CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS
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5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses in brief the conclusions that can be drawn from this study. It also points out the limitations of this study and provides directions for further research.

5.2 Main Findings

1. As in BrE, the present tense is used to express futurity and talk about factual and universal things in IE. One of the important functions of the past tense is to refer to a state in the past and this meaning also commonly occurs in IE.

2. There is a tendency in IE to use the simple present tense instead of the perfect progressive. In most such cases, the lexical verb ‘be’ is used. The past tense is also used as a substitute for the present perfect in IE.

3. IE makes use of deviant tense forms in if-conditionals. There is a tendency in IE to use ‘will + main verb’ in the dependent clause. The frequency of the deviant occurrences of if-constructions in case of five categories of the Kolhapur Corpus and two categories of the ICE-India Corpus reveals that there are only marginal differences between if-
constructions in BrE and IE. There is a tendency in IE to use the past tense instead of the present tense in if-constructions.

4. It is found that the concept of sequence of tenses is not rigidly followed in IE.

5. As in BrE, the progressive is sometimes used elliptically in IE. In such cases 'be' or -ing is found to be ellipted. The progressive is used as a substitute for the perfect progressive in IE. However, it has been suggested in this study that this substitution can be regarded as a variable pattern in IE.

6. Some of the patterns have identical functions in both the varieties. For example, the use of the progressive to express the meanings of continuation, incompleteness, futurity and simultaneity and the use of the perfective to express the meanings of current relevance, persistent situation and activity in the recent past are common to BrE and IE.

7. In BrE, the progressive is occasionally used with adverbials expressing very high frequency with a pejorative sense. On the other hand, in IE the progressive is used with all the adverbials of frequency to denote habituality and the pejorative sense is absent.

8. This study shows that some of the stative verbs like 'want', 'hope', 'know' and 'see', which are not used in the progressive form in BrE, are
used in the progressive in IE. However, it has been observed in this study that stative verbs like ‘love’, ‘hate’, ‘prefer’ and ‘consist’ are not used in the progressive form even in IE.

9. The performative verbs ‘say’ and ‘tell’ are often used in the progressive in IE.

10. This study brings out that ‘current relevance’ is the basic meaning of the perfective and treats other meanings as derived from this basic meaning.

11. In BrE, the perfective does not occur with the adverbials having a definite time reference. In IE the perfective occurs with the entire set of adverbials of time, including specific adverbials of time. Thus, though the formal features of the perfect (have + -en) are common to both BrE and IE, its distributional features (i.e. features of co-occurrence with certain types of adverbials) are different in the two varieties.

12. In BrE, the present perfect is used with adverbials like ‘today’ and ‘this morning’ only if the time of speaking is included in the adverbial. IE does not impose such a constraint.

13. As in BrE, the subject is overtly present in the indicative mood in IE, but some instances of the lack of subject-verb concord have been observed in this study.
14. Some deviations with respect to question-formation have been observed in this study. There is a tendency in IE to form questions without making the use of subject-verb inversion rule and by omitting ‘do’ in interrogative sentences. The register of legal cross examination in the ICE-IND corpus has made a frequent use of ‘did + past participle’ construction. It has been observed that the category of declarative questions has been extended and generalised in IE.

15. According to Wong (1982), ‘It is in the area of grammar that the most widespread simplifications and reductions of native speaker English may be seen’ (p.278). In IE, the complex network of rules of the question tag seem to be reduced to one simple rule i.e. addition of ‘isn’t it’ or ‘no’.

16. As in BrE, the base form is used in the imperative mood in IE. Indians seem to make comparatively less use of the politeness marker ‘please’.

17. The four different morphologically and syntactically identifiable forms of the mandative subjunctive (third person singular form not ending in –s, be-form, base verb form and negated clause without do-support) are found to exist in IE as well. In both BrE and IE, verbs like
‘propose’, ‘recommend’, ‘demand’ and ‘insist’ frequently occur with the subjunctive.

18. IE makes less frequent use of the ‘were’ subjunctive.

19. The different types of the passive verb phrase like progressive + passive, perfective + passive, modal + passive and modal + perfective + passive are found in both BrE and IE. The use of sentences containing more than one passive clause, the use of passive in Yes/No interrogatives and the use of prepositional passives and non-finite passives are also observed in both the varieties. As in BrE, the agentless passive class seems to be the central passive class in IE as well.

20. Excessive use of the passive construction seems to be one of the special characteristics of IE.

21. Some of the transitive verbs are used intransitively in IE.

22. The modal auxiliaries ‘can’ and ‘could’ and ‘will’ and ‘would’ seem to be used indiscriminately in IE. There seems to be predominance of the past forms of the modals in IE.

