Lexico-Grammatical Variation in the Use of REQUEST Strategies in Indian and British 'Letters to the Editor': A Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Study

Dissertation

zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades
Doktor der Philosophie
(Dr. phil.),

genehmigt durch die Fakultät
für Geistes-, Sozial- und Erziehungswissenschaften
der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg

von M.A. Nina Offergeld
geb. am 27.12.1975 in Soest/Westf.

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Eingereicht am: 24.06.2008

Verteidigung der Dissertation am: 22.01.2009

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Abbreviations

DECCA Deccan Herald
HIND The Hindu
GUARD The Guardian
INDEP The Independent

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Dr. Angelika Bergien for her ongoing support of the present work which would have not been feasible without her. Her contributions on the topic and her interest in the proceedings of the investigation have been a source of constant encouragement.
I am grateful to Professor Dr. Clausdirk Pollner who cultivated my interest in sociolinguistics and varieties of English when I was a student at the University of Leipzig, and who kindly agreed to join the supervision of this thesis.

Over the years, I have enjoyed enlightening discussions with colleagues both in Germany and India on the topic of this dissertation: my special thanks go to Dr. Karin Ebeling, Dr. Ines Fornell, Dr. Mala Pandurang and Prof. Dr. S.V. Shastri. Especial thanks go to Dr. Melani Schröter and Dr. Mala Pandurang who provided assistance for data collection procedures in England and in India, which would have been extremely difficult without them. I am also grateful to the students who participated in the Discourse Completion Tests in Reading, Hove and Mumbai.

I would also like to thank Dr. Hans-Joachim Wolfram for his kind and useful advice in the statistical analysis of my results and James Hewitt who proofread the manuscript.

Last but not least, I owe a special debt to my family and friends for their love and support while researching and writing this thesis.

0 Abstract (German)

Die vorliegende Arbeit ist im Bereich der anglophonen Varietätenlinguistik angesiedelt und versteht sich als Studie an der Schnittstelle zwischen den traditionellen Beschreibungsebenen Grammatik und Pragmatik.

Gegenstand der Untersuchung sind Besonderheiten der Varietät des indischen Englisch, einer der jüngeren Varietäten des Englischen, die seit den 1980er Jahren in der anglophonen Linguistik als eine Varietät der so genannten 'New Englishes' (z.B. Platt et al. 1984), 'Englishes' (z.B. McArthur 1998) oder 'world Englishes' (z.B. Jenkins 2003) anzutreffen ist. Die im Englischen gewählte Pluralform ist nicht im Deutschen vorzufinden[1], spiegelt für den englischsprachigen Raum aber jenseits der inhaltlichen Expansion des Begriffes auch ein verändertes Terminologieverständnis wider.

Waren in der Vergangenheit (über)regionale Varietäten in der Regel als Abweichungen einer Sprache, genauer einer als ‚Standard' begriffenen Sprache, verstanden worden, und anhand eben dieses Modell beschrieben und evaluiert, so ist verstärkt seit den 1980er Jahren in der anglophonen Varietätenforschung darauf hingewiesen worden, dass Varietäten des Englischen, insbesondere diejenigen der so genannten *zweiten Diaspora*[2], nicht anhand ausschließlich traditioneller Referenzmodelle (des britischen oder amerikanischen Englisch) adäquat erfasst werden können. 'Non-native varieties of English', also nicht-muttersprachliche Varietäten des Englischen, gewinnen seitdem zunehmend an Aufmerksamkeit in diesem Forschungsbereich (z. B. Cheshire 1991; Kachru 1992; Hickey 2004).

„Das Englische hat schon vor langer Zeit aufgehört, alleiniger Besitz der Briten zu sein", kommentierte schon 1983 der in Indien geborene Schriftsteller Salman Rushdie in seinem Essay *Commonwealth Literature Does Not Exist* (1992a: 70), und, so kann man zufügen, das Englische ‚mäandriert' in verschiedene Richtungen, verändert sich in Bezug auf Form, Funktion und Verwendung in den jeweiligen kulturellen Kontexten. Daneben ist auch die

[1] Wörtliche Entsprechungen dieses Plurals, *Englische* oder gar *Englischs*, muten im Deutschen eher seltsam an und bieten m.E. keine befriedigende Lösung in nominaler Form.

[2] Während die sog. *erste Diaspora* die Verbreitung des Englischen in den USA, Kanada sowie Australien und Neuseeland beinhaltet, werden unter der sog. *zweiten Diaspora* Länder gefasst, die in der Phase kolonialer Expansionspolitik der Briten das Englische als Sprache ‚hinzugewannen'. In diesen Ländern (z.B. Indien, Südafrika) nimmt das Englische die Rolle der (meist offiziellen) Zweitsprache ein (Jenkins 2003).

Komplexität der sprachlichen Situation in den jeweiligen Regionen von Bedeutung, befinden sich die zur Verfügung einer Sprachgemeinschaft stehende Varietäten doch potenziell in einem konkurrierenden Wechselverhältnis zueinander. Interferenzerscheinungen im Sinne von Übertragungen grammatischer und lexikalischer Strukturen von einer Varietät auf eine andere (typischerweise einer Sprache auf die andere) müssen also ebenfalls Eingang in eine Beschreibung dieser ‚Neuen Varietäten' finden. Pragmatische Interferenzen stellen einen weiteren Forschungsbereich innerhalb der Varietätenforschung dar.

In der vorliegenden Untersuchung soll die Varietät des indischen Englisch im Zentrum stehen, wobei sprachliche Erscheinungsformen der grammatischen und der lexikalischen Ebene in Beziehung zu einer pragmatischen Beschreibungsebene gesetzt werden sollen. Ausgehend von einem funktionalen Ansatz der linguistischen Analyse (Halliday/Hasan 1989; Halliday 2004) stehen sprachliche Erscheinungen im Vordergrund, die potenziell verwendet werden können, um die Sprecherintention des AUFFORDERNs (REQUEST) zu realisieren. Da Aufforderungshandlungen einen prototypischen Bestandteil der Textsorte ‚Leserbrief' konstituieren (vgl. Ermert 1979; Graedler 1989; Wetzel 1998; Robert 2002), kann diese Textsorte als Ausgangspunkt für eine kontrastive Analyse qualitativer sowie quantitativer Realisierungen von Aufforderungshandlungen dienen. Im Fokus der Untersuchung sind dabei zwei Varietäten des Englischen, nämlich das indische Englisch und das britische Englisch.

Um sprachliche Realisierungen von Aufforderungshandlungen zu identifizieren, wurde einerseits induktiv vom Textmaterial selbst ausgegangen, anderseits wurde auf Analyseraster aus der REQUEST-Forschung (Ervin-Tripp 1976; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989) zurückgegriffen. Referenzquellen zum Abgleich der tatsächlichen Okkurrenzen mit dem erstellten Analyseraster waren moderne Grammatiken des britischen Englisch (Biber et al. 1999, 2002) als auch ein Sprachlehrwerk des Englischen, welches exemplarisch den Spracherwerbsprozess im indischen Kontext illustrieren soll. Weiterhin wurden Einzelstudien zur Modalität in anderen muttersprachlichen (z.B. Collins 1991; Kennedy 2002; Smith 2003) als auch nicht-muttersprachlichen Varietäten des

Englischen (z.B. Nkemleke 2005; Kasanga 2006) einbezogen. Als weitere Referenzquelle dienten elektronische Textkorpora des britischen und indischen Englisch aus dem Korpusprojekt *International Corpus of English*. Empirische Studien zu Aufforderungshandlungen in England[3] und Indien fungierten als dritte Referenzquelle für die Analyse indischer und britischer Leserbriefe.

Das entwickelte Analyseraster für mögliche Strategien von Aufforderungshandlungen führte zu einer dreifach gestaffelten Kategorisierung in *Impositives (Impositive*), *Conventionally Indirect Strategies (konventionell indirekte Aufforderungsstrategien*) sowie *Hints* (*Hinweise)* mit jeweiligen Untergruppierungen. Die Kategorie der *Impositives* wird dabei als die am meisten direkte und potenziell stärkste ‚gesichtsbedrohende' (face-threatening) Strategie[4] verstanden. Linguistische Realisierungsformen dieser ersten Kategorie sind Imperativkonstruktionen, Verbalkonstruktionen mit Performativ (offen sowie verdeckt), Verbalkonstruktionen mit Modalverben wie z.B. *must*, *should*, *have to* sowie lexikalische Mittel aus den Wortfeldern des Aufforderns. Als *Conventionally Indirect Strategies* werden Vorschlagshandlungen anhand des inklusiven *let*-Imperativs, aber auch Passivkonstruktionen in Verbindung mit evaluierenden Adjektiven oder Adverbien untersucht. Die Kategorie der *Hints* umfasst rhetorische Fragen, prädiktive Deklarativsätze und Andeutungen, die als Verweis auf eine gewünschte Handlung in der Zukunft verstanden werden können.

Etwa 1500 Textexemplare der Textsorte Leserbrief aus (englischsprachigen) indischen und britischen seriösen Tageszeitungen (‚quality press') wurden im Folgenden auf das erstellte Analyseraster überprüft und in Beziehung zu den anderen genannten Referenzquellen gesetzt.

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[3] Da der Begriff des "British English" nur als übergeordneter ‚umbrella term' verstanden werden kann, sei an dieser Stelle darauf verwiesen, dass sich die vorliegende Arbeit auf eine Varietät des *British English*, nämlich das *English (Standard) English*, bezieht. Andere regionale Varietäten (*Scottish (Standard) English*, *Welsh (Standard) English*, *Irish (Standard) English*) müssen in diesem Kontext unberücksichtigt bleiben.

[4] Nach Brown/Levinson (1987: 60ff.), können gesichtsbedrohende Akte (Face-Threatening Acts, FTAs) als Akte verstanden werden, welche das ‚positive' und/oder ‚negative Gesicht' (face) eines Aktanten bedrohen. Unter 'positivem Gesicht' (positive face) wird dabei das eigene Selbstbild und damit verbundene Bedürfnisse (wie z.B. der Wunsch nach Anerkennung) verstanden; Bedürfnisse, die an das 'negative Gesicht' (negative face) gekoppelt sind beinhalten z.B. den Wunsch nach eigenständigem Handeln ohne Einfluss Dritter und/oder dem Anspruch auf Privatsphäre.

Wie die Analyse ergab, sind schriftlich realisierte Aufforderungshandlungen in Leserbriefen sehr viel häufiger vertreten als in anderen Textsorten der Schriftsprache. Ein Gesamtvergleich der beiden Leserbriefkorpora ergab, dass insgesamt eine größere Zahl sprachlich realisierter Aufforderungshandlungen im indischen Material anzutreffen war als im britischen. Jedoch wurden auch qualitative Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede hinsichtlich präferierter Aufforderungsstrategietypen ersichtlich: während in beiden kulturellen Kontexten Aufforderungshandlungen des Strategietyps *Impositives* sowie des Typs *Hints* im Gegensatz zu *Conventionally Indirect Strategies* bevorzugt wurden, belegte die Textanalyse unterschiedlich ausgeprägte Präferenzen innerhalb der einzelnen Kategorien. Insgesamt konnte beobachtet werden, dass indische Leserbriefproduzenten sehr viel häufiger *Impositives* realisierten als britische Textproduzenten. In Bezug auf das Konzept von ‚Direktheit' bedeutet dies, dass indische Texte dieser Textsorte einen potenziell stärker gesichtsbedrohenden Charakter aufweisen als britische Texte.
Als mögliche Interpretationsansätze für die aus der Studie resultierenden Untersuchungsergebnisse werden dabei die folgenden Erklärungsmodelle diskutiert:

(1) Die sich bei der Analyse herausgestellten sprachlichen Unterschiede in indischen und in britischen Leserbriefen werfen die Frage auf, ob Lesebriefe in beiden kulturellen Kontexten als Mitglieder *einer* Textsorte gelten können, somit als vergleichbar im engeren Sinne erachtet werden können. Anhand struktureller, funktionaler und inhaltlicher Kriterien wird dieses Erklärungsmodell diskutiert; es erweist sich jedoch aufgrund ausgeprägter Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den beiden Leserbriefkorpora als unbefriedigende Lösung.

(2) Ein weiteres Erklärungsmodell fußt ebenfalls auf dem Kriterium Textsorte. Im Gegensatz zur Diskussion des vorherigen Modells wird der Textsortenbegriff in diesem Zusammenhang allerdings als dynamisches Konstrukt aufgefasst, dass sich in den beiden Kulturräumen auf unterschiedlichen Entwicklungsstufen befindet. Ausgehend von der Hypothese, dass sprachliche Entwicklungen des zeitgenössischen Englischen sich vom amerikanischen Englisch über das britische Englisch zu den anderen nationalen Varietäten des Englischen

verbreiten (Krug 2000; Crystal 2003; Mair 2006) kann vermutet werden, dass die Textsorte Leserbrief im indischen Kontext etwas konservativer an traditionellen Strukturen und Charakteristika festhält als Leserbriefe im britischen Englisch. Eine solche Hypothese erscheint insofern denkbar, als Texte des britischen Leserbriefkorpus eine große Anzahl von Beispieltexten aufweisen, die eher öffentlichkeitswirksamen Textsorten wie PR-Texten oder Werbetexten ähneln denn traditionellen Leserbriefen.

(3) Ein drittes Erklärungsmodell zieht einen fortschreitenden Prozess der Grammatikalisierung im Bereich der Modalität als Ursache für die unterschiedlich ausgeprägten Präferenzen bei Aufforderungshandlungen in Betracht. Wie bei dem vorhergehenden Erklärungsmodell besteht auch hier die Annahme, dass im zeitgenössischen britischen Englisch Veränderungen stattfinden, die im indischen Englisch entweder mit zeitlicher Verzögerung in Erscheinung treten oder gar nicht stattfinden werden. Wie Studien zur Modalität in muttersprachlichen (z.B. Collins 1991; Leech 2003) als auch nicht-muttersprachlichen Varietäten (z.B. Nkemleke 2005; Kasanga 2006) des Englischen gezeigt haben, kann im britischen Englisch seit Mitte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts ein tendenzieller Rückgang bei der Verwendung von Modalverben mit deontischer Bedeutung beobachtet werden. Im Gegenzug hat die Verwendung so genannter Semi-Modalverben wie *have to* oder *need to* tendenziell zugenommen, vermag jedoch quantitativ den Rückgang ersterer nicht zu kompensieren. Erklärungen für die zur Kenntnis genommenen Veränderungen im Modalsystem des Englischen, folgt man Mair (2006), können prinzipiell entweder in Veränderungen von Diskurskonventionen, in Veränderungen im grammatikalischen Sprachsystem oder aber einer Mischung aus beiden Faktoren gesucht werden. Mairs Annahme von sich verändernden Diskurskonventionen weist Überschneidungen mit dem dritten hier vorgeschlagenen Erklärungsansatz auf, wenn Aspekte der Texttypologie als eine Art der Diskurskonvention betrachtet werden. Geht man hingegen von Veränderungen im Sprachsystem aus, wird ein sprachimmanenter Prozess, der beinahe universeller Natur zu sein scheint, angenommen.

(4) Ein anderer Erklärungsansatz begibt sich in die Tradition des Zweitsprachenerwerbs und versucht aus einer lernerorientierten Perspektive Motivationen für die varietätenspezifischen Ausprägungen von Aufforderungshandlungen zu ergründen. Ausgehend von der Aussage, die *New Englishes* wiesen eine Tendenz zur *fossilization*, einer Verfestigung von früh erlernten, aber oft noch Fehler behafteten Strukturen auf ist annehmbar, dass sich abweichende Realisierungen von Aufforderungshandlungen als pragmatische Fehler herausstellen, die aus dem Zusammenspiel der Muttersprache, der Zielsprache und einer Interimssprache resultieren. Wie Chelliah (2001) in einer Inhaltsanalyse von aktuellen indischen Lehrmaterialien für den Englisch-Spracherwerb aufzeigte, weist die Mehrzahl der untersuchten Lehrwerke nicht nur didaktische Mängel, sondern auch sachliche Fehler (z.B. im Bereich der Grammatik) auf. Insofern scheinen im indischen Kontext neben der ohnehin komplexen Sprachensituation im Land auch beschränkte Möglichkeiten des Zweitsprachenerwerbs als Gründe für eine abweichende Performanz bei Aufforderungshandlungen möglich. Dem entgegen steht jedoch einerseits die weite funktionale Verbreitung des Englischen im indischen Alltag als auch die Tatsache, dass die Herausbildung einer Interimsprache in der Regel bei erwachsenen Lerner beobachtet wurde – was jedoch für den indischen Kontext nicht zutrifft, da der Spracherwerb des Englischen zumindest in den mittleren und oberen Bildungsschichten im frühen Kindesalter beginnt.

(5) Der speziell für den indischen Kontext vielleicht mit dem deutschen Begriff *Indisierung* noch am besten übersetzbare englische Begriff *nativization* stellt einen zentralen Ansatzpunkt für das letzte angeführte Erklärungsmodell dar. Ein Zusammenspiel verschiedener sprachlicher Normen und Konventionen ist hier von besonderer Bedeutung. Diesbezüglich ist auch pragmatischer Transfer von einer Sprache (in der Regel die Erstsprache) in die andere (in der Regel die Zweitsprache) zu berücksichtigen. Dabei sind einerseits als universell erachtete Prinzipien des Sprachtransfers als auch einzelsprachliche Spezifika in Betracht zu ziehen. Essentiell für einen *nativization*-Erklärungsansatz ist ein dynamisches Konzept von Sprache, welches neben der im engeren Sinn innersprachlichen Entwicklung auch ko- und kontextuelle Einflüsse auf Sprache einbezieht. Für das indische Englisch bleibt so beispielsweise zu fragen, wie

sich indigene Sprachen und die lokale Varietät des Englischen zueinander verhalten und welche Einflüsse der Sprachen aufeinander nachweisbar sind. Dass das Englische in Indien enorme Bedeutung insbesondere für offizielle, aber auch kommerzielle Zwecke gewonnen hat, ist unbestreitbar. Welchen Status das Englische in Indien jedoch in Bezug auf seine Autonomität und Akzeptanz als lokale Varietät mittlerweile erlangt hat, wird von der Forschung weiterhin kontrovers diskutiert. Dass Prozesse der strukturellen *nativization* im indischen Englisch begonnen haben ist belegt worden (z.B. Mukherjee 2007) – inwieweit pragmatische Aspekte jedoch ebenfalls tangiert werden, bleibt ein Desiderat der Varietätenforschung.

1 Introduction

1.0 Preliminary Remarks

In 1983, the Indian-born author Salman Rushdie remarked in his essay *Commonwealth Literature Does Not Exist* that “the English language ceased to be the sole possession of the British some time ago” (1992a: 70). Taking this quotation as a starting point, it is the spread, development and diversification of the English language during the last centuries which has promoted regional varieties of English to emerge and flourish. The spread of English from its original motherland to every continent in the world has been described in two phases: (1) the so-called *first diaspora* resulting in the formation of countries which do have English as a native language today (e.g. Canada and the United States, Australia, New Zealand), and (2) the so-called *second diaspora* comprising all countries which had been under British administration during the period of Britain’s policy of colonial expansion, and which have been accounted for as countries which have established English as a Second Language (e.g. India, South Africa). The varieties of English in countries of the first diaspora have been acknowledged as independent national varieties which can be described by a number of both common and distinct features from its ‘parent variety’ British English. However, varieties of English found in countries of the second diaspora for a long time have not been acknowledged as ‘full’ and independent national varieties, but rather have been taken into consideration when it comes to deviances from British English. This contrastive perspective focusing on ‘correct’ versus ‘erroneous’ uses of English in the world ceased its dominance during the 1980s and encouraged an alternative perspective on ‘younger’ language varieties and their closely related ‘ancestors’. To account for these younger varieties of English as independent varieties, the plural form, ‘New Englishes’ (Platt et al. 1984), or simply ‘Englishes’ (McArthur 1998) has become increasingly popular since that decade.

