PART II

A PHONOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

- Introduction
- The Vowel System (Chapter 4)
- The Consonant System (Chapter 5)
- Consonant Clusters (Chapter 6)
- Word Accent (Chapter 7)
INTRODUCTION

The accent of English used by teachers of English in the rural areas of Panjab being a non-native accent, cannot be expected to have a very consistent and stable system as is the case with the native accents. A near-stable system can, nevertheless, be seen to be present even in the variety of English under discussion, for this language continues to be used by teachers of English on a large scale, both because of the demands of their profession and the status and utility of the language in the country.

Since Panjabi and Hindi are the mother tongues of the population under study, that is, since these languages are learnt and acquired by this population much earlier than is English, the phonological features of these two languages have left an unmistakable impact on the system of the English language that has grown amongst these people over the last several decades. This impact is visible in almost all the phonological areas under study in the present project, viz. vowels and consonants (individual sounds and their distribution), clusters, word-accentation. The variety of English that seems to have emerged as a result is more or less a hybrid product with the impact of the native languages (Panjabi and Hindi) markedly visible in various areas.

For the convenience of reference, we have called the
variety of English spoken in the Rural Areas of Punjab ESRAP. The label ESRAP, although it does not include the word 'teacher', has been knowingly selected because teachers of English in rural areas, who constitute the population under study in the present project, represent a big majority, and an important section, of the population that ever speaks English in the rural areas. Moreover, almost all people living in rural areas who speak English have acquired their English from teachers of English working in the rural schools. Therefore, the English spoken by teachers of English in the rural areas of Punjab can be justifiably claimed to represent the English spoken in general by any speakers of English in such areas. Hence the label ESRAP.

ESRAP has come to assume a great importance during the recent years because of the big and rapid strides taken by the people of Punjab (a big majority of whom lives in rural areas only) in various economic, cultural, academic and political fields in the country. The rural teacher being a pivot or the backbone of the entire English teaching programme in the state, deserves a much greater attention. An attempt has, therefore, been made in the following pages to identify and evolve the phonological system of ESRAP.

The study has been made under the following broad headings:

(a) The Vowel System (Chapter 4)
(b) The Consonant System (Chapter 5)
(c) Consonant Clusters (Chapter 6)
(d) Word Accent (Chapter 7)