ABSTRACT

The twentieth century saw the establishment of English as a World language due to its wide demographic and geographical spread. This phenomenal rise in the status of English has resulted in an adaptation of English to the cultural and pragmatic needs of the speakers of English in Asian and African countries.

English enjoys a special privilege in India. It is a global language in India, as it satisfies both the global and the local needs. Indian English is an important ESL (English as a Second Language) variety and it displays certain distinguishing phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic patterns. In spite of several claims made regarding the grammar of Indian English, scholars have expressed the view that we lack exhaustive data required for generalising about the syntax of Indian English and a lot of descriptive work still needs to be done. The present study is a modest attempt to examine the verb phrase in Indian English as a system in its own right.

A verb is considered to be the 'heart' of the sentence. This is probably the first full-scale study of the verb phrase in Indian English. It analyses sentences collected from various sources and comments on the formal and functional features of the verb phrase in Indian English. It reveals that there is a
close relationship between the distinctive patterns in IE and the core grammar of BrE.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter focuses on the characterization of Indian English and presents a preliminary discussion on certain aspects of Indian English. It reviews the contributions of various Indian and Western scholars to the description of Indian English. The problem of defining Indian English is discussed in this chapter. It conducts a brief survey of the various definitions of Indian English. Kachru’s model of the three Concentric Circles to represent World Englishes is elaborated in this chapter. The chapter also sheds light on the status of Indian English in the pre-Independence and post-Independence eras.

The second chapter provides a theoretical background to the verb phrase. Tense, aspect, mood and voice are the sub-systems that constitute the verb phrase in English. It discusses the formal and functional features of the verb phrase in BrE. Different classifications related to the verb phrase in British English are also taken into consideration in this chapter.

The third chapter is the central chapter of this thesis. In order to study the sub-systems of tense, aspect, mood and voice in Indian English, data collected from various sources are analysed in this study. It points out the similarities and differences between British English and Indian English.
The fourth chapter comments on the implications of this study for the teaching of English in India. It discusses the question of the teaching model in the light of the traditional exonormative approach and the emerging endonormative approach. It suggests that the task of writing pedagogic grammars in the framework of the endonormative approach needs to be taken up at the earliest.

The fifth chapter, which is the concluding chapter of this thesis, sums up the ideas and points emerging from issues discussed in the preceding chapters. It points out some of the limitations of this study and offers suggestions for further research in this field.