It is one of these ‘New Englishes’ which is in the centre of the present study, namely the variety traditionally labelled ‘Indian English’ (Mehrotra 1998). The numerous ways in which this variety displays similarities and differences with respect to its parent variety, British English, are most pertinent here. Contrary to contrastive studies of the past, however, this study does not attempt to describe the peculiarities of Indian English as ‘deviances’ from the perspective of an

exclusively native reference model, but instead aims at providing a description of some features of Indian English as characteristics of a national variety of English in its own right. In particular, the comparison of linguistic entities to be found within these two national varieties of English involves two dimensions of language description, namely the dimension of lexico-grammar on the one hand, and the dimension of pragmatics on the other hand. Whereas previous studies have frequently focused on peculiarities with respect to pronunciation, vocabulary, and/or grammar (e.g. Kachru 1990; Kachru 1992; Nihalani et al. 2004 [1970]), tasks related to pragmatic or discourse issues have often been ignored. Specifically, the connection between formal and functional entities is of special interest. In the present investigation, systematic realizations of REQUEST acts within a particular text type, namely letters to the editor, represent the central focus. To investigate these REQUEST act realizations from a cross-cultural perspective marks a specific goal of the study. What presents a new aspect in speech act research here is that REQUEST acts in two varieties of English, one being traditionally classified as native (British English), the other as non-native (Indian English), are compared systematically. Letters to the editor collected from British and Indian quality newspapers served as primary data for the present investigation; in addition, corpuslinguistic material of the 1990s (i.e. the International Corpus of English project with its national corpora Great Britain and India) as well as empirical data from England and India were taken into consideration.

In the material, realizations of REQUEST acts were analysed according to various degrees of semantic force and directness. To what extent patterns of variation in the preference for REQUEST strategies could be observed in the data constitute one major task for the investigation. Interpreting the results and searching for possible explanations proved to be the other major task.

1.1 Organization of the Thesis

Whereas the present Chapter is intended as a brief introduction into the topic as well as into the main aims and hypotheses of the present study, Chapter 2 aims at providing an introduction into the British Systemic-Functional Approach towards language and its significance for variation studies.

Speech acts as semantic-pragmatic universals (Wierzbicka 1987, 1991, 1997) will be in the focus of Chapter 3. Furthermore, an overview about cross-cultural speech act research since the 1980s will be provided.

Chapter 4 documents aspects of variation studies research, and attempts to give an overview of the development and description of 'New Englishes' in post-colonial settings. A special emphasis is placed upon the South Asian context which exhibits a variety commonly termed either 'Indian English' (e.g. Mehrotra 1998) or, more broadly, 'South Asian English' (e.g. Kachru 1990). Furthermore, a discussion of reference models for the New Englishes available at present, and a localization of Indian English within a dynamic reference model are also attempted.

Chapter 5 sets out the methodological and empirical foundations for the present study. Apart from traditional methodology originating from the fields of sociolinguistics and variation studies, corpuslinguistic tools and methodology will be introduced. In addition, empirical data functioning as reference data for my observations shall be taken into consideration.

Chapter 6 presents the framework developed for the description and analysis of REQUEST act strategies in Indian and British letters to the editor, and acknowledges earlier models from the REQUEST research tradition (Ervin-Tripp 1976; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989). A discussion on the interrelations between lexico-grammar and pragmatic dimensions of language enriches this framework and opens a cross-cultural perspective which goes beyond traditional contrastive feature analysis.

On the basis of Chapter 6, Chapters 7 and 8 are to give a systematic overview of linguistic realizations of REQUEST acts within the established framework and supply information about the distribution of linguistic REQUEST act strategies within both the Indian and the British Letter Corpus each. As a next step, these observations are compared with results stemming from the reference sources (i.e. reference grammars, reference corpora and empirical data).

A summary of the findings from the two letter corpora is offered in Chapter 9.

Searches for plausible explanations of the cross-culturally divergent preferences in linguistic realizations of REQUEST acts then constitute the central focus. Distinct interpretations of the data drawing on diverse

perspectives such as text typology, second-language acquisition or contact linguistics represent the key topics in Chapter 10.

Chapter 11 offers a review of REQUEST act performance in the two cultures under observation, and formulate questions on related, but untouched areas for study.

Additional information on the primary material, on the empirical studies conducted in India and Britain, and statistical relevance of the REQUEST strategies identified in the Letter Corpora can be accessed in Appendices I to III.

1.2 Aims and Main Hypotheses of the Present Study

The main purpose of this investigation is a description and analysis of REQUEST act strategies as represented in British and Indian letters to the editor of the daily quality press. Drawing back on Bühler's (1990 [1934]) notions[5] of one of the functions of the linguistic sign, namely the appellative function between a sender and a receiver, a REQUEST act here is understood as a semantic and a pragmatic entity[6] which is reflected in diverse linguistic forms in lexico-grammar[7]. REQUEST acts comprise an element of contact between a speaker/writer and a listener/reader, and, in addition, they do express a specific intention of the former, which for the present case can be described as an attempt to influence the listener/reader either to perform a certain action or refrain from carrying it out. This intention of making someone else perform an action clearly corresponds to Searle's concept of Directives (1969; 1979).

As has been shown by previous research (e.g. Wetzel 1998), REQUESTs constitute a typical speech act to be found in the text type 'letters to the editor'. But how is this speech act realized in this text type in other varieties of English?

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[5] Bühler classifies the semantic functions of the language sign as follows: "It is a symbol by virtue of its coordination to objects and states of affairs, a symptom (*Anzeichen*, *indicium*: *index*) by virtue of its dependence on the sender, whose inner states it expresses, and a signal by virtue of its appeal to the hearer, whose inner or outer behaviour it directs as do other communicative signs" (1990 [1934]: 35). For the present approach, the signal function is of importance.

[6] The relationship between semantics and pragmatics here is assumed to be of a complementary character, and follows Levinson (1983: 15).

[7] The term 'lexicogrammar' draws back on Halliday, and was chosen here to emphasize "that grammar and vocabulary are not different strata [of language]", but that "they are the two poles of a single continuum, properly called lexicogrammar […]" (2004: 24).

The present study attempts to examine realizations of REQUEST acts within letters to the editor in two major varieties of English, namely British English and Indian English. British and Indian English constitute two genetically related varieties of (British) English, which share not only common roots in language but also in the journalistic tradition. Letters to the editor in India and Britain share a threefold basic structure, traditionally starting with an address formula (usually *Sir,*), then proceeding with the body of the letter, and finally closing with a short reference on the writer's person (usually name and place of residence). With respect to the aspect of the text function, these letters can be classified as members of the appellative (Brinker 2001) or argumentative/instructive text group (Werlich 1976).

Assuming that letters to the editor in India and England share basic formal as well as functional properties and do belong to the same text type, the concept of the REQUEST act has been used as *tertium comparationis* for the present investigation. In what way this speech act is realized in the two varieties of English, and how patterns or preferences for REQUEST strategies are distributed within the letter corpora is of vital interest here. In addition, cross-cultural aspects of variation in REQUEST act realizations shall be explored. According to first observations, these cross-cultural differences are not only reflected in lexis or style, but also in grammar.

Following Halliday and Hasan's (1989) notion of language as a semiotic system operating on ongoing processes of selection on behalf of the language users, I do regard these peculiarities in lexico-grammar as reflections of selective procedures performed by the text producers to perform a REQUEST act. To identify and describe variation in REQUEST strategy types across these two varieties of English is one major aim of the present study; to search for possible explanations for lexico-grammatical variation in REQUEST acts constitutes the second task here.

In the following, preliminary observations of realizations of REQUEST acts shall be presented as a starting point for the further investigation:

What became obvious from a first analysis of Indian and British sample texts was that letters to the editor in fact seem to constitute a text type characterized

by a relatively high density of linguistic forms expressing REQUEST acts. When comparing the occurrence of the modal *should*, for instance, as one item which in its deontic meaning (cf. Chapter 6) can function as a REQUEST strategy type, it becomes apparent that frequencies in letters to the editor are at least three times higher than in other text types in English (cf. Biber et al. 1999: 491). A second hypothesis gained from initial findings is that realizations of REQUESTs may vary in their degree of directness, ranging from highly direct expressions such as imperative constructions to highly indirect strategy types such as predictive statements. Moreover, the role of the speaker/writer as a potential agent of the desired action or as the source of obligation seems to reveal cross-cultural variation. Questions of (linguistic) politeness and directness/indirectness in the two cultural settings also come into play.

Based on these preliminary findings, I assume that quantitative and qualitative variation in REQUEST act realizations in Indian and British letters to the editor can be described and analysed on a systematic basis. To what extent culture-specific preferences in REQUEST act realizations can be identified and described in letters to the editor constitutes a prominent task for this study.

From these considerations, the following steps of procedure are proposed: first, a theoretical framework for a description of the two varieties of English has to be established. Second, a framework for realizations of REQUEST acts is needed, which can be applied to the text type letters to the editor. Third, data from reference sources (grammar books, electronic corpora, empirical research) shall be taken into consideration. Possible interpretations of the findings gained from the Indian and the British Letter Corpus are subsequently offered. Finally, implications for language teaching as well as for future research on non-native varieties of English must also be taken into consideration.

2 Functional Approaches to Variation Studies

2.0 Introduction

Since the twentieth century linguistics, schools of thought promoting formal approaches towards language (e.g. the Chomskyan tradition or Glossematics) have stood in opposition to schools being devoted to functional approaches (e.g. the Prague School, the work by Firth and by Halliday). In these two broad linguistic orientations, conceptualizations of ‘language’ both as system and as object for study diverge considerably: although both approaches study language as an abstract system, only functional approaches acknowledge language-internal *and* language-external (i.e. contextual and/or social aspects) components and interrelations, whereas formal approaches typically concentrate on language-internal units. Accordingly, the concept of ‘language’ reveals distinct foci on either *social aspects* (resulting from the location of language within a contextual framework), or *cognitive procedures* taking place within the more narrowly defined language system.

In the British linguistic tradition, functional approaches in particular were established and have continuously flourished since the mid-twentieth century. Inspired by the Prague School as well as Firth’s (1952-59) work on the role of context (cf. de Beaugrande 1993a), especially the writings of Halliday (e.g. 1978; 2004) defined British functional linguistics. Halliday’s notion of language as a semiotic system in social context has been influential for a wide range of subsequent fields of linguistic study, such as Applied Linguistics, the Ethnography of Communication, Register Studies or even Critical Discourse Analysis.

2.1 Systemic Functional Grammar

Since the 1960s, the British linguistic school linked to the work of Halliday has become known under the name of *Systemic Functional Grammar*, *Systemic Grammar*, or *Systemic Linguistics*. The approach promoted by Halliday and his research fellow Hasan has a strong orientation towards application, and stresses the importance of interrelations between a language system and language use (Bailey 1992). In Systemic Functional Grammar, language is conceptualized as a “form of system networks, not as an inventory of structures”

which constitutes “a resource for making meaning […]” (Halliday 2004: 23). Accordingly, a ‘system’ is understood as “the underlying potential of a language” (Halliday 2004: 26), or ‘meaning as choice’ on a paradigmatic dimension of language in contrast to ‘structure’ operating on a syntagmatic dimension. It is therefore not surprising that Halliday (cited in de Beaugrande 1993b: 224f.) differentiates between paradigmatic or *choice* grammars on the one hand and syntagmatic or *chain* grammars on the other hand. For Halliday, especially the former were of special interest, as they emphasized the role of meaning and, moreover, integrated contextual factors into their theoretical frameworks.
The notion of ‘functionalism’, following Halliday (1973: 7), involves functional questions of both language use and functional interpretations of the language system:

> A functional approach to language means, first of all, investigating how language is used: trying to find out what are the purposes that language serves for us, and how we are able to achieve these purposes through speaking and listening, reading and writing. But it also means more than this. It means seeking to explain the nature of language in functional terms: seeing whether language itself has been shaped by use, and if so, in what ways – how the form of language has been determined by the functions it has evolved to serve.

In Halliday’s approach towards grammar, the traditional distinction between the grammar of a language on the one hand, and the lexicon on the other was replaced by a unitary concept of ‘lexico-grammar’, which considers meaning or ‘content’ a link between the linguistic system and the extra-linguistic context. “We use language to make sense of our experience, and to carry out interactions with other people”, Halliday claims, and he continues as follows:

> This means that the grammar has to interface with what goes on outside language: with the happenings and the conditions of the world, and with the social processes we engage in. But at the same time it has to organize the construal of experience, and the enactment of social processes, so that they can be transformed into wording.
> (Halliday 2004: 24)

To account for this phenomenon of language occurring both as system and as text, Halliday introduces the concept of ‘instantiation’: the system of a language,

according to this argumentation, is realized or 'instantiated' as text, i.e. concrete occurrences of forms in use.

Text, in the Hallidayan understanding of the term, is essentially a semantic entity. Moreover, it is a unit comprising both a stative element in the sense of a product, and a dynamic element which can be characterized by ongoing processes of selection and interaction on the side of the language users (Halliday/Hasan 1989; Halliday 2004). Halliday's notion of the *context of situation*[8] as an essential ingredient of language use is assumed to comprise three distinct components which are manifested in the concepts of *field*, *tenor* and *mode* of discourse (Halliday/Hasan 1989). The first, *field of discourse*, characterizes the nature of the social action that is taking place and refers to the propositional content of the utterance. The interactional element is comprised in Halliday's notion of *tenor of discourse*, where the relationship between the communication partners forms the central focus. Finally, the concept of the *mode of disco*urse is linked to the symbolic organization of the text and the role attributed to language within the communication process (Halliday/Hasan 1989: 12).

What makes Systemic Functional Grammar a valuable approach for the present investigation is that this linguistic school is functional and semantic rather than formal and syntactic in orientation, and focuses on the text and context rather than on isolated sentences. In addition, it acknowledges questions of interrelations between language structure, language use and contextual factors. Moreover, Halliday's notion of language as a semiotic system which establishes different kinds of meanings through constant processes of selection can be regarded a valuable starting point for text analysis. This enables us, following Eggins (2004: 3), "to consider the appropriacy or inappropriacy of different linguistic choices in relation to their contexts of use, and to view language as a resource which we use by choosing to make meanings in contexts".

To investigate cross-cultural preferences in such processes of selection materialized in the language of letters to the editor constitutes a major point of interest for the present study. As previous text typological research on letters to

[8] The notion of 'context of situation' originally goes back to Malinowski and was introduced into British linguistics by Firth, Halliday's teacher (de Beaugrande 1993a: 200ff.).

the editor has shown (e.g. Wetzel 1998), REQUEST acts, among other speech acts, constitute a typical act performed in this text type. *How* these REQUEST acts are realized in the language of Indian and British texts is of primary interest here. Qualitative as well as quantitative similarities and differences between Indian and British REQUEST act realizations will be explored and possible models for interpretation presented for discussion.

2.2 Metafunctions of Language

Assumptions on functions attributed to language may be as old as the first reflections on literary genres and styles of rhetoric. Since the twentieth century, some of the most influential contributions to the functions of language have been made by Bühler, Jakobson and Halliday, which shall be presented briefly.

In his model on the linguistic sign, Bühler (1990 [1934]) identified three basic functions of the sign (and language), namely the *representational*, the *appellative*[9], and the *expressive* function of language. According to this distinction, the functions of language were assumed to be oriented towards three distinct referents: *representation* is linked to concepts and objects in extralinguistic reality, *appeal* is directed toward an addressee, and the function of *expression* refers to the self, i.e. the speaker or writer. Such a threefold model includes the speaker, the addressee and referents in the real world as components of the linguistic sign. In contrast to de Saussure's considerations on the nature of the linguistic sign, Bühler's model does not perceive the sign as a cognitive entity, but as an entity which combines the linguistic with the extralinguistic world. The underlying notion of the sign as a functional unit views the sign or language as a 'tool' ("organon") to establish and communicate meaning between interactants.

This model proposed by Bühler was later picked up by Roman Jakobson (1995 [1956]), who expanded and revised the model of the linguistic sign and its elementary functions in language. In this successive model, Jakobson

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[9] Confusion may arise from distinct translations and uses of Bühler's terminology: whereas the translation of Bühler's work by D. Fraser Goodwin (1990 [1934]) suggests the term *appellative*, Halliday/Hasan (1989) as well as Akamatsu (1991) have used the term *conative* when referring to Bühler's organon model.

distinguished between six functions of language, which he termed the *referential*, the *emotive*, the *conative*, the *phatic*, the *metalingual* and the *poetic* functions of language. Jakobson's *referential* function is conceptually linked to the context or extralinguistic world, and hence closely resembles Bühler's idea of the *representational* function. His *emotive* function refers to the self or the speaker, and corresponds to Bühler's notion of the *expressive* function of language. In contrast, the *conative* function in contrast focuses not on the first, but on the second person, i.e. the addressee (cf. Bühler's *appellative* function). In addition to these three functions which clearly include the classification system introduced by Bühler, Jakobson established three further functions termed the *phatic*, the *metalingual* and the *poetic* function of language. Of these, the first goes back to Malinowski's concept of the *phatic communion*, and involves the establishment and maintenance of relationships between the communication partners. For that reason Jakobson's *phatic* function has also become known under the label of the 'contact function'. The second additional function, the *metalingual* function, refers to the code or channel of communication. Finally, the *poetic* function is introduced as a concept which is interrelated with the message and its symbolic form in the text.

Halliday (1989; 2004) identified three basic functions, or *metafunctions*, of language, which have been termed the *ideational*, the *interpersonal* and the *textual* metafunctions of language. Of these, the *ideational* (formerly further distinguished into *experiential* and *logical* function) is assumed to provide a means for "making sense of our experience" (Halliday 2004: 29) by construing experience and establishing logical relations. Thus, language is regarded as "reflection" and "representation of reality" (Halliday/Hasan 1989: 19f.), (Halliday 2004: 29f.). The *interpersonal* function comes into play when we act out our personal and social relationships. Here, language is viewed as an entity which intertwines propositional content with an element of action, adding a subjective dimension to the information being transferred. Language is thus perceived as a "mode of doing" or as "action" within the process of social interaction (Halliday/Hasan 1989: 20; Halliday 2004: 30f.). Finally, the *textual* function is assumed to be related to the construction of a text, i.e. it is assumed to facilitate the former two functions by providing a realization in text and discourse. Underlying this threefold distinction of metafunctions of language is Halliday's

(2004) perception of the clause grammar. The *ideational* metafunction, following this idea, perceives the clause as “representation”, and views aspects of transitivity as being of essential value for linguistic analyses. The *interpersonal* metafunction implies the perception of the clause as “exchange”, and focuses particularly on the grammatical category of mood. With respect to the *textual* metafunction, the clause is regarded as “message”, which means that the grammatical category of theme is of special interest.