23. The modal auxiliary ‘may’ seems to carry strong connotations of politeness to many Indian users of English. ‘May’ seems to be used in IE to express obligation in a polite manner.
24. It has been observed that some verbs are used in a different manner in IE. Some differences in complement structures with certain verbs are also observed.

25. This study reveals that there is a close relationship between the distinctive patterns in IE and the core grammar of BrE. The various patterns of the verb phrase in IE are related to and extend from the patterns in BrE. The following extensions are noted in this study.

(a) Extension of a pattern from a sub-set to the entire set

(i) The progressive in IE is used with all the adverbials of frequency to denote habituality.

(ii) In IE, the perfective occurs with the entire set of past adverbials.

(b) Extension of the progressive to replace the perfect progressive

(c) Extension of the simple present to substitute the present perfect

(d) Extension of the category ‘dynamic’ verbs

26. Some of the contrasts in BrE may be found to be neutralized in IE, at least in case of some speakers of IE. For example, the differences between the simple past and the past perfect and the present progressive and the present perfect progressive are neutralized in IE. The contrast between He leaves for Delhi tomorrow and He is leaving for Delhi tomorrow also seems to be neutralized in IE.
27. Several creative writers in India welcome English as a medium of literary expression. It is felt that conceptualizing IE entirely on the basis of literary texts would not be reliable and appropriate. However, examples in literary texts can be used as supporting evidence to make generalizations on IE.

28. The exonormative approach expects all users of a language to follow a particular norm that is provided by the usage of the native speakers. Therefore, all the deviations in the verb phrase in IE would be considered errors according to this approach.

29. The currently emerging endonormative approach recognizes Standard IE as the most suitable model for all ELT purposes in India. The advantage of this approach is that it allows us to expand the notion of correctness to include Standard IE. It is suggested that within this approach the concept of the ‘cline of error’ should be accepted. This will help the teachers to distinguish between ‘errors to be rectified’ and ‘errors to be tolerated’ and thereby facilitate them to recognize their priorities in teaching English. Therefore, it is felt that the endonormative approach has several advantages over the exonormative approach. Standard IE should be considered to be the suitable teaching model in the Indian context.
30. It has been suggested in this study that Standard BrE and Standard IE should be seen as complementary to each other. Indians must aim at developing active proficiency in IE and passive proficiency in BrE.

5.3 Limitations of the Present Study

Though this study has made a serious attempt at describing the formal and functional features of the verb phrase in IE, it has a number of limitations in its objectives and scope. The conclusions that have been derived in this study are based on limited amounts of data. This study has also not carried out the pragmatic study of verbs. This study aims at describing the verb phrase in IE and in some cases an attempt has been made to identify some of the possible reasons for deviations from BrE. However, it has not been possible to provide reasons in case of all deviations. One of the limitations of this study is that it has selected examples from different registers of the Kolhapur Corpus and the ICE-India Corpus, but an attempt has not been made in this study to discuss the registral differences in the use of the verb phrase in IE. The present study provides a teacher with some insights into the teaching of a verb phrase, but it does not discuss in detail how tense, aspect, mood and voice must be taught in the Indian context.
Though this study has several limitations, it is hoped that it would provide some interesting hypotheses to be tested in further studies. These limitations reveal that there are several areas which are worthy of future investigation.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The present study has demonstrated that though IE shares several features with BrE, it has its own distinct identity. This study has taken into consideration several related issues like the characterization of non-native Englishes in general and IE in particular, attitudes towards IE, the complex process of standardization, language change, the historical sketch of tense, aspect, mood and voice, the relationship between IE and Indian Literature in English, mother-tongue interference, the utility of the endonormative approach and the limitations of the exonormative approach, the utility of corpora in linguistic studies and the question of the teaching model in the Indian Context. It is felt that each of these areas needs to be studied in detail for a better characterization of IE as a variety of English. Work on registral differences with particular reference to the verb phrase in IE would also be a fertile topic for research. It is felt that it is necessary to carry out more specialized
studies on the semantic and phonological aspects of the verb phrase in IE. A full-fledged pragmatic study of the verb phrase in IE can also be undertaken. This study has focussed mainly on the qualitative analysis. However, it is felt that the frequency of deviant patterns observed in the Kolhapur Corpus and the ICE-India Corpus needs to be counted for a better characterization of IE. Data from different countries where English is used as a non-native variety can also be analysed in order to investigate whether the deviant patterns with respect to the verb phrase in IE also exist in other varieties of English. It is felt that identifying the common patterns existing in different non-native varieties of English can be an interesting area of study.

The goal of this study is more than fulfilled if it motivates researchers to revise the tentative findings presented in this study and arrive at a more satisfactory description of the verb phrase in IE.