are instances of true conditionals, *i.e.*, *X means Y* can be replaced by *if X, (then) Y* with no change to the meaning of the sentence. However, an additional use of the word is as in

(60) Where I'll reach means you see where I'll reach.

which was said in response to "Where you'll reach?" (intended in a mockingly rhetorical tone). Thus the response has the import of "You want to know where I'll reach? I'll show you".

This second usage, however, poses problems to a substrate hypothesis. As long as we had only the *if* meaning, it was explicable, as there are phrases in South Indian languages, like Kannada *andare* and Malayalam *enn veccāl*, which mean both *if* and, literally, *means*. The usage in example (60), however, cannot be encompassed by these expressions. It is possible to translate it by the Hindi word *matalaba*, though, which is also used as the literal translation of *means*.

Thus we can guess that *means* acquired mutually exclusive senses from two different substrates, in addition to retaining its BrE meaning.

2.7 Verbs

One divergence was noted in the case of verbs, which has also been remarked upon broadly by Pingali (2009). However, she does not mention the exact verb which manifests this divergence in this study, *i.e.*, *tell* (*give* also shows the same divergence, but only one in utterance).

2.7.1 Tell

This verb is used both in the way it is in standard BrE, and in an innovative way. The standard usage is for the verb's indirect, and then direct object to follow it, as in

(61) You tell me what all components go into that.

However, in BIndE, it is allowed to leave out the indirect object or both the objects. For instance:

(62) She was telling no, there was a rat in there.

(63) Tell, tell.

(64) I just came to tell that I have work to do and I can't join.

From these utterances, we can possibly conclude that *tell* and *say* have been conflated in BIndE. In (62) and (64) above, the substitution of *say* yields a sentence correct standard BrE sentence.
Example (63), however, presents a problem – it is here used in the sense of *Go on* or *Go ahead*. Thus, the usage of *tell* is even more general than that of *say*. It would probably be more accurate to equate it to the verbs of speech in Indian languages, which allow the dropping of either or both of the objects – *bolanā/batānā* in Hindi, *paRayuka* in Malayalam, *hēLu* in Kannada, *sollu* in Tamil, and *ceppu* in Telugu.

The next natural question is then – does *say* present the same behaviour? During data collection, no anomalous use of *say* was observed, although it is possible that such usages for it are much less frequent than in the case of *tell*.

2.8 Noun Phrases

Two NP-related processes not found in standard BrE are seen in the data, *viz.*, topicalisation and (dvandva) compounding.

2.8.1 Topicalisation

This is a commonly studied feature of IndE, given that most Indian languages have free word order, allowing for the use of position to indicate focus or emphasis. This possibility is exploited frequently, with regard to both noun phrases and other parts of speech. Pingali (2009) gives examples of the same with adverbials and objects (Pingali 2009:53-4). She also quotes Bhatt (2004), giving examples of fronting of NPs in embedded clauses.

In the same vein, Lange (2012) notes that "object phrases are the prime candidates for topicalisation, but adverbials of place and time are also frequently fronted" (Lange 2012:123). This is also quoted from Bhatt (2008).

Some examples of the topicalisation of NPs are:

(65) Morning football I have.

(66) Rest all you were just cruising.

(67) Full three kilos I lost.

Example (65) presents an ambiguity: it could be an elision (as seen in Section 2.4.4 above) and topicalisation of *In the morning, I have football*, or a direct topicalisation of *I have morning football*. By (66), the speaker means that the addressee was "cruising" the rest of the way apart from a certain stretch of road. (67), as we have seen, is the speaker emphasising the amount of weight he lost.

Notably, however, there is no evidence of topicalisation from an embedded clause in our data.

Lange (2012) also hypothesises that "speakers of IndE map the syntax of Indian topicalisation constructions onto English, which results in the loss of syntactic restrictions on the English construction" (Lange 2012:151).

2.8.2 Dvandva Compounding

Dvandva compounding is the formation of compounds which refer to the collection or the union of their constituents. One example of dvandva compounding is found in the data, *i.e.*,

(68) Give ID-password and go.

which may not be enough to conclude that this is a productive process in BIndE. However, the possibility exists that it is one, and if such is the case, it can be explained by a similar practice in Indian languages. For example, the equivalent of (68) in Malayalam could reasonably be *ID-password tanniTT pō*, without using the conjunctive particle *-um* ("and").

2.9 Miscellaneous

The following divergences that the data shows from BrE do not fall neatly in any of the above categories. They have therefore been considered separately.

We consider the semantics of the future tense modal *will*, and the specific usages of the word *all*. Finally we consider the possibility of reduplication being a feature of IndE.