For the present study and the focus on REQUEST act realizations, the centre of attention is both on the sender (writer) and on the recipient (reader). With respect to the models on metafunctions of language which have been presented, an analysis of REQUEST acts would include the *expressive* and *appellative* functions in Bühler’s and the *emotive* and *conative* functions in Jakobson’s model. Of Halliday’s *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual* metafunctions of language, the former two conceptualise the function attributed to the speaker and the function attributed to an exchange between speaker and hearer. The focus in this instance is both on the text producer and on his/her indented audience as manifested in the language of letters to the editor.

2.3 Form-Meaning Relationships

An essential problem within linguistics is the relationship between the forms and structures of language on the one hand, and the meanings or underlying intentions encoded in language on the other hand. The fact that there exists no easy one-to-one relationship between a linguistic form and an underlying meaning has led linguists to view ambiguity as an integral part of the language system. In 1977, Bolinger had hinted at the same problem when he claimed that in the same way as two or more forms could be linked to the same underlying meaning one form could alternatively be linked to different underlying meanings (1977: 3). The result in both cases is ambiguity, which cannot be resolved in a simple manner. With respect to widespread conventions of linguistic analyses during the 1970s, Bolinger argued that forms tended to be overemphasized whereas underlying meanings used to be treated as minor important aspects of language. Hence it is not surprising that Bolinger himself stressed the

importance of underlying meanings, and considered the ‘one form-one meaning’ assumption “a fallacy” (1977: 9) which needs to be avoided. In a narrow sense, Bolinger even claims that there are no lexico-grammatical structures which share exactly the same meaning (1977: 4), and exemplifies this hypothesis, for instance, in his analysis section of active and passive clauses.
The complex relationship between form and meaning manifests itself in different layers of language, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, but also within pragmatics. Halliday/Hasan (1989: 23) use the term ‘multifunctionality’ to account for this phenomenon on the sentence level. The same phenomenon, however, also applies to speech acts, which form units beyond the sentence level. In Speech Act Theory, the relationship between speech act as the objects of study and speech act verbs as the indicators for speech acts has opened up for difficulties[10]. Mey (1993: 115) reflects on this very same aspect when he summarises:

> One of the problems with speech acts is that the very wording of the act can lead to misunderstandings. To put it succinctly: Is the word *promise* a necessary element in the speech act ‘promise’? Or, in more general terms: Do I have to use a so-called ‘speech act verb’ to perform a speech act?

The answer to this question, clearly, is ‘no’. But how do we then identify and classify speech acts? In the past, the use of performative verbs as one illocutionary force indicating device has received much attention (e.g. Searle 1969, 1979). Even so, that explicit performative uses of speech act verbs by no means serve as speech act indicating devices has been demonstrated by Levinson (1983: 233) who posits not only mood, adverbs and particles, intonation, but also contextual information as additional illocutionary force indicating devices as well.
What can be rather sure is that the relationship between speech acts and speech act verbs is of an asymmetrical character (Mey 1993: 134). This makes speech act verbs one potential source for speech act classification, but at the same time emphasizes that there are other illocutionary force indicating devices, too.

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[10] The lack of differentiation between speech acts and speech act verbs is one major point of criticism on Austin’s Speech Act Theory (cf. Searle 1979; Leech 1983; Mey 1993).

To capture these potentially distinct illocutionary indicating devices, the present study proceeds on an inductive basis in that, initially, linguistic forms that realize REQUEST acts were collected[11]. These forms of realization were then compared to previous models established within the REQUEST research tradition, and accommodated to the present text type. The distribution of linguistic REQUEST acts later on was compared between Indian and British letters to the editor, and correlated to other reference data. This procedure finally resulted in a list of linguistic forms being potentially capable of expressing a REQUEST act, which, in turn, could be applied to the present letter corpora. Hence, what has been attempted here is to conduct an empirical study which combines aspects of actual with potential occurrences of linguistics forms expressing a specific speech act. The fact that, theoretically, no finite set of all potential REQUEST act realizations can be detected, and thus the list of potential realizations is far from being exhaustive, reflects the previously mentioned form-meaning problem.

2.4 Variation Studies

With the emergence of sociolinguistics or urban dialectology during the 1950s and 1960s, a growing interest in interrelations between variations of language on the one hand and social parameters on the other hand could be observed. In the United States of America, it was especially the work of William Labov (e.g. 2006 [1966]; 1994 [1970]) which promoted a shift of interest from mainly regional variation in the beginning to social variation within linguistic research. In Great Britain, the sociologist Basil Bernstein (e.g. 1971) was influential on scientific research within the field of social class membership and linguistic performance, especially in terms of the classroom context. Since the 1970s, linguistic research on language variation due to social parameters has flourished and has brought about a range of diverse fields of interest which could be subsumed under the label ‘variation studies’. With respect to social variation, categories such as social class, gender, age or ethnic group membership came under scrutiny both inside and outside Britain. Moreover, the

[11] This inductive procedure served as a starting point. Afterwards, information on linguistic REQUEST act performance was gathered from descriptive grammars of contemporary English (Biber et al. 1999, 2002) to establish a framework for linguistics realizations of REQUESTs.

role of functional parameters on language variation has gained scientific interested since the late 1980s. These functional parameters have constituted a key focus in linguistic disciplines such as Register Studies or Genre Analysis (e.g. Swales 1990; Bhatia 2004).

It can therefore be noted that the traditional scope of what can be termed 'variation studies'[12] has become diversified during the past decades and today incorporates regional, social and functional categories which are, in turn, intertwined with language structure and language use. The term *variety* as it is used here combines aspects of a *user-related* variety with aspects of a *use-related* variety[13] (cf. McArthur 1992b: 1081), and thus blurs the distinction between socio-culturally and regionally determined varieties on the one hand, and contextually and functionally determined varieties of language on the other hand.

That language variation has systematically been correlated to non-linguistic factors, such as social class, regional background or sex of the speaker has not always been the case. Especially the concept of 'free variation'[14] as a form of haphazard, unsystematic occurrence of linguistic features detached from other factors clearly demonstrates this point. A growing interest in and acceptance of linguistic variation could be observed during the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, which encouraged linguists from diverse fields of research to acknowledge language variation as a new object of study as well as an area for theoretical consideration.

In the light of these developments it is not surprising that also within the field of regional variation new topics of potential interest arose. Whereas in the beginning it was primarily countries of the first diaspora which were a central concern in variation linguistics, non-native or second diaspora countries have emerged as potential objects for study since the 1980s. To include researchers from these second diaspora countries into scientific discussions would constitute a further step in the direction of mutual respect and understanding.

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[12] There is, however, no agreement concerning the labels attributed to this field of research. Alternatively, the term *sociolinguistics* has been often used.

[13] The original distinction between *use-related* and *user-related* varieties has been suggested by Halliday/Hasan (1989).

[14] The concept of 'free variation' is reflected in the work of Fries/Pike, or Hubbell (Chambers 2003: 13-17).

3 Cross-Cultural Pragmatics

3.0 Introduction

At first glance, the field of cross-cultural pragmatics offers a wide range of possible objects for study, such as research on semantic and/or pragmatic universals (e.g. Wierzbicka 1991, 1997), pragmatic transfer or interlanguage phenomena (e.g. Kasper 1981). In addition to this, a range of divergent perspectives including cognitive, psychological, pedagogical or acquisitional foci have also been identified. Common to all of these sub-branches of cross-cultural pragmatics is that the adoption of an action-oriented perspective on language, and hence focus on the production and interpretation of linguistic action in context (Kasper/Blum-Kulka 1993: 3). Moreover, they do operate on a contrastive basis, comparing language structure and language use in distinct cultures. Granted that all languages share basic functions of communication, most of the research conducted within this field of study has focused on the entity of the speech act[15] as one major aspect for attention. Today, especially the branches of language teaching and of intercultural communication (for business purposes) appear to be conducting extensive research on culture-specific pragmatics (cf. Casper-Hehne 1999).

In the following, I will start with the question of universality vs. culture-specificity of speech acts before Wierzbicka's approach on semantic-pragmatic universals (Wierzbicka 1987, 1991, 1997) shall be discussed as an approach which seeks to examine universal and culture-specific differences in the conceptualization and realization of keywords and speech acts. Lastly, a short overview about cross-cultural speech act research since the 1980s shall be given before turning to the variety that forms the central interest of this and other chapters: Indian English.

[15] Here, a *speech act* is defined as a functional unit. A speech act may be represented by formal units of distinct length (from word to utterance) and hence is not restricted to the unit of the sentence (as practised by classical Speech Act Theorists). The concept of the speech act, however, has been subject to criticism. Especially the focus on the isolated unit of the sentence and the neglect of co- and context has caused severe criticism. Another source for criticism had been the role of the hearer and the perceptual dimension, which had remained in the periphery in classical Speech Act Theory. For a selection of critical essays on Searle's philosophy, especially with respect to semantic questions cf. Burkhardt (1990).

3.1 Speech Acts as Semantic-Pragmatic Universals

Speech acts have been investigated from many perspectives, stressing philosophical, linguistic or cultural aspects. Here, the linguistic focus is of special interest and particularly the question of how a specific speech act, namely the REQUEST act, is conceptualized and verbalised in two different cultures using closely related language varieties constitutes one major task for the present study. The underlying assumption which has been made here is that speech acts constitute a universal phenomenon of human language. As the survey by Sadock/Zwicky (cited in Allan 1998: 598) on thirty-five languages of diverse languages families has shown, languages across all linguistic areas similarly reflect linguistic structures in performing a basic number of functions. Hence, all languages can be assumed to possess declarative structures to make statements, interrogatives to ask things, and imperatives to get people to perform actions. Furthermore, a number of languages have been reported to exhibit optative-subjunctive, expressive-exclamative, prohibitive and/or imprecative structures (Allan 1998: 598). Supported by language-typological studies as these, I do assume that there exists a number of basic speech acts operating across all languages. Whether or not these speech acts, however, can be grasped through lists of speech act verbs (cf. Austin 1962) is doubtful as language users of diverse languages may not draw on the same linguistic resources in order to carry out speech acts. According to my point of view, this problem can only be partly solved via empirical studies operating on a comparative basis. How Wierzbicka as one of the major figures of cross-cultural pragmatics has attempted to cope with the entity of the speech act shall be presented in the following.

In her writings of the 1980s and early 1990s, Wierzbicka focused on interrelations between semantics and pragmatics[16] from a culture-contrastive perspective (Wierzbicka 1987, 1991, 1997). Based on the underlying concept of

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[16] Since Morris's classification of semiotics into the three disciplines syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Nöth 1990: 48-55), there have been several attempts to distinguish between semantics and pragmatics. Nevertheless, such differentiations have remained a matter of disagreement in writings on this topic (cf. Mey 1993; Bublitz 2001). In particular, the question of whether pragmatics has to be considered a perspective rather than an individual discipline has caused many controversies. Here, I do follow Levinson's definition of pragmatics as "the study of those relations between language and context that are *grammaticalized*, or encoded in the structure of a language" (1983: 9).

semantic universals, Wierzbicka aimed at a description of various speech acts in a range of cultures and languages. For this purpose, Wierzbicka developed a semantic metalanguage which enabled her to paraphrase and simplify the assumed meanings of culture-specific lexical items ('key words'). The foundations for this metalanguage are localized in the vocabulary of a language, which, following Wierzbicka's argumentation, reflects 'universal semantic primitives'. Subsequently, about two dozen lexical entities (e.g. the pronouns *I* and *you*, or verbs such as *want*, *say*, *do* or *think*, etc.)[17] were identified as realizations of basic universal semantic categories. Apart from these studies which mainly concentrate on the distribution and meaning of key words in different cultures, Wierzbicka also investigates speech act patterns from a contrastive point of view (1991; 1997). The notion of 'speech acts' here suggests they are "not [being] language-independent and culture-independent theoretical tools" (Wierzbicka 1987: 11), but cognitive entities which reflect a particular perspective on the world. Access to these culture-specific perspectives on the world, following Wierzbicka, could be gained via the lexicon of a language. "There is a very close link between the life of a society and the lexicon of the language spoken by it", Wierzbicka argues (1997: 1), and, at the same time, presupposes that a list of key words incorporating the most fundamental concepts for a society can be identified quite easily. Methodologically, Wierzbicka performs this task by concentrating on what she terms 'cultural elaboration' on the one hand (i.e. richness in forms to express a concept), and, on the other hand, the overall frequency with which these forms occur in language use (1997: 10ff.). The underlying assumption is that an important concept will result in a multitude of forms, which, moreover, will occur more frequently than forms of other, less prevailing concepts in a culture. Despite this reasonable argumentation, Wierzbicka later admits that "there is no finite set of such words [key words] in a language, and there is no 'objective discovery procedure' for identifying them" (1997: 16). This is exactly the experience readers of Wierzbicka's work inevitably have at some point while studying her argumentation, where de facto intuition seems to constitute a major force within the semantic characterization of key words in English, Polish, Russian and Japanese culture. Nevertheless, Wierzbicka's approach provides a

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[17] Cf. Wierzbicka (1991: 8) for a full list of these universals.

valuable piece of work for cross-cultural linguistics, as her notion of ‘semantic universals’ enables comparative studies between languages and cultures which go beyond previous investigations in the fields of language typology or traditional variation studies based on geography. Although both the notion of ‘key words’ as well as the identification and definition of these lexical entities prove to be problematic this does not mean, in reverse, that the lexicon of a language can be considered in isolation from the respective language and culture. What is suggested here is that Wierzbicka’s focus on the lexical dimension of a language has to be enlarged to comprise not only words and their meanings, but also entities of the grammatical dimension of language. In my opinion, both dimensions exhibit correlations between one another, and hence require to be integrated into a common framework for analysis. The concept of underlying pragmatic universals is shared with Wierzbicka, although realizations of these universals are perceived to be more complex in structure. A second difference from Wierzbicka’s approach is that the notion of the culture-specific ‘key words’ is neither considered theoretically adequate, nor empirically useful. Especially Wierzbicka’s procedure of key word identification as well as her notion of ‘culture’ prove to be particularly problematic. Wierzbicka (1987; 1991; 1997) frequently and in a self-explicatory manner uses the term ‘culture’, but actually fails to provide a definition. The use of the term, however, makes it clear that for Wierzbicka, ‘culture’ seems to be a clear-cut and fixed, but at the same time impenetrable entity which can be easily attributed to people on the basis of criteria such as their nationality or ethnic group membership. This understanding is reflected in her use of the terms ‘Anglo-Saxon culture’, ‘Polish culture’, ‘Russian culture’, ‘German culture’ or ‘Japanese culture’ as if these were homogeneous entities which do not show any permutation to or overlapping with other ‘cultures’. The idea of ‘grasping cultures’ through their vocabulary used for basic semantic entities is assumed to reveal insights into peoples’ beliefs and attitudes. Similar understandings of ‘culture’ can be detected in studies which investigate intercultural communication for business purposes (cf. Casper-Hehne 1999). Even if these findings might provide some practical relevance for verbal or non-verbal culture-specific behaviour, what remains problematic is cultural stereotyping, feeding the dichotomy between ‘the self’/’the known’ and ‘the other’.

From a linguistic perspective, I would propose a very broad definition of 'culture' as comprising all human activities which are encoded symbolically and which establish meaning for a society. Williams's (1988: 80) notion of culture as "the way of life for an entire society" point into the same direction. Language as a crucial aspect of culture hence mirrors the beliefs, values and norms of a social group, but at the same time also contributes constantly to the reproductions of such beliefs, values and norms. To a certain extent this corresponds to Wierzbicka's use of the term. In my opinion, however, a further aspect has to be taken into consideration: 'cultures' do not form stable entities with clear-cut boundaries. In contrast, they are characterized by 'hybridity', a situation in which "other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse" (Bhabha 1994: 114). The ongoing processes of transformation and negotiation of incommensurable differences create a Third State of enunciation, which "challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People" (Bhabha 1994: 37). This idea could also prove valuable for the study of postcolonial varieties of English. For the Indian situation, for instance, not only local aspects of 'Indian culture', but also (post-) colonial aspects linked to the society's past and present would have to be acknowledged. In the recent past, a few studies in linguistics have begun to operate with a more transgressive and more dynamic concept of 'culture' (e.g. Schneider 2003, 2007), so that interdisciplinary research exploring linguistic questions in the context of cultural studies may provide a promising field of research for the future.

3.2 Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research

Contrastive speech act research has been flourishing since the 1980s, and has been mainly influenced by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper and their Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), which conducted empirical investigations into REQUEST and APOLOGY acts in seven distinct languages and language varieties. The major aim of the CCSARP project was to investigate "the ways language is used to perform certain speech acts with the social and situational variables that potentially affect their use" (Blum-Kulka et

al. 1989: 5). Blum-Kulka et al. focus especially on the degree of directness/indirectness in requesting behaviour, and aim at detecting interrelations between request patterns on the one hand and social, situational and functional variables on the other hand. Moreover, the interest not only concerned speech act realizations of native varieties but also included non-native varieties. For data elicitation, the researchers of the CCSARP project introduced the so-called Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which consists of written dialogues representing distinct situations all of which require verbal complementation by the informants through a realization of the respective speech act of interest. In their analysis section, potential constituents of REQUEST and of APOLOGY sequences were identified and then compared across the seven language varieties. Apart from a first systematic analysis of the structure of requests and apologies on a comparative basis, Blum-Kulka et al.'s study provides valuable procedures for subsequent cross-cultural speech act analyses.

Hence it is not surprising that subsequent studies, especially within the field of the REQUEST research tradition, mainly drew on the CCSARP framework (e.g. Márquez Reiter 2000; Warga 2004).

Other speech acts which have received some attention are, for instance, COMPLAINTs (e.g. Kasper 1981; House/Kasper 1981) and INVITATIONs (e.g. Kasper 1981).

Common to all these studies is that they are based on one (or a few) specific speech act(s), which is/are analysed with respect to realization patterns and preferences within and/or across varieties. To a certain extent, these studies take the entity of the speech act as the universal and stable entity for comparison, and analyze actual occurrences of this speech act with respect to linguistic, social, functional and regional parameters. Methodologically, most cross-cultural research exhibits a strong focus on empirical analyses, and uses techniques such as DCT, questionnaires, interviews, or role plays to elicit data. For the present investigation, the DCT method was selected as one additional source of reference. Reference grammars and data gained from reference corpora (i.e. the ICE-GB and the ICE-India) constituted the two further sources for comparison.

To conduct a contrastive study on aspects of politeness in REQUEST and APOLOGY acts in British English and Uruguayan Spanish was the aim of the study carried out by Márquez Reiter (2000). Based on data gained from open role-plays, discourse completion tests and observation, Márquez Reiter analysed the verbal response of 61 native speakers of British English, and 64 native speakers of Uruguayan Spanish. Concerning the coding scheme, the system developed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) was taken as a starting point. In addition, Brown/Levinson's distinction of 'positive' versus 'negative' politeness was integrated into the study. Finally, the three levels of directness as suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), i.e. direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect, were taken into consideration (Márquez Reiter 2000: 82ff.). In her analysis part of REQUESTs in Britain and Uruguay, Márquez Reiter has discovered that the linguistic form chosen for different situations clearly depends on the social distance between the communication partners (2000: 170). According to her findings, social distance seems to be the most pervasive factor in influencing the directness of a REQUEST strategy. In contrast, other factors such as the degree of the imposition or the social power between the interlocutors did not show much impact on REQUEST preferences. The other social factor which did influence language behaviour in the study was revealed to be gender. Of all the strategies under investigation, the conventional indirectness category proved to be the most frequently occurring pattern in both languages and among both males and females (Márquez Reiter 2000: 173).

The acquisition and performance of REQUESTs for language learners of French has been one of the central questions in Warga's study (2004). Locating her study within the field of interlanguage pragmatics, Warga draws on Kasper's definition of interlanguage as "the branch of second language research which studies how non-native speakers (NNS) understand and carry out linguistic action in a target language, and how they acquire L2 pragmatic knowledge" (quoted in Warga 2004: 10). In her study, Warga focuses on REQUEST acts performed by Austrian learners of French (as a foreign language) from an acquisitional perspective. Especially minor moves accompanying the illocutionary act, such as supportives, forms of address and attention getters, etc. are elicited by the DCT-method and compared to native speaker

performances. The observation of the ‘verbosity’ phenomenon of learner performance, resulting from learners’ attempts to justify or explain their REQUEST act confirmed the conclusions of previous studies (Warga 2004: 106).

After an initial under-representation and a following over-representation of attention-getters in opening sequences, the learners’ performance was observed to become gradually adjusted to the native speakers’ performance (Warga 2004: 241).

On the other hand, modifications of REQUEST act realizations, e.g. by the use of the conditional, however, occur less frequently in learner performance compared to native speaker performance (Warga 2004: 243). Despite progressive developments within the second language acquisition process, Warga claims, Austrian learners seem to orientate pragmatically to their first language, i.e. German. Reasons for this behaviour remain unclear; Warga suggests that learners (1) do lack intensive contact to French culture, and (2) are not aware of pragmatic differences between one language and another (Warga 2004: 244). The second reason hints at deficiencies in second-language teaching material, which often ignores questions linked to the pragmatic dimension of language. According to my point of view, however, these observations are by no means restricted to the Austrian learning context, but they are the result of extreme positions in language pedagogy. Whereas before the 1970s the focus had been on the acquisition of ‘grammatical competence’, after this period ‘communicative competence’ was declared the main goal of L2-learning. Unfortunately, the latter has only proved partly successful as the role of intuition in language learning tended to be overemphasized.

4 Varieties of English in Postcolonial Settings: India

4.0 Overview

In the following, salient developments in research on the so-called ‘New Englishes’ will be briefly presented. An overview about the regional diversification of English marks the starting point for the present chapter. Afterwards, changes within the variation studies tradition on non-native varieties of English in postcolonial settings are of interest. Afterwards, the status and functions of non-native varieties of English as allocated in major reference models is provided for discussion. Finally, a localization of Indian English within a dynamic reference model will be suggested.

4.1 The Spread and Diversification of the English Language

For more than 400 years the term ‘English’ has not only referred to the variety of English which we label ‘British English’ today, but has comprised a vaguely defined range of varieties of English or ‘Englishes’ which have emerged and developed especially in postcolonial settings, or areas which were under British political and/or economic influence[18]. Whereas in the sixteenth century the number of speakers was assumed to oscillate between five and seven million, today figures range from one-and-a-half to two billion speakers of English (Jenkins 2003: 2). What is different when comparing these two numbers is, of course, is that the former comprises primarily native speakers of English, whereas the latter includes both native and non-native users. In 2001, the total number of native and non-native speakers of English was suggested to be about 2,2 billion, i.e. more than one third of the world’s population at that time (Crystal 2003: 67). Of these, only about 330 million users have English, or a variety of English, as their native tongue; the largest groups of native speakers have been living in the United States and Canada (c. 236 million native speakers), the United Kingdom and Ireland (c. 63 million native speakers), and Australia and New Zealand (c. 19 million native speakers) (Crystal 2003: 63ff.). With respect to numbers, this means that today the great majority of English users today do not belong to the group of speakers with English as their mother tongue, but that they belong to the group of ‘non-native

[18] Countries which used to be under US-American sovereignty in the past, such as the Philippines, Liberia, Samoa or Puerto Rico are ignored here.

users of English', a group which has by far outnumbered English native speakers today.
In addition, the importance of English seems to be increasing continually. But what are the reasons for the present status and use of English as a world language?

First of all, historical reasons have to be acknowledged. These include what has been termed the 'first diaspora' and the 'second diaspora' of the English language[19] (Jenkins 2003: 5). Whereas the former has been primarily associated with migrations of British people to North America and Australia, the latter has been used to refer to British expansion politics from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, which had resulted in the formation of British overseas colonies in Africa, Asia and in the South Pacific. With the decay of the British Empire and the emergence of new independent nation-states at the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the necessity for English as an official language ceased to exist. Surprisingly, many of these former British colonies in fact retained English as one of their major languages. One possible explanation would be that the use of English had been institutionalized in so many areas of public life in the past that native languages could not easily substitute English within these specific functions. In India, for instance, English was granted an 'additional official language' status in the country's constitution of 1950, although, in reality, one of the native languages, namely Hindi, was proclaimed the first language of the country. Records of the first Indian government reveal that English was intended to be accepted as an official language until the year 1965 after which, politicians hoped, Hindi would take over the functions English had fulfilled in the past. As we know today, this attempt proved to be in vain.

Apart from historical reasons for the dispersal and survival of English in various countries, the status attributed to English has to be taken into consideration. Attitudes towards a language (and its speakers) are an important motivation for learning and using a language. In the former colonies, however, attitudes toward English have often been ambivalent. Associating English with

[19] Alternatively, Jenkins (2003: 5) uses the terms 'first dispersal' and 'second dispersal' of the English language.

values of intellectual and cultural distinctiveness might therefore have promoted positive connotations among those who considered themselves 'the ancestors' of the British legacy in their country. Today, positive connotations toward English are more likely to be linked to the role of English as a language for international communication, especially in the fields of politics, trade, science and technology. Nevertheless, there are also critics that consider the use of English today as a new form of (linguistic) imperialism connected to the dominance of Western Europe and the United States, which endangers local identities and cultures (e.g. Ammon 2001).

In the case of India, English has established a new status within the country by offering an alternative lingua franca for those Indians who either cannot or do not wish to communicate in another common language apart from English. Against this background, English can be regarded as a 'neutral link language' in multilingual contexts which proves problematic in the case of other language choices.

Similar observations have been made by Platt et al. (1984: 13ff.) who comment on the use of English in former British colonies as follows:

> The choice of English as an official language in many of the New Nations is not surprising. The reason is not only that English had been the language of the former colonial administration and was therefore the popular choice for an elite group. English has also become, the world over, a language of international communication, diplomacy and business dealings. It has been one of the major languages used for scientific and technological research and publications. A further point is that in multilingual nations it can be considered a neutral language of communication.

For international communication, English has become the most commonly used language. In particular, Crystal concludes, it is the economic position of the United States in the world, "which continues to explain the world position of the English language today" (2003: 59). Whether or not this position provides a satisfactory explanation remains debatable.

One consequence of the spread of English is a diversification of the language[20] into a range of different regional, i.e. national, varieties. Due to

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[20] English as one (national) variety could be assumed to have existed until the fifteenth century.

historical and political developments in the past, British and American English have been considered the two main varieties of English which served as 'roots' or 'parents' for the 'younger' varieties of English in the world. Today, varieties of English going back to the American English parent are to be found in the Philippines, in parts of Samoa, Liberia, and Puerto Rico. All other varieties of English are descendants of British English, although the time of their conception and their subsequent growth into fully-fledged national varieties of course did not, of course, take place simultaneously. Today, many of these Englishes which have emerged in postcolonial settings either have developed into a fully-fledged variety of English, or are within the process of establishing a variety of English of their own.

4.2 From *English* to *Englishes*: Terminological and Conceptual Changes

Whether we come across terms such as 'New Englishes'[21], 'world Englishes', or 'global Englishes', what is common in all these labels is that today the plural form, *Englishes*, seems to be widely accepted and used to denote varieties of English which have emerged in postcolonial settings in the world. Although composite forms in the singular are still used to refer to the same phenomenon, simple searches in national libraries[22] reveal that composite forms in the plural have been increasingly used for book titles during the last two decades.

As a result of the formation of independent nation-states especially during the early decades of the twentieth century, questions of identity construction and of separating oneself from the former 'mother country' became salient issues within the postcolonial context. As language is an important means (among others) for identity construction, one could assume the focus would subsequently be centred on indigenous languages rather than on English, the language of the former colonizers. A matter of fact is, surprisingly, that this did not happen in most countries with colonial ties to Britain. Rather, what could be observed was the beginning of a gradual incorporation of the English language into local contexts, a development which Rushdie described with respect to the

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[21] Whereas during the 1980s spelling of the adjective revealed inconsistent usages with respect to capitalization, nowadays the capitalized form seems to be preferred. This might be due to the fact that either the term has acquired a comparable status as proper names, or that ideological motivations might have promoted a capitalized usage.

[22] Queries in the catalogue of the British Library, for instance, have confirmed this trend.

Indian situation, asserting that “to conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free” (1992b: 17). This notion of ‘conquering English’ as an act of liberation clearly displays the changing process of considering the ‘New’ Englishes no longer as erroneous and deviant forms of British English, but as regional varieties in their own rights. By accepting these Englishes as fully-fledged varieties of English, sociolinguists as well as dialect geographers turned their attention to these non-native language contexts. Whereas, during the nineteenth century, linguistic observations on these varieties of English were conducted more or less intuitively as a result of the (native) researcher’s impressions when travelling to the respective country, perspectives of the later twentieth century attempted to provide a structurally more complex and ideologically more objective view on their object of study. In contrast to early studies on non-native varieties of English, which attributed linguistic differences either to instances of ‘free variation’ or, more likely, to ‘errors’ on behalf of the learners, present-day investigations aim at a systematic description and analysis of these ‘errors’, and promote a re-evaluation of these discrepancies as ‘differences’, but not as ‘deficits’[23]. Such an ‘emancipation’ of the non-native varieties of English as independent varieties (at least in their current state) has opened space for new questions on the relationship between native and non-native Englishes, or the relationship between the non-native Englishes themselves.

These changes in terminology from singular to plural indicate changes in perception concerning the object of study. Moreover, scientific approaches to linguistic phenomena within these varieties not only became accepted by linguistics and neighbouring disciplines, but also enlarged traditional perspectives on non-native varieties of English.

4.3 Reference Models for the New Englishes

When linguistic studies on the varieties of English in the world increased during the 1980s, most attempts to classify these Englishes relied on factors such as geographical location, colonial history and typological relatedness (cf. McArthur 1998: 93ff.).

[23] A similar debate has been conducted on Basil Bernstein and his Code Theory (1971).

One of the earliest models within this time span was Strevens's "world map of English" (1980, reprinted in Kachru 1992: 33), which provided a graphical presentation of the varieties of English within the form of a one-dimensional family tree linking a geographical location with a 'language parent', i.e. either British English, or American English. I choose the term 'one-dimensional' here because obviously several other aspects within this family tree, such as the degree of typological relatedness of a 'descendant' either with its 'parent' or its 'siblings', or 'age' of the respective descendant cannot be accounted for in this model.

The second model often quoted during the 1980s is the 'wheel model' by McArthur (reprinted in McArthur 1998: 97), which suggested a categorization of the Englishes around a common core labelled "world standard English". On one side of the wheel, McArthur locates all native varieties of English, i.e. "British and Irish Standard English", "American Standard English", "Canadian Standard English" and "Australian, New Zealand and South Pacific Standard English". The other side of the wheel comprised non-native varieties, namely "East Asian Standardizing English", "South Asian Standard(izing) English", "West, East and South(ern) African Standard(izing) English" as well as "Caribbean Standard English". What becomes clear in the chosen labels for these varieties is that McArthur assumes them to be partly on the stage of having developed individual standards or of being on their way to establish a standard regional variety. Hence, a temporal dimension is at least tentatively included within this model. The notion of a common 'world standard, at least with respect to written English, is shared by some researches (e.g. McArthur 2004; Gupta 2006), although the discussion on the development of the varieties of English is far from reaching a consensus.

Language competence, the type of spread of English and the function allocated to English in the respective countries represent the underlying motivations in Kachru's 'three-circle model of Englishes' (1992). In this model, countries (actually the users of English) in the world where English is an important national language are differentiated into three distinct groups or 'circles', termed the 'inner circle', the 'outer circle', and the 'expanding circle' (cf. figure 1).

Following this distinction, countries classified as members of ‘the inner circle’ (e.g. the USA, and the UK) match previous typologies in that they represent what is commonly believed to be ‘a native-speaker country of English’. Kachru’s second circle, the ‘outer circle’, includes countries such as India, Bangladesh, Kenya or Nigeria, and thus implies that in these countries English is acquired (and used) as a second language. The remaining ‘expanding circle’ comprises all other learners and users of English in the world, irrespective of their competence level.

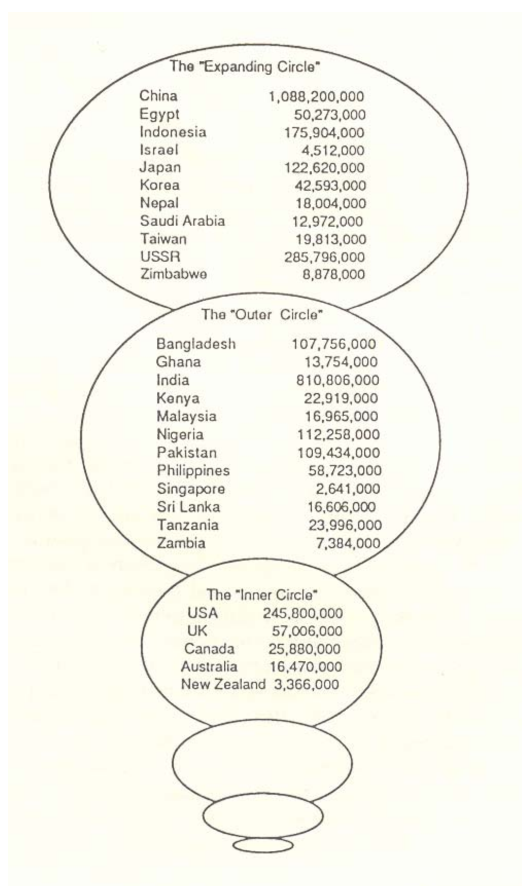

Figure 1: The Circle Model of Englishes (Kachru 1992: 356)

When it comes to norms or reference models of English, Kachru claims that members of the ‘inner circle’ do provide the norms valid for all varieties of English, whereas members of the ‘expanding circle’ are considered being ‘norm-dependent’. Members of the ‘outer circle’ are perceived as being at an intermediary stage, as ‘norm-developing’ members, which have abolished their status as ‘norm-dependent’ varieties.

With respect to traditional terminology, all countries listed as members of the 'inner circle' by Kachru correspond to what has been alternatively referred to as varieties with 'English as a Native Language (ENL) countries', while countries included in the second circle were categorized under the label 'English as a Second Language (ESL) countries'. Finally, all countries comprised in Kachru's 'expanding circle' correspond to the category termed 'English as a Foreign Language (EFL) countries'. As this model reveals, the acquisition and use of English as well as the spread of English are categories of salient importance for Kachru's threefold classification.

Several aspects have been criticised in this model, such as its reliance on geographical and genetic units, blurred boundaries between speakers of the three circles[24], or its incapacity to account for phenomena of linguistic complexity in multilingual settings (Jenkins 2003: 17f.). Evaluations of the earlier tripartite model 'ENL' – 'ESL' – 'EFL', in fact, reveal similar aspects for criticism, such as the concept of a language as one homogeneous entity (ignoring internal variation), the concept of the 'typical' ENL/ESL/EFL speaker (which is an idealization), or the neglect of multilingualism and functional phenomena of language change and mixture, such as code-switching (McArthur 1998: 43ff.). What is perceived as the main problem for both types of categorizations is the notion of homogeneity, which is applied to speech communities, languages and regions, but which at the same time disguises linguistic and social complexity within the different regions of the world. A citizen of the United States, for instance, does not necessarily have English as his/her first language[25]. Similarly, speakers of an ESL country do not necessarily have to be in-between native speakers and EFL learners with regard to language proficiency in English. Moreover, differences in competence, terms of acquisition and use of English for speakers in EFL countries remain unacknowledged in Kachru's circle model. Apart from these points of criticism, Kachru acknowledges the varieties of English in the 'outer circle' (i.e. ESL varieties) with at least a status of recognition when he describes them to as 'norm-developing' varieties of English which are approaching native varieties of English with respect to

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[24] The classification of countries into one of the three circles ignores the fact that native and non-native speakers of English can be found both in native and in non-native contexts.
[25] Cf. the large number of Hispanics in the United States (which is about 41,3 million) given for the year 2005 by the US government (U.S. Census Bureau 2005).

questions of ‘standardness’ and local recognition. It is this re-evaluation of the ‘outer circle’ members which makes the three-circle model valuable for both the description and perception of these ‘New Englishes’ as varieties of English in their own rights.

Common to these models is that they reinforce the twofold distinction between native varieties on the one hand, and non-native varieties on the other hand. This underlying assumption was previously made within the branch of learning teaching, where the categories ‘English as a Native Language’ (ENL), ‘English as a Second Language’ (ESL), and ‘English as a Foreign Language’ (EFL) have been accepted terms since the 1970s (McArthur 1998: 42). In essence, this threefold distinction has survived until today. What is problematic in this categorization, however, is that countries attributed to one of the three language competence groups do not exhibit homogenous groups of speakers. In India, for instance, only about 3 to 5% of the population are assumed to be competent in English (Kachru 1992: 68; Görlach 1994: 238). The other side of the coin is that, according to this figure, about 95 % of the population are assumed to have limited or even no language skills at all in English although this language holds a quasi-official status within the country. Moreover, assigning one of the statuses to a country also suggests a degree of stability which ignores the process of language change. Scandinavian countries for example used to be classified as members of the EFL group, although some scholars have claimed that they would be on their way to becoming de facto ESL members in the near future (e.g. Phillipson 1992; Gotti 2005).

A rather different approach was suggested by Schneider (2003), who picks up the idea of the ‘life circle’ of a language (cf. Moag 1992)[26]. In contrast to traditional models used in describing the New Englishes, Schneider introduced a dynamic component into his model, which had not been acknowledged in the past. In essence, Schneider assumes “a fundamentally uniform developmental process” of all varieties of English which have emerged from the postcolonial context (2003: 233). Based on the observation that all these varieties exhibit structural as well as sociolinguistic similarities, Schneider concludes that similar

[26] The notion of a ‘life circle’ was first developed for the description of pidgins.

contact processes must be operating within these contact settings. Irrespective of a great number of diverse languages involved into these language contact phenomena, procedures of identity formation, linguistic accommodation and diversification form the basic framework for Schneider's dynamic model. Essential to this model is the concept of 'identity', which is perceived as a constant process of negotiation and modification between individuals, between groups, and interactions between individuals and groups (2003: 239). The two main aspects linked to the continuous (re)creation of identity are "a need to decide who one is, and, more importantly, who one wishes to be" (Schneider 2003: 239). Within the development of these varieties from the transplantation of English in the respective country to the creation of an independent and fully-fledged variety of English, changes in identities, following Schneider, are intertwined with changes in language. Basically, Schneider identifies two main groups involved in the (re)creation process of identity formation, the strand of the 'settlers' on the one hand, and the strand of the 'indigenous population' on the other. Both groups are assumed to pursue very distinct goals in the initial phase, which gradually merge into converging interests during subsequent accommodation processes. The final stage[27] within this evolutionary model, Schneider suggests, typically brings about a differentiation process, which ultimately results in what he terms 'dialect birth' (2003: 253).