2.9.1 Future

The semantics of what is the future tense modal in English, *will*, show an additional feature in BIndE – that of the habitual present tense. Remarkably, this feature does not appear to have been considered in previous studies, although it seems fairly common.

(69) She'll literally know I'll be ahead but she'll let someone else win.

(70) Usually he won't eat.

(71) I told her, he'll be in his own world.

(72) One day there'll be chicken biriyani in the mess in the night, the line will extend into the hostel.

All these examples are intended in a habitual sense from context. (69) refers to a fellow player in a board game (with whom the speaker habitually plays), who never lets the speaker win.
That (70) is habitual is clear from the use of *usually*.
In (71), the speaker is talking about the lack of attention typical of a third person.
Example (72) is a statement on all the times that the mess serves chicken biriyani.

This function has a very clear parallel in the tense systems of all four South Dravidian languages under consideration. The simple present tense in these languages doubles to convey a future sense as well – thus, in Kannada, *nānu skūl ge hōguttēne* could mean *I go to school* or *I will go to school*. Analogously, in Telugu, *nēnu skūl ki velutānu* could have either of these meanings as well.

Note that in BIndE, even the simple present tense can be used with habitual meaning (as in BrE):

(73) My roommate comes back at 3:30 and all.

and *will* can be used with its future meaning (although, as this is not anomalous, instances of it have not been recorded).

2.9.2 All

Another feature of IndE conspicuous by its absence in previous studies is the usage of the word *all*. It can be used in two main ways: as part of the modifier *and all*, and by itself.

The use of *and all* after a noun phrase generally has a meaning similar to *and other such things*, depending on context. For example,

(74) The other cars, Ignis and all no, the brakes were not good.

(75) How are the bathrooms and all?

(76) My roommate comes back at 3:30 and all.

(77) Who and all are there?

Thus, (74) refers to the rest of the cars that the speaker took test-drives in, including the Ignis; (75) refers to the bathrooms and other facilities; (76) indicates times like (*i.e.*, as late as) 0330h; and (77) is inquiring as to who is in the voice call (it was clear that there were at least 2 people).

all by itself occurs in two examples:

(78) You tell me what all components go into that.

(79) Rest all you were just cruising.

The use in (78) is similar to (77); the speaker is requesting a list. In fact, although it is absent from the data, *who all…* is an acceptable rephrasing of (78). In (79), *all* refers to the whole remaining part of the way.

As we have seen from (75) and (78), in the case of wh-words, *(and) all* presupposes that multiple people or objects constitute the answer.

This feature, too, is readily susceptible to a substrate explanation; the word for *all* in South Dravidian languages is typically used as a suffix in just these contexts. Thus we have Kannada *ēnellā*, from *ēnu* ("what") and *ellā* ("all"), and Malayalam *entellām*, from *ent* ("what") and *ellām* ("all"). The usage with *and*, however, remains unexplained.

2.9.3 Reduplication

The data we have presently has only one example of reduplication, which is

(80) Something-something he was explaining.

The reduplication here is meant to emphasise the lack of clarity on the part of the speaker. There are other uses of reduplication in IndE (like indicating plurality), although these are not reflected in the current data.

This particular use of reduplication has a parallel in the Kannada word *ēnēno* (*ēnu* meaning "something"), which has roughly the same connotation.

3 Conclusion

In summary, we have examined a number of syntactic divergences that BIndE exhibits from standard BrE. This dialect of IndE is spoken natively by a section of the urban population of Bangalore, and its speakers are regularly exposed to a number of Indian languages.

We have examined the possibility of an Indian substrate feature for each of the above, from among Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. Most of the features we have studied can be explained by a substrate hypothesis, except a few which posed some inexplicable issues.

In my opinion, however, even if the substrate hypothesis was tenable for all the features, it would have one main inconsistency – why only these? An explanation of how these features came about does not throw light on why no *other* features were transferred to BIndE from Indian languages. For instance, South Dravidian languages invariably place the quoted clause before the main clause in indirect speech, separated by a quotative particle. This feature does not appear to have leaked into the speech of Indian English speakers (remarkably, however, it has

been borrowed into Dakhni Urdu, spoken in various regions of South India, from these languages).

We have also considered some features that have not appeared in the literature (as far as I am aware). Some of these include the divergence in the usage of *all*, the invariant tag *uh?*, and the use of *means* as a conjunction.
Necessarily, however, more concrete conclusions cannot be drawn in the absence of quantitative data and a larger sample size, which are lacking from the present study.

4 References

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