In the following, the five phases involved in the creation of a new variety shall be presented in brief. The subsequent subchapter will then apply this dynamic model to the situation of Indian English.

First, Schneider identifies a phase which he calls 'Foundation', and which exhibits the greatest clash of interests between the settler group and the indigenous group. Historically, this phase refers to the colonial expansion of the settler group. With respect to identity construction, both groups clearly display distinct identities, one being part of the colonial 'mother country', the other being of indigenous origin. Due to the restricted amount of contact between these two groups, knowledge of the language of 'the other' is limited during this phase. Linguistic contact phenomena are scarce, except basic simplification processes

[27] The last stage within the evolutionary model constitutes a theoretical end point in language development, although, Schneider (2003: 256) admits, in practice this may not be reached by all New Varieties.

in the language of the settler group and frequent borrowings of e.g. place names from the indigenous language(s).

The second phase is termed ‘Exonormative Stabilization’, and mirrors what Schneider calls “a stable colonial status” characterized by a growing ‘English-plus-local’ identity in the settler group and a ‘local-plus-English’ identity in the indigenous group (Schneider 2003: 255). In this phase, contact between the two groups expands, promoting an increase of lexical borrowing from local languages. Among elite groups of the indigenous population, bilingualism begins to spread. The reference model for both speakers of English in both groups, however, is the native variety, e.g. British English in the case of India.

‘(Structural) Nativization’ constitutes the third phase within the development of the New Englishes. During this period the end of the colonial supremacy can often be observed. With the advent of political independence, the ties of the settler group with their mother country begin to loosen and, although the two groups might not have constructed a shared identity yet, both of them perceive themselves as permanent residents of the ‘new’ nation-state. That is why linguistic accommodation processes on the levels of phonology, lexis and grammar start to evolve during this period. Furthermore, among the settler group, a gap between innovative and conservative speakers starts to emerge.

The fourth phase is called ‘Endonormative Stabilization’ and not only refers to a shift in a historical dimension but also to changes in identity construction from an entity directed towards ‘the other’, i.e. the former colonial power, to an entity which has constructed a new native reference model. At that point of time, Schneider claims, the settler group and the indigenous group have merged into one group who perceive themselves as a homogenous entity of members of the new nation-state. What has developed into a national language variety for the first time gains widespread acceptance among its speakers. Hence, this phase has been characterized by “the gradual adoption and acceptance of an indigenous linguistic norm, supported by a new, locally rooted linguistic self-confidence […]” (Schneider 2003: 249). Within this environment, processes of codification further promote a stabilization of the new variety.

Following this phase of stabilization, however, is the phase of ‘Differentiation’, which results in the creation of internal variation (“dialect birth”, cf. Schneider 2003: 253) within the variety. What follows afterwards is a further differentiation of speakers and their language use due to the various group memberships being linked to factors such a regional background, social status, ethnic group, etc.

What makes this model by Schneider potentially applicable to all the New Englishes is that it does not assume a progression through all the five stages at the point of analysis, but that it allows to locate distinct varieties on different stages within the ‘evolutionary circle’ model. Such a new classification opens up a new perspective on the New Englishes without forcing them any longer into the ‘straitjackets’ of their genetic relatives any longer. The inclusion of a temporal dimension into contrastive analyses of varieties of English hence provides the path for valuable insights in prospective investigations.

4.4 The Localization of Indian English within a Dynamic Reference Model

To identify the present state and position of Indian English with this dynamic model suggested by Schneider (2003), we have to take socio-cultural, historical, political and linguistic factors into consideration, which are, following this model, assumed be operating similarly in these postcolonial contact settings.

For India, the Foundation phase as the first phase within the ‘life circle’ of a New English variety marks the stage of English from its introduction in the early sixteenth century by missionaries and merchants up to the mid-eighteenth century. The amount of interaction between the settler strand and the indigenous people strand can be assumed to have been rather of a limited character as both groups kept their distinct identities. Within this early period of contact, simplifications among the variety of English used by the settler group can be assumed to have taken place (Schneider 2003: 244). In the new contact situation, names of indigenous origin, particularly toponymic names, can be seen entering the English language.

The second phase, Exonormative Stabilization, has been identified for the Indian context as the period roughly dating from the 1760s to 1835 (cf. Kachru 1983: 19ff.; Mukherjee 2007: 164). The consolidation of British power on the Indian subcontinent after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 can be taken as one pervasive historical event which marks a turning point with respect to the role and self-perception of the settler group in the country. With the strengthening of political dominance within the country, the British also anchored their position in the Indian society. Redefinitions of identity within both groups do occur during this period of enriched contact, promoting a change from a formerly exclusively ‘British’ or even ‘English’ identity to an ‘English-cum-local’ identity (Schneider 2003: 246) within the settler group. For the indigenous group, a spread in bilingualism opened new perspectives for interactions with the settler group, although it also gained negative connotations as the language of oppression and dominance. Due to the increasing influence of the British onto the political and administrative body of the country, English became a language which consequently was acquired by the Indian aristocracy and the elite strata of the society through their support of British rule either as mediators between the Indian princes and the British, or as soldiers and clerks within the colonial system. As the contact between the two groups became closer, English incorporated vocabulary denoting items and concepts peculiar to Indian culture. The reference model for the variety of English, however, was clearly externally oriented, towards what was considered the native standard, namely British English. With Thomas Macaulay’s *Minute on Indian Education* (1835) and its subsequent introduction of English as a medium for Indian education, the next phase of Schneider’s dynamic model can be assumed to begin.

Subsequently, the establishment of English-medium instruction in higher education is regarded as the first step in the process of Nativization (cf. Mukherjee 2007: 165). From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, English enforced its status among the indigenous group, and became obligatory for people in the upper strata of society. The spreading competence in English and knowledge of Western science and thought eventually provided grounds for a growing self-confidence of the indigenous groups, which, quite ironically, facilitated communication among diverse Indian groups and eventually instigated the struggle for political independence. What can be concluded from

this development is that, for the indigenous population, English was transposed from a language of oppression and dominance to a link language promoting socio-political changes in the country. It is worth noting that also questions of identity construction were affected by this gradual shift of English as a language of 'them' into a language of 'ours', i.e. the native population. We can also assume that the self-perception of the ancestors of the settler strand has gradually changed.

From a linguistic point of view, it was during this phase that the variety of English used in India had acquired 'indigenous' features of phonological and grammatical dimensions. Nevertheless, the role of English in India did not remain undisputed when the new nation gained independence in 1947. As provisions taken in the initial years of the new nation-state reveal, English was only intended to function as an official language until Hindi would have taken over this role. That this attempt to plan language usage led to a completely different picture can still be observed in modern-day India.

One unclear point within the application of Schneider's model to the example of Indian English is the end of the Nativization phase. Mukherjee, for instance, argues that present-day Indian English "is no longer in the process of ongoing nativization, but finds itself, by and large, in phase 4, that is, in a state of endonormative stabilization" (2007: 167), although, he admits, both progressive and conservative forces seem to operate at the same time in contemporary Indian English.

When actually the transition from Nativization to Endonormative Stabilization within the Indian context actually took place cannot be clearly identified. As one prerequisite for 'standardization from within' is that the nation-state has freed itself from its colonial bondage, we can assume that India could have entered this phase sometime during the second half of the twentieth century. Only with the development of a new national identity incorporating a multitude of indigenous elements as well as elements of the country's colonial past, a new 'standard' of one of the country's languages, English, could have come into existence. Further evidence for Indian English in the stage of Endonormative Stabilization can be detected from the wide range of its uses within the country, and changes in language attitudes towards this variety (cf. Mukherjee 2007:

169). Especially the latter, in my opinion, contributes to the acceptance of this variety in its own rights[28].

But where is Indian English today? Is it still in stage four of the model, that is, in the stage of being a relatively homogenous variety with a new standard regarding pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar? Or is it already on its way to the final stage, i.e. Differentiation, within the dynamic model suggested by Schneider (2003)?

Schilk (2006: 285) has argued that "although the process of nativization does not seem to be at an end […], the emancipatory stance of scholars of IndE […] and the compilation of IndE corpora and dictionaries […] implies that endonormative stabilization […] is well under way". Apart from this line of argumentation concerning the structural effects of stage four within Schneider's model, Schilk (2006: 287) proposes an emerging acceptance of the local norm as well as literary creativity expressed in Indian English as characteristics of the sociolinguistic situation. Due to the fact that Indian English is an indigenous-strand dominated variety with nearly no descendants of the settler group left, Schilk argues, "it seems doubtful if IndE will ever arrive at this stage [i.e. Differentiation]" (2006: 280). The implication of this hypothesis is, according to my point of view, that non-native varieties will never reach the stage of internal differentiation, because of their lack of native speakers. The concept of 'nativeness'[29], however, is very controversial.

Mukherjee (2007: 170) also argues in favour of stage four for present-day Indian English. His major point for this claim is that an internal differentiation of Indian English has not been observed up to now. Though it is hard to verify or falsify the validity of such a claim empirically, the status of Indian English remains problematic. Even if the emergence of a standard in Indian English has been acknowledged by international scholars, local attitudes (of scholars and lay people) towards this standard vary between rejection at one end of the scale to acceptance at the other. Despite individual examples of increasingly positive

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[28] The impression that the variety "Indian English" has gained prestige among young women in the city of Mumbai was one result of the field study conducted in the year 2006 (cf. Offergeld, to appear).

[29] Kachru (2005: 12) distinguishes 'genetic nativeness' from 'functional nativeness'; this distinction has the advantage of granting non-native varieties at least a status of 'functional nativeness'.

connotations toward standard Indian English among young Indian women (cf. Offergeld, to appear), the overall picture of an evolving group identity still remains very vague. Similar observations have been made by Pollner (1985), who investigated the local variety of English used in Livingston, a Scottish New Town. In this case, especially the influence from the Glasgow dialect proved ambivalent: although young speakers revealed positive attitudes towards Glaswegian, metadata by adults reflected rather negative attitudes and such ambivalent attitudes of speakers on a variety, Pollner argues, mirrors the fact that a (linguistic) group identity has not developed in Livingston yet (1985: 372). For India, I would assume a similar status as described in the Scottish example. What further proves difficult for India is the high degree of internal variation from basilect to acrolect and mesolect, including 'broken English' as well as educated standard Indian English. How exactly standard Indian English will be referred to –as an accepted local standard variety or as a deviant form of British English- will be reflected in future observations from 'within' and abroad. In my opinion, the status of current Indian English is within the process of identity construction, and hence either corresponds to nativization or endonormative stabilization in the Schneider model (2003).

4.5 Research into Indian English

The first records of the specific use of English in India go back to the seventeenth century, when British missionaries, merchants and members of the British military service reported differences in comparison to the native British variety, especially in vocabulary. These documents, which essentially consisted of word lists providing semantic information, encouraged the compilation of dictionaries such as *Hobson-Jobson* (Yule/Burnell 1994 [1886]), which were primarily aimed at facilitating communication between British and indigenous people in India, and, subsequently, in providing the Indian people with instructive material for the acquisition of English. The *Hobson-Jobson* dictionary was based on the correspondence between Henry Yule, an Englishman in Britain, and Arthur Burnell, an Englishman working in the Civil Service in Madras, India. In the introduction, Yule describes the aim of the dictionary as follows:

> [*Hobson-Jobson*] was intended to deal with all that class of words which, not in general pertaining to the technicalities of administration, recur constantly in the daily intercourse of the English in India, either as expressing ideas not really provided for by our mother-tongue, or supposed by the speakers (often quite erroneously) to express something not capable of just denotation by any English term (Yule/Burnell 1994 [1886]: xv).

A similar point can be detected in the introduction of the second edition of the dictionary (1902), when the editor William Crooke introduces the dictionary as "a volume which combines interest and amusement with instruction […]" (Yule/Burnell 1994 [1886]: xi). What can be concluded from these early dictionaries is that they served the practical purpose of easing communication between the British and the indigenous population in India. For the audience in the homeland, these dictionaries provided sources of entertainment and an exotic look at 'the other' from the more distant part of the British Empire.

Systematic records of differences in pronunciation and grammar from the British English 'norm' were only established in twentieth century. One example of such a record is Nihalani et al.'s *Indian and British English: A Handbook of Usage and Pronunciation* (2004 [1970]), which survives until today as one of the major sources of reference when it comes to the description of lexico-grammatical patterns, especially collocations, in Indian English (cf. Schilk 2006). Nihalani et al.'s work constitutes insofar an interesting source as it combines a descriptive approach with an implied prescriptive attitude, as can be seen when the authors declare one of their aims "to provide aids for keeping Indian English in touch with British and American English, and enabling Indians to recognize peculiarities in their usage" (2004 [1970]: vii). As the quote demonstrates, the authors first of all consider it necessary to recognize the 'peculiarities' of Indian English, and second, the importance of an ongoing orientation towards the two oldest native varieties of English, i.e. British and American English. Even in the 2004 edition this orientation is not revised. We might at this point conclude that the underlying language attitudes toward Indian English may be responsible for such a position.

In the wake of an increasing interest in the so-called 'New Englishes' in their postcolonial settings, several journals, series and other publications on English

around the world were launched during the 1980s[30]. An ongoing interest in these ‘new’ varieties is reflected in various publications (e.g. Platt et al. 1984; Cheshire 1991; McArthur 1998; Schneider 2003; Hickey 2004).
Indian English thus became an object for scientific research during the 1970s and 1980s, and established itself as a regular topic of interest in the subsequent decades. Moreover, general accounts on the phonology, vocabulary, and grammar of Indian English have been given by e.g. Kachru (1983; 1990; 1991; 1992; 2005), Trudgill/Hannah (1985), or Mehrotra (1998; 2003).

The features typically attributed to Indian English pronunciation are monophthongization of the diphthongs [eɪ] and [əʊ], the substitution of the retroflex consonant series for the British English alveolar series, little vowel reduction and a neglect of phonemic vowel length distinction, the reduction of final consonant clusters, and a syllable-timed intonation in place of a stress-timed pattern (Kachru 1992: 62ff.; Hickey 2004: 515ff.).
Descriptions of the vocabulary used in Indian English have been provided by dictionaries, which in turn have been used for current investigations on collocations and complementation patterns.
Some of the grammatical features typically attributed to Indian English are differences in the use of articles, the occurrence of stative verbs in the progressive form, deviances in word order (such as the lack of inversion in questions), an invariant use of the tag *isn’t it* for all question tags in British English, non-standard uses of prepositions, and frequently occurring patterns of reduplication (Kachru 1990: 40; Hickey 2004: 253ff.). Grammatical deviances from the British English ‘norm’ in relation to the degree of language competence and interference phenomena was examined by S.N. Sridhar (1996) for the Bangalore region in Karnataka. More specifically, aspects of the verb, such as the occurrence of stative verbs in the progressive form, the use of the present and past perfect instead of the simple past tense, and prepositional verbs were studied by Rogers (2002); verb complementation patterns of ditransitive verbs were investigated by Mukherjee (2005).

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[30] Such as the journal *English World-Wide* (1980-), or the series *Varieties of English around the world* (1982-).

Phonology

- monophthongization of [eɪ] (> [eː]) and [əʊ] (> [oː])
- rhoticity of IndE: /r/ pronounced in all environments
- alveolar stops are retroflex
- fricatives [θ, ð] may be realized as aspirated stops [t^h, d^h]
- lacking distinction between [v] and [w]
- final consonant cluster reduction (e.g. /sks/ > /sk/ > /s/)
- germination of double consonants (especially in Southern India)
- syllable-timed intonation; little distinction in vowel length; little stress contrasts
- re-syllabification by insertion of an additional vowel (especially in Northern India)

Morphology

- plural marking often influenced by indigenous languages (i.e. no or distinct marking, reduplication patterns, etc.)
- tendency to drop articles when quantifiers follow
- preference to use *one* rather than the indefinite article *a*
- stative verbs occur in progressive forms

Grammar and Style

- lack of inversion in interrogative constructions
- reduplication patterns for emphasis
- reflexive pronouns and *only* used for emphasis
- *isn't it* as an invariant question tag
- use of the present perfect rather than the simple past

Table 1: Features of Indian English Phonology, Morphology, Grammar and Style (Hickey 2004: 514ff.; McArthur 1992a: 505f.)

A description of the differentiation of Indian English on a lectal range from 'broken English' at one end and 'educated or standard Indian English' at the other end was suggested by Mehrotra (1998) and Hosali (2005).
Publications on the multilingual language situation in India in general and the role of English within this specific context abound, although many of them are oriented toward questions of second language acquisition (e.g. Kachru 1985; Sahgal 1991; Verma 1994).
Until the last decade, pragmatic aspects of Indian English, however, have remained in the periphery of interest. The only studies which attempted to analyse pragmatic features of Indian English were conducted by K.K. Sridhar (1989), Tinkham (1993) and Valentine (1991).

Based on the assumption "that there are important cross-cultural and cross-linguistic differences in the way the 'same' speech act is performed in different

languages" (Sridhar 1989: 99), K. K. Sridhar analysed REQUEST expressions of 164 students in Bangalore. Apart from the linguistic background and situational factors the socio-cultural background of the students, which was categorized into being either 'traditional' or 'Westernized', was depicted as the main variable. Sridhar's major findings were that the speech act of REQUESTING in fact reveals distinct patterns in relation to British English. In particular, preferences for one linguistic strategy or another depended on the situation, the relative status between the communication partners and the degree of Westernization of the informants (Sridhar 1989: 115).

The performance of directive and expressive speech acts in Indian English constitutes the focus of the study conducted by Tinkham (1993), who concentrates on samples of Indian creative writing as a major source for his data. Of his literary texts corpus, all dialogues were picked for analysis (Tinkham 1993: 241). Tinkham investigates directives (i.e. commands, requests, suggestions, offers, invitations) and expressives (i.e. apologies and thanksgiving) with respect to the social background of the speakers, particularly their degree of 'Westernization' in their use of English. In essence, Tinkham confirms the results of Sridhar's study (1989) when he concludes that "Westernized Indians display a tendency to employ Western speech act strategies while non-Westernized Indians are more likely to transfer Indian speech act strategies into their English discourse" (1993: 246).

Based on these findings, one can assume that social background (i.e. education, caste, social status, etc.) constitutes a salient factor for language-internal variation in India.

Valentine (1991) examines the form and function of discourse makers in the speech of North Indian women. Although differences with respect to the function of discourse markers in Indian English could not be presented in a convincing manner, Valentine (1991: 332) gives two potential sources for the nativization of discourse markers, namely (a) by the borrowing of forms, such as the invariant tag *na* from Hindi[31], and (b) by the borrowing of structures of Hindi, e.g. when it comes to express emphasis (e.g. by emphatic enclitics, reduplicative expressions or verbal compounding). The Indianization of these discourse

[31] Hindi *na* corresponds to the British English tag *isn't it*.

markers, Valentine (1991: 333) argues, reflects an increase in the communicative functions of English, especially for personal interactions.

A similar trend was revealed in my empirical studies conducted in Mumbai, India, when young women commented on their presumed language preferences with friends. Here, an increasing popularity of English could be observed, although several informants suggested to incorporate local elements of Hindi "to make [a letter] more friendly", "to heighten the drama or meaning to a close friend" or to create "a feeling of belongingness".

A glance at scholarly writing on Indian English and the other New Englishes of the last decade reveals that in the descriptions of these varieties many questions, especially within the field of pragmatics, remain scarcely touched and leave a rather incomplete picture. Nevertheless, the New Englishes remain a topic of current interest, not only because of the growing number of non-native speakers of English around the world, but also because of an increasing awareness that differences between varieties of English cannot be adequately accounted for as 'learner errors'. Nevertheless, this change in attitude has only gradually started to emerge, as the following quotation by C. L. Nelson reveals, who admits that even today "[…] we will of course see 'differences,' and almost inevitably construe these as *mistakes* on the part of the new variety. We could do the same thing to British and American English, but we don't" (1992: 336). A feeling of superiority of the native speaker, it seems, is still valid – for native and non-native speakers alike.

5 Material and Method of the Present Study

5.0 Object of Study and Data Processing

In the following, the object for investigation, texts of the text type 'letters to the editor', will be addressed. First of all, characteristics of letters to the editor as a journalistic genre are provided; second, letters to the editor are described from a (linguistic) text typological perspective. Both perspectives on this text type are accompanied by a brief overview about research within the fields of media studies and linguistics respectively.

Afterwards, selected procedures for data collection and data processing are described. Lastly, three potential reference sources for comparison, namely (a) reference grammars and teaching materials, (b) electronic corpora and (c) empirical studies on REQUEST acts will be explored.

5.1 Letters to the Editor as a Journalistic Genre

Up to now, there have been only a limited number of linguistic investigations on the text type letters to the editor. Most of these have been done from the perspective of media and communication research (e.g. Stockinger-Ehrnstorfer 1980; Loreck 1982; Bucher 1986; Wahl-Jorgensen 2002), and focus either on the role of letters to the editor as a journalistic genre, or investigate the relationship between the media on the one hand, and the public or public opinion on the other hand.

In terms of research conducted in the field of journalism and media studies (e.g. Noelle-Neumann et al. 2000), genres of the press are most often classified into groups of texts focusing on either (a) information/news (e.g. news articles, documentaries, reports), (b) opinion (e.g. leading articles, comments, reviews), or (c) service information (e.g. sports results, weather, TV programmes). Sometimes journalistic genres with the primary intention of (d) entertainment (e.g. short stories, cartoons, etc.) have been mentioned as a fourth category.

Texts of the opinion group can be further distinguished according to the text producer, who is either a journalist or editor, or a reader of the newspaper, who acts as a text producer from the target group i.e. the readership of the paper. Following this criterion, reviews and leadings articles constitute members of the

first subgroup, while letters to the editor can be regarded as representatives of the second subgroup.

As a journalistic genre, letters to the editor have been allocated various purposes, which vary in degree of importance. For the actual letter-writer and the readership of the opinion column in general, letters to the editor constitute a public space where the exchange of opinion becomes possible. Hodgson (1996: 2) makes a similar claim when he states that “the newspaper, provincial and national, has become a forum where readers themselves can express their views and even influence the paper’s content”. As for the possible intended audiences of these letters, several options might be envisaged: (a) the editor or the newspaper as the primary addressee, (b) a more or less explicitly named third party as the addressee, or (c) the general public as the addressee.

The first case mentioned here occurs only very rarely. One reason for this returns to the fact that readers usually do not know who of the editorial staff will be dealing with the letters, and hence will be responsible for the processes of selecting, editing and publishing one’s letter in the newspaper’s respective column[32]. Another, more important aspect, is that the form of address habitually chosen in the opening section of a letter to the editor, *Dear Sir(s)* or, more briefly, *Sir*, has lost its original, literal meaning of the past, and instead has become a conventionalized form of address, which typically occurs within this text type. That this formula has become empty in content becomes clear when one has a look at current examples of letters to the editor sent interactively and immediately published on the online platforms of many daily newspapers. Here, it seems that brevity in content and form as well as immediacy of the contribution function as the guiding principles for texts within the opinion section.

If the editor or the newspaper is indeed intended as the primary addressee, the writer often demands personal clarification of an alleged error or action on the side of the editor, or he/she attempts to establish some kind of personal bond between him/herself and the editor, which is reflected in the content of the letter, but also in the form of address chosen, such as *Dear comrade editor*.

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[32] This seems to be slightly different for regional papers, where at least Indian readers also often call editorial staff to suggest a ‘letter to the editor’ for publication (Namboodiri 2003).

The second case, focusing on a more or less precisely defined third party as the primary addressee of a letter to the editor, seems to occur much more frequently. In essence, this third party occurs implicitly in the role of an alleged ally, or, on the contrary, as an opponent. Another dichotomy can be observed when it comes to the action which is either desired to be carried out or desired to be prevented. This leads us to the basic semantic formula ‘do X’ vs. ‘don’t do X’ which is regularly utilised in this text type. When it comes to the degree of explicitness used for addressing a third party, various forms are employed, ranging from most direct forms (e.g. use of the imperative) to most indirect hints which leave the concrete persons envisaged as members of the target group open (e.g. use of indefinite pronouns). Sometimes, however, the general public is the only addressee which can be derived from the text. Letter writers typically seem to imply, irrespective of their opinion put forward in the letter, that the public audience shares their point of view, and hence approves of the content of the text.

What are the functions of letters to the editor both for the readers and the newspapers? Those readers who take part in the verbal exchange between the newspaper and its readership present themselves as active members of public discussion. However, if the content of the letter does not seem to be relevant for previous discussions, but instead contains amusing or somewhat else extravagant elements in content or style, then these letter writers are either disparagingly labelled “lonely people whose newspaper is their contact with the world beyond the end of the street” (Hodgson 1996: 61), or narcissists, who cannot be taken seriously (cf. Wahl-Jorgensen 2002). Opinion columns in the press seem to constitute a forum for discussion in public but, at the same time, they also serve the purpose to create a peculiar presentation of the self in public. If a letter writer does not act in the role of a private person, but rather as a representative of an organization or group, then the aspect of self-presentation gains even more weight.

For the newspapers, letters to the editor fulfil two important functions. First, they provide important feedback about the newspaper’s content and topics of interest for the editorial staff, as well as fulfilling a similar function as a marketing research tool (cf. Hodgson 1996; Straßner 2001). Second, the

maintenance of an opinion column dedicated to the voices of the readership serves as a strategy to establish and maintain a positive relationship between the newspaper and its readers, and thus also acts a means of positive self-presentation for the newspaper. Beyond both aspects lies the economic pressure to attract and keep readers; this becomes obvious when Hodgson (1996: 57f.) claims that the editor views the reader as "an individual who needs to be persuaded, helped, informed, advised and entertained, and who may, if the contents of the paper fail to attract, be lost".

5.2 Letters to the Editor as a Linguistic Text Type

Within linguistics, letters to the editor have only become a topic of scientific interest since the late 1970s, when scattered studies were carried out on isolated aspects of letters to the editor. These studies often reflect in size and organization the fact that many critics consider letters to the editor to be merely an interesting side-phenomenon and nothing more. Depending on one's focus of interest, emphasis was laid either on traditional linguistic disciplines for description, such as syntax (e.g. Piirainen/Yli-Kojola 1983), morphology and word-formation (e.g. Kim 1996), or on aspects of language-transfer within the branch of register studies[33] (e.g. Gläser 1990; Busch-Lauer 1995). Moreover, since the 1980s, textlinguistic studies on letters to the editor have emerged both on a microlinguistic and a macrolinguistic level (e.g. Graedler 1989; Fix 1993; Wetzel 1998; Robert 2002). Most of these studies have been conducted in Germany and German-speaking areas rather than in the Anglophone tradition. In recent years, textlinguistic research has been further enriched by a cross-cultural perspective on letters to the editor (e.g. Drewnowska-Vargáré 2001; Kniffka 2001). Moreover, cognitive aspects of text reception had been of further interest (e.g. Stöckl 2002) recently.

To obtain a first overview about linguistic research on letters to the editor, the studies by Ermert (1979), Fix (1993), Wetzel (1998), Kniffka (2001) and Drewnowska-Vargáré (2001) shall be briefly examined as examples of research within the German context. These studies, of course, can only serve as a

[33] Within the German linguistic tradition known as *Fachsprachenforschung.*

starting point for linguistic analyses on this text type, and hence do not constitute an exhaustive review of existing research in this field.

The earliest study dealing with letter communication in Germany was carried out by Ermert (1979), who aimed at a categorization of different forms of letter communication. In essence, Ermert is interested in establishing a text typology valid for letters, and thus focuses on possible criteria applicable for such a typology. Types of letters are analysed according to the following dimensions (Ermert 1979: 176): (a) context of action, (b) situation, (c) topic, (d) style, and (e) (textinternal) organization. With respect to the intentions represented in letter communication, Ermert comes to a fourfold distinction differentiating between (1) contact, (2) representation, (3) evaluation and (4) appeal (1979: 69).
Within the German context of the 1970s and 1980s, Ermert's study contributes to text typology from a theoretical perspective; moreover, it provides a first attempt to characterize letter communication typologically. What seems to limit Ermert's investigation for the present purpose is that functional as well as language- and culture-specific aspects are only of minor interest.

Three years after the German reunification, Fix (1993) studied letters to the editor on a diachronic basis covering the time span of the late GDR, the time of the German reunification, and the few months afterwards. In her observations, Fix demonstrates that the text type letters to the editor shows variation according to the dominant political system in which members of the speech community live. On a scale with highly ritualized texts produced during the years of the former GDR at one end, and rather conventionalized texts dating from 1990 and onwards at the other, the 'transition period' between the two reflects what Fix considers 'unusual' examples of this text type. From October 1989 to November 1990, letters to the editor differed from earlier and later examples in style, content, intention, speech acts and addressees to a considerable degree.
These changes, Fix argues, go back to the breakdown of the political system and the decline of communicative norms which had been obligatory in the past (1993: 30).

As concerns major speech acts performed in these letters of the transition period 1989/90, Fix observed a change from AFFIRMATIVE speech acts directed towards the state, and THREATENING speech acts directed towards political opponents during the period of the former GDR to speech acts of QUESTIONING and COMPLAINING directed towards the 'new' state (1993: 31).

Theoretically, Fix draws back on Foucault's ideas on power, hierarchy and modes of expression. For letters to the editor, Fix argues, this means that creative ways of expression can only 'flourish' in an environment characterised by so-called power vacuums, Fix argues. With the breakdown of the political system of the former GDR, letters to the editor as well as other highly ritualized text types (e.g. 'slogans') are assumed to shed their former 'straitjackets', and provide space for a multitude of voices instead – irrespective of style, or content (Fix 1993: 38). After new power constellations have been consolidated, and a new political system has been established, this 'space' decreases again, although the text type letters to the editor has become more individual, especially with respect to potential topics.

All in all, Fix's analysis provides valuable information on a specific text type within its peculiar socio-cultural context. Moreover, her diachronic perspective allows a comparison between examples of letters to the editor produced before, during and after the German reunification.

In 1998, Wetzel wrote her doctoral dissertation on letters to the editor in French, German and Russian newspapers. In this investigation, Wetzel aims at developing an applicable method for a linguistic text type classification. Newspapers chosen for investigation were *Le Monde*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and *Prawda*; letters chosen for analysis were selected on the basis of their content. Wetzel decided to focus on international as well as national topics and attempted to draw conclusions from this comparison. Unfortunately, this aspect did not prove fruitful, as Wetzel herself admits that, ultimately, letters to the editor constitute a very heterogeneous text type with respect to topic, intention, structure, and style (Wetzel 1998: 180). In her investigations on the macrostructure of these letters, Wetzel focuses on structural and stylistic elements such as obligatory text constituents and speech events. Within the

latter section, she identifies NAMING OF THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER, EVALUATING and DEMANDING ACTION as most often occurring patterns (1998: 49f.). Of these, Wetzel concentrated on evaluations as the most pervasive overall pattern within her text corpus. The language-contrastive perspective alleged in the beginning of Wetzel's study, however, remains in the periphery. For instance, the observation that German, French and Russian letter writers do differ qualitatively in the performance of their demand for action is mentioned, but not pursued in her following study. Overall, Wetzel's analysis stays behind its originally proposed aims in that questions linked to use and function within the different cultural and linguistic settings in essence remain mainly untouched.

A more convincing attempt to introduce a culture-contrastive perspective into research on the text type letters to the editor is provided by Kniffka (2001), who investigates letters in English in two Saudi Arabian daily newspapers. Supported by his own experiences as a Westerner living and teaching in Saudi Arabia during the 1980s as well as by participant observation and interviews, Kniffka studied letters to the editor from a perspective based on cultural contrast. In his analyses of letters to the editor published in the Friday editions of *Arab News* and *Saudi Gazette* he investigates message content with respect to culture-sensitive topics, social variables (e.g. readership, or gender of the writer) and situational aspects. Considering himself a 'cultural linguist' (Kniffka 2001: 255), he focuses on culture-sensitive topics, which in this case predominantly stem from the domain of religion. To a certain extent, this approach follows Wierzbicka's idea of approaching cultures via their keywords (cf. 3.1) as demonstrated when Kniffka states:

> I am interested in questions like what language use in LTE in newspapers reveals, for example, about the culture in question, the country, the people, everyday behaviour, belief-systems, value systems, culture-specific syndromes of personal, official, public, religious, professional, sexual, and other behaviour, 'reservoirs' of attitudes, including language attitudes, auto- and heterostereotypes of natives, non-natives, etc., and related matters. […] The choice of the specific variety of LTE for investigation […] is accidental except for the fact that they [LTE covering religious topics] are assumed to represent a rich corpus of cultural 'core notions'.
> (2001: 255f.)

As his analysis of topics reveals, especially "'little matters' of everyday Islamic practice and conduct" (Kniffka 2001: 272) occurs frequently. Relating this observation to the variable of the primary readership, which consists of "non-natives, non-Saudis, non-Arabic speakers" (2001: 264), Kniffka concludes that letters to the editor in Saudi Arabia can be basically differentiated according to the intended readership, i.e. natives vs. non-natives or Arabic-speakers vs. English-speakers. For the latter, letters to the editor concerning religious topics play an essential role as they seem to be considered an educational means to convey Islamic concepts and values. Taking into account that Saudi Arabia has a great number of guest workers living in their country, this observation provides an insight into the mechanisms of assimilation.

Again more oriented on formal aspects of the text type is Drewnoska-Vargáré (2001), who studies coherence management and the relationship between sender and receiver in German, Polish and Hungarian letters to the editor. As with Kniffka, Drewnowska-Vargáré is interested in the culture-specific characteristics of this respective text type. In essence, she detects the following peculiarities for her text material:
For German letters to editor, Drewnowska-Vargáré identifies a high degree of intertextuality and an impersonal style of writing (2001: 93). As revealed in her text corpus, reference to previous texts seems to be an obligatory feature in German letters to the editor. This reference, however, seems to be established by the editors (i.e. via added titles, subtitles, etc.) rather than by the letter-writers themselves. With respect to style, Drewnowska-Vargáré describes German text samples as being rather 'stiff' and distanced in character.
Hungarian letters to the editor within the text corpus were identified as being partly intertextual concerning coherence, and more personal in style. Coherence management, however, differs considerably between the German and the Hungarian samples in that coherence in Hungarian was mainly established by the writers themselves, and not by the editorial staff. Hungarian editors, Drewnowska-Vargáré concludes, intervene to a lesser degree into coherence management in this text type. The feature of intertextuality, which arose as an obligatory characteristic of German letters, was less consistently

present in the Hungarian text corpus. As a result, it seems to be possible for Hungarian letters to the editor to present 'topics on their own' (Drewnowska-Vargáné 2001: 93f.) without establishing reference to a previous text. In addition, a relatively high frequency of vocatives leads Drewnowska-Vargáné to regard Hungarian letters as both more personal and direct than their German counterparts.

Finally, Polish letters to the editor are at the centre of Drewnowska-Vargáné's interest. Even though they resemble the Hungarian letters concerning the degree of intertextuality, the Polish texts also reveal differences in style compared to both the Hungarian and the German letters. Although both Polish and Hungarian letter-writers employ vocatives, the former group showed such a high frequency in use of vocatives that Polish letters, according to Drewnowska-Vargáné, reveal an emotional dimension which is less common in Hungarian letters, and rather uncommon in German letters (2001: 101ff.). This aspect of emotionality is affirmed by expressions of gratitude which exclusively occur in Polish letters (Drewnowska-Vargáné 2001: 104).

What makes Drewnowska-Vargáné's description and analysis of German, Hungarian and Polish letters to the editor more stimulating to the present investigation than the study by Wetzel is the culture-contrastive perspective. Although aspects of coherence and intertextuality are not central to the present study, Drewnowska-Vargáné offers valuable insights into culture-specific features of this text type.

In the British tradition, text types have been dealt with in the wide field of applied linguistics, namely in the disciplines known as Register Studies, Register Analysis, or Genre Analysis (e.g. Biber 1988; Ghadessy 1988; Halliday/Hasan 1989; Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993; Hoey 2001). These disciplines are viewed as belonging to the field of applied linguistics as insights from these textual analyses were often applied to language teaching and education. In research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and contrastive rhetoric (e.g. Connor 1996), letters to the editor principally could be, in principle, established as a topic of interest but major publications promoting such a production-oriented focus could not be detected, even though the composition of letters to

the editor presumably will form a component in teaching material for learners of English.
In the last years, letters to the editor have also become an object of interest for researchers of the British Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) tradition (e.g. Richardson 2001, 2007).
In the following, two studies following the British tradition shall briefly be explored.

The first study of British letters to the editor was carried out by Graedler (1989), who investigates the text type from a structural perspective. Drawing back on material from one ‘quality paper’, i.e. *The Times*, and one ‘popular paper’, i.e. *Daily Express*, Graedler established theoretical categories for a description of the text type, and adds a stylistic dimension for comparison between letters of these two newspapers. Methodologically, she applies models from text typology and discourse analysis as well as from speech act theory and problem-solution analysis. Her qualitative study of letters to the editor focused on different aspects, such as text typological features, functional characteristics, aspects of text organization and stylistic variance. With regard to the model of description, Graedler establishes a number of parameters (e.g. dominant sentence/sequence type, dominant illocutionary force, Problem-Solution structure or intertextuality, etc.) assumed to be suitable for an analytical frame. What becomes obvious from these criteria is that functional approaches in particular have served as a theoretical background for Graedler’s analysis of letters to the editor. One of the main findings of this investigation, accordingly, is “that arguing or argumentative LEds [letters to the editor] represent the ‘prototypical’ LEd” in the text corpus (Graedler 1989: 137). Stylistic differences between letters taken from *The Times* and the *Daily Express* constituted an additional focus in Graedler’s thesis; these, however, shall be ignored here. What makes Graedler’s study interesting for my analysis is primarily her functional approach towards this text type.

In 2001, Richardson conducted research on letters to the editor from a distinct perspective. Grounded in methodology and premises of Critical Discourse Analysis, Richardson investigates newspaper texts dating from

October 1997 to January 1998. Of these, 67 were letters to the editor. Via diverse argumentative strategies, Richardson claims, media texts in British broadsheet papers in general, and specifically the chosen sample letters, demonstrate strong tendencies towards negative other-representation and anti-Muslim prejudice within the British media (2001: 150). Within texts of and in the media, letters to the editor are considered as examples of an "elite discourse genre" which establishes and reinforces the reproduction of racist discourse, as most writers of letters to the editor are categorized as members of an elite stratum of society (Richardson 2001: 144).

What becomes clear from the kind of research conducted both from the textlinguistic-oriented approach as promoted mainly by German researchers, or a broader discourse-oriented approach of applied linguistics and the British strand of CDA, is that letters to the editor are far from being a minor matter. What makes this text type a worthy source of information for the present investigation is that letters to the editor can be viewed as reflections of laypersons' language use with respect to formal writing. Though modifications of form and content resulting from the editing process, unfortunately, remain invisible to the reader's as well as to the researcher's eye, these letters provide valuable material for analysis, especially for cross-cultural analyses.

5.3 Data Collection and Data Processing

For this study, a text corpus has been established which comprises letters to the editor in the research period of November 2004. As regards the British newspapers, *The Independent* (INDEP) and *The Guardian* (GUARD) were chosen as sources for letters to the editor. For India, the English-speaking newspapers *The Hindu* (HIND) and the *Deccan Herald* (DECCA) were selected. Concerning corpus planning, it has to be acknowledged that the planning of a corpus frequently involves several decisions, such as on the quality and size of the material to be included, the scope of the text types and text samples included, the amount of variables within the corpus, and criteria for informant selection (cf. Meyer 2002; Hunston 2002). The most important of these is the purpose the corpus is to fulfil, or following Meyer (2002: 53), which "ultimate use

of the corpus" the researcher has in mind when planning to create a valid corpus. Basically, a distinction between multi-purpose and special-purpose corpora can be drawn. Whereas the former aim to provide a representative selection of language variation (e.g. via the range of text types or language varieties to be included), which, accordingly, might be studied from different perspectives and with various research goals, special-purpose corpora are composed for the more specialized aim of the researcher. Although they also follow the principle of representativeness, special-purpose corpora do not cover the whole range of language variation, but only focus on one main variable.

For the present investigation, a special text type in two national varieties of English constitutes the basic criterion for the corpus compilation.

Because my focus was on letters to the editor exclusively, other text types of the press were not included into the corpus. This means that reference texts of these letters which often go beyond the opinion column proper, such as news reports or interviews, were not included. Being based in the aim *not* to establish a description of typical characteristics of letters to the editor, e.g. as in the form of a checklist (cf. Wetzel 1998), the present investigation attributes only minor importance to the characteristic of intertextuality within the investigation[34]. All letters to the editor were included into the letter corpus in their fully published size and annotated with a reference code[35]. As a preliminary check to the study, it was necessary to ensure that a comparison between the texts from India and Britain could be performed, i.e. that both groups of texts basically belong to *one* text type, not to two[36]. Since relying on text type labels of everyday language might lead to wrong conclusions (Swales 1990), this preliminary check was conducted before the investigation proper.

In considering the variables, two basic distinctions between (a) the Indian and the British newspapers and (b) the different national varieties of English were made.

Due to the fact that background information on the writers of these letters usually remains obscure, only a further distinction between two possible roles of

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[34] Studies dealing with intertextuality in letters to the editor were conducted e.g. by Bucher (1986) or Wetzel (1998).

[35] The reference code consisted of an abbreviated form of the newspaper name, the date of publication and the number of the letter within the letter column.

[36] This problem for instance occurs in the case of 'death notices' and 'obituaries', which do constitute different text types, but do not have an equal distribution among different language and cultures.

a letter-writer was noted: first, the writer appears in the role of an individual who promotes his/her contribution deriving from a personal motivation. This might be the prototypical case for the text type letters to the editor. The second role observed in the data was the role of the letter-writer as a representative of a group, organization or institution. In this case, writers withdraw from their roles as individuals and instead appear as the mouthpiece of a group or an organization. The latter case raises the question of whether or not these letters to the editor can be considered as typical letters to the editor at all, or if labelling them as 'mergers' in-between letters to the editor on the one hand, and public relations texts on the other would be more adequate.

With respect to data collection and saving, the online-versions of the chosen newspapers were preferred to the print editions. The availability of the data in an electronic form in particular proved to be of enormous help: thus, the time-consuming task of computerizing printed texts either by hand or by scanners could be avoided. An electronic format, moreover, is required by concordancing programmes such as MonoConc Pro 2.2.

Given the assumption that letters to the editor sent to the newspapers' editorial staff might be selected for publication within a time span of about three weeks (cf. Stockinger-Ehrnstorfer 1980), it made sense to cover a similar period for data gathering. For my corpus, letters dating from 29 October 2004 to 27 November 2004 were collected, coded and saved. To compensate for public holidays and other days either without a daily edition or a letter-section on that day, 29 days were taken into consideration. Of these, 24 days delivered material for my text corpus[37]. All in all, the collected material makes up a letter-corpus of about 145,000 words, and consists of about 1,500 published texts[38].

In contrast to studies which consider content analysis as their major aim for examination, as for instance in the branch of Critical Discourse Analysis for instance, an ordering of texts according to topics was not carried out here. Instead, instantiations of REQUEST acts in this text type were to in the focus of the investigation.

[37] Only days were online-editions of all four newspapers were available were taken into consideration.

[38] Only published letters to the editor were included into the corpus, as newspapers usually do not lay open their editorial policies nor give away their material/sources.

To examine linguistic forms expressing a REQUEST, qualitative as well as quantitative aspects had to be taken into consideration. To acquire reliable and reproducible data for the quantitative part of the analysis, corpuslinguistic tools such as concordance programs were utilized. These were of enormous help when it came to gain insights in the distribution and co-occurrence of linguistic forms expressing REQUEST acts. Unfortunately, the letter corpora could not be tagged, i.e. annotated with additional information about the word classes. As a consequence, this required that several steps in the analysis to be carried out manually.

5.4 Reference Sources: An Overview

To investigate the speech act set of REQUEST in a particular text type in two varieties of English requires first of all a theoretical framework for possible REQUEST act strategies. A good starting point for such a framework is to draw on major reference grammars of the norm-providing native variety for Indian English during the past, i.e. British English[39]. In addition, Indian language instruction material for English will be acknowledged. Further, to test and modify this preliminary framework it seemed useful to include data from electronic text corpora such as the International Corpus of English, and its local variants, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB. Empirical studies conducted in India and England are to serve both as additional sources and as control mechanisms for the established framework.

5.4.1 Reference Grammars

Due to the historical and sociocultural dependency of India on Britain during the time of the British Empire and the gradual implementation of English as a lingua franca, *British* English has to be regarded as the closest genetic relative of Indian English. Therefore, examining major reference grammars of British

[39] Reference grammars for Indian English are still obsolete. Although literature on the deviances of Indian English from other native varieties of English, especially British English, exists, reference grammars on this variety have not emerged up to now. This fact gives considerable support to the claim that Indian English is still within the state of a ‘norm-developing’ country (Kachru 1992), and hence has not completed this process yet.

English with respect to possible realizations of REQUEST acts constitutes the first step within the analysis procedure. For British English, Biber et al.'s grammar books (1999; 2002) served as a reference model for 'standard English'; to a certain extent, they moreover served as reference models for Indian English, as grammars on Indian English are still lacking. One attempt to compensate for this lack was to include Phillips (2001), a local teaching guide for English.

The problem of what exactly constitutes 'standard English' in contexts of non-native Englishes, however, has been hotly debated in the recent past. The most popular dispute on 'standard English' occurred during the beginning 1990s and has become known under the label 'the *English Today* debate'.

The starting point was Quirk's article "Language Varieties and Standard Language" (1990) in *English Today*, where Quirk argued against the institutionalization of non-native varieties of English. These, according to Quirk, would constitute interlanguage varieties rather than forms of 'standard English' and hence could not, or rather *should not*, serve as teaching models for learners of English. For Quirk (1990: 6f.), previous research on divergent grammaticalicity judgements of native and non-native speakers of English justifies his demand for native reference models in English language acquisition (ESL and EFL contexts).

The implication of this line of argumentation is quite clear - what Quirk considers to be 'standard English' clearly refers to a native variety of English, presumably British English.

For Kachru, a linguist devoted to the description of these non-native varieties, such statements must have been viewed with reservation. It is not surprising that in his article "Liberation Linguistics and the Quirk Concern" (1991), Kachru directly responds to Quirk's assumptions on the lacking legitimacy of non-native Englishes. Therein, Kachru (1991: 4ff.) questions the usefulness and applicability of a native reference model for linguistically complex L2-countries, which predominantly do not use English for communication with native speakers, but more typically for exchanges between non-native speakers (i.e. intranational and international communication). The rejection of non-native Englishes as inadequate reference models leads Kachru to refer back to debates on the legitimacy of 'Black English' in the United States and the

resulting dichotomy of ‘deficit’ vs. ‘difference’ in language. He hence comments on Quirk’s article:

> It seems to me that Quirk’s position is not much different from what in another context has been termed *deficit linguistics*. This concept has so far primarily been used in the context of language learners with inadequate competence in using the vocabulary, grammar and phonology of a language […]. It has also been used for ‘deficit’ in organization of discourse and style strategies, and inadequate competence in manipulation of codes […].
> […] The Quirk concerns, of course, go beyond Black English and have global implications on research and the teaching of English.
> (Kachru 1991: 4)

To a certain extent, the same discussion has persisted until today, although it may have become increasingly difficult to argue (at least openly) against the existence and legitimacy of the New Englishes[40].

Perceptual changes on the ‘standard’ are also mirrored in grammar book composition. The grammar books by Quirk et al. (1985) and Biber et al. (1999; 2002), both of which are the most often cited reference works with respect to British English, exemplify these new developments and have a number of common aspects:

The first aspect is linked to a change in attitude from a prescriptive to a descriptive point of view, which can be observed in their attempts to integrate non-standard language uses whenever considered necessary. In addition, other (native!) regional varieties of English are sometimes taken into consideration. The extent of non-standard uses (irrespective of the source of variation), however, remains in the periphery as both Quirk et al. (1985) and Biber et al. (1999; 2002) pursue the ultimate goal of providing guidelines for an accepted usage of (native) English.

The second shift in the compilation of grammar books involves the quality and quantity of sources to be included in the grammar book. While in the past grammarians had mainly relied on written records[41] or on intuition or a combination of both to illustrate their theory, contemporary grammarians and

[40] Language attitudes towards these non-native varieties, however, may reflect less tolerant views – not only from native speakers, but also from non-native speakers alike.

[41] In the past, the recording and transcription of spoken language had been technically demanding. Moreover, attitudes towards spoken language reflected a lower status with respect to a ‘standard’, which was rather allocated to written forms of language.

lexicographers have been increasingly striving for an integration of quantitative data. Considering the fact that quantitative material is both evidence and illustration of usage, modern grammar compilation enables insights about authentic language use for the language user and learner which had hitherto remained hidden in the past.

The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber et al. 1999, 2002), for instance, is based on a c. 40 million-word corpus comprising the four registers of conversation, fiction, news and academic prose, and provides comparative material from both British and American English for all the registers.

Thus an integration of authentic language data into grammar books provides us with a wider perspective on the current state of native varieties of English. Descriptive grammars for non-native varieties of English will hopefully emerge in the future, and provide an easier access for the analysis of the New Englishes.

5.4.2 Electronic Corpora as Sources for Linguistic Analyses

Launched by technological progress in the field of computing and data processing in the 1960s, the creation of text corpora in a machine-readable format and the development of annotation and tools to accompany these texts laid the foundation for a branch of linguistics known as corpus linguistics.

In this branch of linguistics, a corpus is primarily understood as “a body of text made available in computer-readable form for purposes of linguistic analysis” (Meyer 2002: xii). Hence, the primary unit for investigation no longer is the phrase, clause or sentence in isolation, but longer strings of language *in context*. This provides the advantage, Meyer argues, that corpora thus enable linguists to contextualize their analyses of language (2002: 6).

In contrast to traditional approaches in grammar which had often relied on the researcher’s intuition as a native speaker, corpus linguists focus on authentic language data. The advantage of taking authentic language into consideration is that researchers can provide a more representative picture of how language is used in natural environments.

Similar points have been suggested by Biber et al. (1998: 4), who emphasize the advantages of corpus linguistics in that:

> it is empirical, analyzing the actual patterns of use in natural texts;
> it utilizes a large and principled collection of natural texts, known as a 'corpus,' as the basis for analysis;
> it makes extensive use of computers for analysis, using both automatic and interactive techniques;
> it depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.

What seems to be worth noting here is that, particularly with regard to the very last aspect mentioned, a balance between quantitative and qualitative analyses, is important for linguistic analyses.

For the present study, two electronic corpora have proved valuable sources as reference works for hypothesis testing and as a basis for contrastive analyses. Both of the corpora belong to the *International Corpus of English* (ICE) project[42] launched by Greenbaum during the 1990s, and are designed to represent British English (ICE-GB) and Indian English (ICE-India) respectively.
The two national sections of the ICE, however, exhibit differences with respect to grammatical annotation and suitable tools for analysis:
The ICE-GB contains basically three different classes of annotation marks: (1) textual and structural mark-up (which includes e.g. information on the typography and intonation), (2) word-class labelling (so-called 'tagging'), and (3) labelling of syntactic structures (so-called 'parsing'). Additional variables which can be modified by the software utility program ICE-CUP III are text category, speaker gender, speakers per text, speaker age, speaker education, speaker role, TV or radio, scope (geographical distribution), frequency ("daily" vs. "weekly") and distribution (number of copies). In contrast, the ICE-India is still in an earlier stage of technological development and, in essence, the Indian component of the ICE project is a lexical corpus, providing spoken and written texts in transcription as well as information on the texts' origins and basic structure. For written texts, information on text structure, typography, word origin in case of being 'non-English' (i.e. either foreign or indigenous), as well as bibliographical and biographical information on the texts is given (G. Nelson

[42] Cf. the ICE homepage (Nelson 2007).

2002). The ICE-India consists of 500 texts of approximately 2,000 words each, and thus constitutes a one million-words corpus.
The text categories included are listed in the following:

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Spoken</td><td rowspan="2">Dialogue</td><td>Private</td><td>Direct Conversation
Telephone Calls</td></tr>
<tr><td>Public</td><td>Class Lessons
Broadcast Discussions
Broadcast Interviews
Parliamentary Debates
Legal Cross-examinations
Business Transactions</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Monologue</td><td>Unscripted</td><td>Spontaneous Commentaries
Unscripted Speeches
Demonstrations
Legal Presentations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Scripted</td><td>Broadcast News
Broadcast Talks
Non-broadcast Talks</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="8">Written</td><td rowspan="2">Non-Printed</td><td>Non-professional writing</td><td>Student Essays
Exam Scripts</td></tr>
<tr><td>Correspondence</td><td>Social Letters
Business Letters</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Printed</td><td>Academic</td><td>Humanities
Social Sciences
Natural Sciences
Technology</td></tr>
<tr><td>Non-academic</td><td>Humanities
Social Sciences
Natural Sciences
Technology</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reportage</td><td>Press News Reports</td></tr>
<tr><td>Instructional Writing</td><td>Administrative Writing
Skills and Hobbies</td></tr>
<tr><td>Persuasive Writing</td><td>Press Editorials</td></tr>
<tr><td>Creative Writing</td><td>Novels and Stories</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 2: Text Categories in the ICE-India
(G. Nelson 2002: 4f.)

In contrast to the completely annotated British component of ICE, the ICE-India still is a lexical corpus, i.e. a corpus composed and displayed in plain text format. This makes syntactic searches, which have already become feasible in ICE-GB, nearly impossible. Nevertheless, lexical searches as well as searches for collocations and frequency lists can be carried out with the help of the MonoConc Pro 2.2 (MP 2.2) concordance program. Although the MP 2.2 software is limited in the number of its operations, a major advantage is that it is

not bound to any specific text corpus. This means that any piece of text saved in either txt-format or in html-format can be loaded into the concordance program, and further investigated by the search options offered there.

In the present investigation, all letters of Indian and of British newspapers listed were collected and saved in plain text format to establish two different letter corpora. Figure 3 illustrates a possible search via MP 2.2; here, the search for occurrences of the modal *should* was chosen as an example.

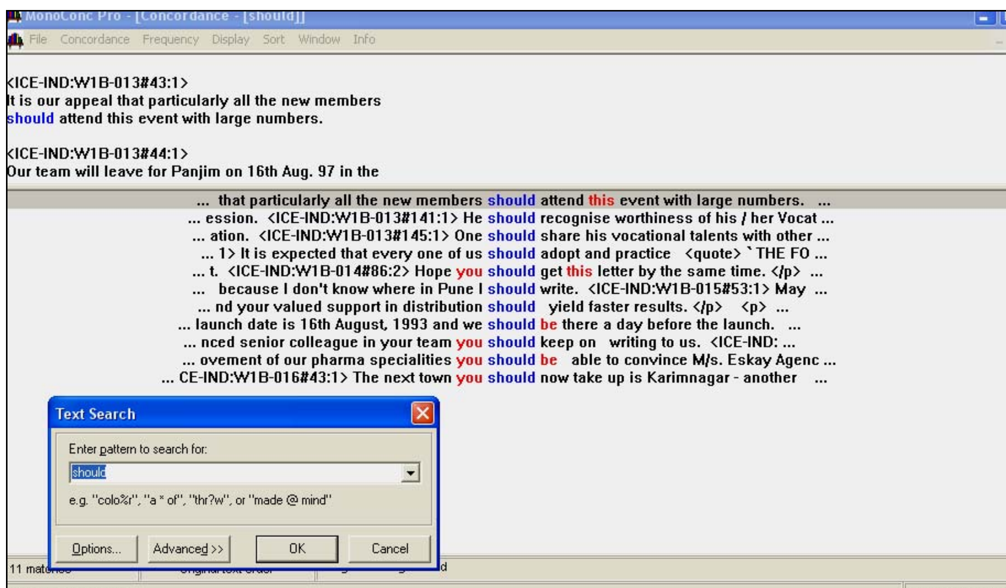

Figure 3: MP 2.2 Query for the Modal *should* in the ICE-India

In order to establish also an intravarietal dimension for comparison, occurrences gained from my letter corpora were compared to data from the ICE-GB and the ICE-India respectively. Of the two latter corpora, all written texts were taken into consideration.

5.4.3 Empirical Studies in India and Britain

For additional information on culture-specific realizations of REQUEST acts in various text types, empirical research was conducted in both India and in

Great Britain. A feasible solution for data gathering proved to be the use of a questionnaire and a discussion section afterwards[43].

The questionnaire composed for the Indian target group consisted of three parts: firstly, demographic information about the target group, secondly, the language attitudes of the informant group towards English, Hindi and local languages and thirdly, the performance of REQUESTs in various situations was asked for via a Discourse Completion Test (DCT).

To obtain useful data, L. Milroy's (1987) concept of the network was applied, introducing the researcher as 'a friend of a friend' to a group or network of people of interest. This approach had the advantage of restricting the degree of formality on the one hand, and of increasing the motivation for participation on the other hand. The questionnaires were sent to an Indian colleague who teaches English at the Dr. Bhanuben Mahendra Nanavati College of Home Science (Dr. BMN College), which is affiliated to the Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University (S.N.D.T. University) of Mumbai[44]. The teacher distributed the questionnaire among her English classes and collected the material afterwards. This procedure led to 110 responses from female students, the majority of who were between seventeen and twenty years old, and studied either for a Bachelor or Science degree in *Food Science and Nutrition* or *Textile and Clothing*. Finally, the researcher visited Dr. BMN College in Mumbai, and discussed characteristics of Indian English with respect to structural as well as pragmatic aspects in class with about 25 of the participants and the teacher.

The questionnaire for the British target group focused on the linguistic realizations of REQUESTs. Here, demographic information was gained at a secondary school in Hove[45] and at the University of Reading[46].

Due to the fact that the phenomenon of multilingualism contributes more pervasively to the complex linguistic situation in India, rather than to the linguistic situation in Great Britain[47], language preferences for this target group were not taken into consideration.

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[43] Unfortunately, the discussion section could not be conducted in Britain.
[44] I would like to thank Dr. Mala Pandurang for her support and contributions on this issue.
[45] Peter Shears kindly distributed the questionnaires among British pupils in Hove.
[46] Thanks go to Dr. Melani Schöter (Reading).
[47] The Celtic languages in Wales, Scotland and Ireland are ignored here.

Data was elicited through Discourse Completion Tests (DCT), a method developed by Blum-Kulka during the 1980s, which has provided a fruitful source for various studies on culture-contrastive pragmatic studies. In essence, the DCT method relies on a questionnaire providing the descriptions of several situations focusing on a specific speech act and which requires verbal (written) complementation by the informant. The DCT-method was chosen because it offers several advantages: first, DCT offers the opportunity of gathering greater amounts of data in a relatively short time span. Moreover, the description of specific situations requiring complementation patterns has proved a suitable tool for cross-cultural speech act comparison. Lastly contextual factors can be integrated with relative ease into the description of the specific situation, and hence can be used alongside the analysis of realization patterns. Nevertheless, there are also disadvantages in the DCT-method. The most serious aspect here is that the questionnaire does not elicit authentic language data in the narrow sense in that imitating presumed verbal behaviour without the physical presence of a communication partner might blur the results of the analysis. It has also to be borne in mind that spoken and written speech act performance might reflect enormous discrepancies.

Due to the anonymity of the situation, verbal complementation of the informants in the written medium might be both more direct and stronger than in direct face-to face interactions.

Despite such disadvantages, the DCT-method was chosen as an additional source for eliciting reference data in India and in England. Especially for the Indian context, this data provided valuable information on the performance of REQUEST acts which could not easily be gained by other means.

6 Realizations of REQUEST Strategies in Lexico-Grammar

6.0 Introduction

The concept of REQUEST as it is employed here denotes an illocutionary force on behalf of a writer who wishes his or her audience to adopt a certain point of view and support or carry out some future action, or, on the other hand, prevent some future action to come into existence. What is common in these notions is that the writer aims at influencing an imagined addressee, and wishes a specific course of future action to take place. These aspects clearly resemble Searle's speech act category of Directives, which express the relation between propositional content and reality from a 'words-to-world' direction, and which have been characterized as "attempts […] by the speaker to get the hearer to do something" (Searle 1979: 13). The interpretation of the illocutionary force(s) in utterances takes place via so-called 'illocutionary force indicating devices' (Searle 1969: 30) or 'inference triggers', such as performative verbs, sentence types, word order, prosodical features or particles (Searle 1969: 30f.; Bublitz 2001: 134). With respect to the medium of the text type under investigation, all phonological aspects have been ignored here. Instead, the major focus is on linguistic occurrences of the grammatical and lexical dimension, which can be captured by notions such as 'mood', 'modality' and 'collocations'. In current linguistics, 'mood' is defined as a syntactic category which comprises the indicative, the imperative and the subjunctive sentence type[48] (Hoye 1997). In contrast, the category 'modality' is identified as a semantic entity (Palmer 1986; Hoye 1997; Huddleston/Pullum 2002), which can be realized by modal auxiliary verbs, semi-modals, or modal adverbs. 'Collocations' are multi-verb units which incorporate both syntactic and lexical features.

In the present investigation, grammar and the lexicon are assumed to be closely interrelated, hence both being involved in the production of intended speaker meaning. A similar point is made by Lyons who says that "[…] there is commonly some correspondence between the grammatical and lexical structure of sentences and their characteristic illocutionary force" (1977: 778). The restriction "*some* correspondence", however, hints at the caveat of equating one form (e.g. one sentence type) with one meaning, or vice versa.

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[48] Sometimes, further mood categories are included, such as interrogatives (e.g. Sinclair 1990), or exclamatives (e.g. Quirk/Greenbaum 1985).

REQUEST acts have received some attention in previous speech act research (e.g. Kasper 1981; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Warga 2004). In contrast to these studies, which have focused on spoken language, here it is written language which is in the centre of interest. Further, my conceptualization of REQUEST departs from previous research in that I do not consider REQUEST acts as adjacency pair units which possess a question-like sequence (on behalf of the writer) and an answer-like sequence (on behalf of the reader), as such a concept would be hardly applicable for written communication within the public domain[49]. Rather, I concentrate on the possibilities of and preferences in the REQUEST act performance of letter writers in two culturally distinct settings. Semantically, REQUEST acts are assumed to belong to the group of Directives, although they additionally incorporate the emotional element of appeal, which is directed towards the reader's morals, belief and attitudes on what is 'right' or 'wrong' within the respective society. Accordingly, REQUEST acts in the present understanding do not only appeal to the reader's reason, but also to his/her emotions. To convince the reader to adopt a certain point of view and support a particular course of future action can be attempted via various linguistic strategies.

6.1 Earlier Frameworks of the REQUEST Research Tradition

Within cross-cultural pragmatics, two major models have been most influential for the description and classification of REQUEST acts.

The first model was delivered by Ervin-Tripp (1976), who, after having carried out several empirical studies on request behaviour in the United States during the late 1960s, developed an elementary framework for the classification of realizations of REQUEST acts. Mainly based on data gained from observation, six major categories for realizations of REQUESTs were identified (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 29):

[49] To grasp the receiver's reaction would not only demand further studies on intertextuality, but also research in the field of cognitive linguistics.

(1) Need Statements (e.g. *I need a match*),
(2) Imperatives (e.g. *Gimme a match*),
(3) Imbedded Imperatives (e.g. *Could you give me a match?*),
(4) Permission Directives (e.g. *May I have a match?*),
(5) Question Directives (e.g. *Gotta match?*), and
(6) Hints (e.g. *The matches are all gone*).

According to Ervin-Tripp's findings (1976: 29f.), examples for the first category, Need Statements, occurred particularly among persons differing in ranks. Two typical settings for Imperatives were also identified in the study: firstly, the work setting, where hierarchical relationships between communication partners were clearly defined and obvious and, secondly, Imperatives also occurred frequently in family settings. Examples from the family setting suggest that unmodified imperative constructions also occur among equals when there is a high degree of familiarity between the communication partners.

The second category, Imperatives, included four distinct structural variants: (a) *you* + imperative, (b) attention-getters, (c) post-posed tags, and (d) rising pitch. In this classification, *please* was observed to function either as an attention-getter or as a post-posed unit which was more likely to occur when the speaker asked for an extra service or when the physical distance between the communication partners had increased (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 32).

Imbedded Imperatives comprised all instances of imperative and interrogative clauses where agent and object were explicitly mentioned. Often, these imperative constructions make use of one of the modal verbs *can*, *could*, *will* or *would*, and are highly context-sensitive when it comes to their interpretation. Ervin-Tripp (1976: 33) mentions the sample sentence *Can you swim?*, which, depending on the context, could either be interpreted as a yes/no question or as a directive 'followed by a splash' [into the swimming pool]. As with Imperatives, Imbedded Imperatives vary according to the criterion of social status of and between the communication partners. In contrast to Imperatives (category 2), which were also used among equals in rank, Imbedded Imperatives could frequently be observed in situations where the communication partners differed in social status (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 36). Further variables which determined the distribution of both Imperatives and Imbedded

Imperatives were the factors age, familiarity, speaker territory, difficulty of the task and likeliness of compliance (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 37).

A construction consisting of “modal + beneficiary + verb + ?” has been subsumed under the category Permission Directives (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 37). In contrast to Imbedded Imperatives, Permission Directives are assumed to differ in their “shift of focus to the beneficiary or recipient’s activity, rather than the donor-addressee’s” (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 37). In her corpus data, Ervin-Tripp (1976: 38) finds out that such interrogatives tend to be used when the addressee is higher in social rank than the speaker.

Question Directives (category (5)) are conceptualized as non-explicit directives, which do provide the communication partner room for non-compliance. Due to their semblance to questions for information, Question Directives might be ambiguous for the communication partner (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 39). When it comes to the distribution of these directive forms, Ervin-Tripp (1976: 40) detects many similarities between Question Directives and Imbedded Imperatives.

Finally, Hints were established as a category which requires considerable knowledge of the situation to be interpreted correctly, as they cannot be identified by any fixed surface structure. According to Ervin-Tripp’s findings, Hints occurred especially in family contexts; in specific, Hints were used (a) by children, (b) if a service is special and the speaker does not want to make his/her desire explicit or (c) in settings where the necessary acts are very clear (Ervin-Tripp 1976: 42).

What becomes clear from Ervin-Tripp’s framework is that realizations of directive speech acts can be investigated according to systematic patterns of occurrence, which do correlate with factors such as familiarity, rank, difficulty of task, physical distance, whether or not a duty can be expected and whether or nor compliance is likely or not (1976: 25). Therefore, the work by Ervin-Tripp and her students has laid the foundations for subsequent studies on speech acts realization patterns. Although the individual categories of this framework, as well as the sequence of these categories with respect to directness, may be open for discussion, this early framework has proved influential for later studies of REQUEST acts.

The second major model goes back to the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) conducted by Blum-Kulka et al. during the 1980s. Influenced by Ervin-Tripp's observations on directives in American English (1976), the research group developed a classificatory model for REQUESTs and APOLOGIES which has been most influential in subsequent studies in contrastive pragmatics.
For the project, seven languages/language varieties, i.e. Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian French, Danish, German and Hebrew, were chosen to examine their speech act realizations of REQUEST and APOLOGY acts. In contrast to Ervin-Tripp, who had mainly focused on social factors and speech act performance, the major aims of the CCSARP included acquisitional and cross-cultural aspects, too. Moreover, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) were interested in varying degrees of directness and in the relationship between directness and politeness. One of the main results concerning REQUEST and APOLOGY acts in the respective languages and cultures was that these speech acts both imply universal aspects and language/culture-specific aspects at the same time[50], which thus adds support to my opinion regarding universal and culture-specific elements in speech act performance (cf. 3.1).

Blum-Kulka et al.'s model (also cf. Blum-Kulka 1987:133) comprises nine distinct realization forms each of which is assumed to be distinguishable from the other realization form by a varying degree of strength of the illocutionary force. Their nine categories are, in a descending order with respect to illocutionary transparency and degree of directness:

(1) Mood Derivable, e.g. *Move your car*.
(2) Performative, e.g. *I'm asking you to move the car*.
(3) Hedged Performative, e.g. *I would like you to ask to move your car*.
(4) Obligation Statement, e.g. *You'll have to move my car*.
(5) Want Statement, e.g. *I want you to move the car*.
(6) Suggestory Formulae, e.g. *How about cleaning up?*
(7) Query Preparatory, e.g. *Would you mind moving your car?*

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[50] "On the one hand, the validation of the primary features of each speech act can count as further evidence for 'universalistic' claims. On the other hand, detailed contrastive analysis of the realizations of the given feature can reveal the extent of cross-linguistic differences." (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 24)

(8) Strong Hints, e.g. *You've left the kitchen in a right mess.*
(9) Mild Hints, e.g. *We don't want any crowding* (as a request to move the car).

The categories employed by both Ervin-Tripp and Blum-Kulka et al. can be contrasted in the following way, keeping Blum-Kulka's hierarchical order from the most direct to the most indirect REQUEST realization strategies, hence causing changes in assumed degree of directness in Ervin-Tripp's model:

Ervin-Tripp (1976)	Blum-Kulka et al. (1989)
Imperatives	Mood Derivables
---	Performatives
---	Hedged Performatives
Need Statements	Obligation Statements
	Want Statements
---	Suggestory Formulae
Question Directives Permission Directives Imbedded Imperatives	Query Preparatories
Hints	Strong Hints
	Mild Hints

Table 2: REQUEST Frameworks by Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Blum-Kulka et al. (1989)

What become obvious in the second model proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. is that it differs from the previous model in that (1) the categories do only partly correspond to Ervin-Tripp's (e.g. the Imperatives group functions only to a certain degree as an equivalent to the Mood Derivables group, as other moods are neglected), (2) its distinctions in directness are based on systematic analyses of native speaker judgments rather than the researcher's intuition and (3) it offers a revision of the classification of interrogative constructions, which provides a better starting point for a description and analysis of REQUEST acts. Another advantage of Blum-Kulka et al.'s model is that aspects of contrastive analysis were included, acknowledging not only an intravarietal, but also an intervarietal dimension of variation.

6.2 REQUEST Strategies in Letters to the Editor: A Framework

For the present investigation, Blum-Kulka et al.'s framework for REQUEST strategies (Ervin-Tripp 1976) was taken as a starting point for the development of a modified classification model. To adopt the REQUEST act realization framework, which was mainly applied to the analysis of speech, for an analysis of a written text type in my opinion requires several modifications, which will be presented in the following.

The first category established is termed 'Impositives'[51] and consists of four subcategories which are, following an descending order with respect to degree of directness, (1) 'Mood Derivables', (2) 'Performatives', (3) 'Obligation Statements' and (4) 'Want Statements'. The second category is called 'Conventionally Indirect Strategies' and includes the two subcategories (5) 'Suggestory Formulae' and (6) 'Necessity Statements'. Finally, the last major category is termed 'Hints'. Here, (7) 'Rhetorical Questions' implying a demand for (physical or non-physical) action, (8) 'Predictive Statements' and (9) 'Allusions' have been chosen as subcategories.

REQUEST Strategy Type	Substrategies
Impositives	Mood Derivables
	Performatives
	Obligation Statements
	Want Statements
Conventionally Indirect Strategies	Suggestory Formulae
	Necessity Statements
Hints	Rhetorical Questions
	Predictive Statements
	Allusions

Table 3: A Framework for REQUEST Strategies in Letters to the Editor

Despite close similarities with the model developed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), several modifications have been introduced:

[51] The term 'Impositives' goes back to Leech (1983).

First, Blum-Kulka et al.'s categories Performatives and Hedged Performatives[52] were subsumed under one category. This does not imply, however, that there is no difference in directness between the two sub-forms of Performatives. Rather, considerations of presumably rare uses of either explicit or hedged Performatives in the present text type lead me to merge both of the performative strategies into one category.

A second difference lies in introducing an additional category termed 'Necessity Statements' as a further strategy within the group of Conventionally Indirect Strategies. The motivation for doing so was the desire to integrate agentless constructions implying a necessity to perform (or refrain from performing) a certain action into the REQUEST strategy framework for letters to the editor. Grounded on the assumption that agentless constructions are more indirect than, for instance, modal constructions[53] and constructions using lexical means of the semantic field desire/wish/want which imply the source of the desired action, Necessity Statements were classified as being part of the indirect strategies group.

In contrast to the model by Blum-Kulka et al., interrogatives were of minor importance for the analysis of letters to the editor. The only interrogative constructions included were rhetorical questions, which were grouped either into the Suggestory Formulae or the Rhetorical Questions category. The distinguishing criterion between these two categories was the sender, who is part of the suggested action in the former case, but who is excluded in the latter. 'True' information questions seeking clarification did occur in the letter material, although they were neglected in the present model, because they did not contribute to the realization of REQUEST acts.

The Hints REQUEST strategy type comprises 'Rhetorical Questions', 'Predictive Statements' and 'Allusions'. Rhetorical Questions included not only rhetorical interrogatives in the strictest sense, but also *why not*- and *how about*-constructions. Of all constructions matching this criterion, only those conveying a REQUEST act were taken into consideration; interrogatives which conveyed an EVALUATION act did not enter the present investigation. Predictive

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[52] In contrast to (explicit) Performatives, hedged Performatives are more indirect. Often, they co-occur with modal constructions, such as *I must warn/ask you…* (Bublitz 2001: 131).

[53] Impersonal modal constructions are considered a special subgroup within the 'Obligation Statements' category.

Statements or Predictives were often composed in the *will*-future, although future reference could also be established via the present tense. As in the case of Rhetorical Questions, only Predictives serving as REQUEST act realizations were included into the analysis. With respect to degrees of directness, 'Allusions' transported REQUEST acts most indirectly as allusions require the greatest amount of inference on behalf of the hearer/reader, and may or may not be interpreted as demands for action. To a certain extent, Allusions form a fuzzy category because they are open to different interpretations.

In the subsequent sections, the individual categories chosen for the present REQUEST framework shall be presented in more detail.

6.2.1 Impositives

Impositives can be considered the most direct REQUEST strategy type available. This strategy type most obviously resembles Searle's definition of Directives, which centres on a speaker/writer, who wishes to pursue an addressee to carry out some future action and is considered preferable, necessary or even obligatory on behalf of the sender (Searle 1969, 1979). Here, Impositives are further differentiated into four major strategies, namely Mood Derivables, Performatives, Obligation Statements and Want Statements. The order of these strategies reflects the degree of directness of the lexico-grammatical forms expressing an appeal for (re)action in a decreasing hierarchy, i.e. the first category, Mood Derivables, is assumed to rank highest on the scale of directness, whereas Want Statements constitute the least direct forms within the Impositives group.

6.2.1.1 Mood Derivables

In English, the grammatical category 'mood' traditionally comprises the three moods indicative, imperative and subjunctive (Hoye 1997). Of these, the former appears in an unmarked verb form and is typically used for making factual assertions. Although Quirk et al. (1985: 831) acknowledge that "imperative sentences are used for a wide range of illocutionary acts", the most pervasive meaning attributed to imperative constructions is linked to an element of

obligation. Imperative constructions involve the base verb form in affirmative contexts (e.g. *Wait!*), and occur with *do*-support either in negative (e.g. *Don't wait!*) or in emphatic contexts (e.g. *Do wait a moment!*), as base form plus question tag (e.g. *Wait here, will you?*) or as coordinated base forms (e.g. *Go and play outside*) (Alexander 1988: 184). A special case of imperatives are constructions with *let ('s/us)*. Here, affirmative contexts of the *let*-imperative are dealt with in section 6.2.2.1, whereas negative contexts (*let's/us not*) are counted as equivalents of imperative constructions. Imperative forms are mainly used to express commands, requests or suggestions (e.g. *Shut the door (please)!*). Moreover, they occur in warnings (e.g. *Look out!*) and in instructions (e.g. *Use moderate oven and bake for 20 minutes*). Moreover, prohibitions (e.g. *Keep off the grass!*), advice (e.g. *Never speak to strangers!*), but also offers (e.g. *Help yourself*) be formulated using imperative constructions (Alexander 1988: 185).

In the present tense, the subjunctive can be characterized by an uninflected verb form in all persons, which reflects a lack in subject-verb concord. The past subjunctive form of the verb *be* is *were*. Occurrences of the subjunctive in present-day English are low (Alexander 1988: 239; Biber et al. 2002: 261)[54], and are mainly restricted to *that*-complement clauses and adverbial clauses (Biber et al. 2002: 261). With respect to meaning, the subjunctive denotes what could or should happen in hypothetical situations, and hence often occurs after verbs referring to proposals, request, or orders (Alexander 1988: 239).

For the present investigation, it is especially the imperative mood in particular which represents a way of expressing a REQUEST act in the most direct manner. Theoretically, the subjunctive mood might also fulfil this function, although the semantic force of a verb phrase in the subjunctive is less strong than in the imperative, and, moreover, a hypothetical element distinguishes it from the former. Furthermore, *be to*-constructions have to be acknowledged. Of

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[54] Investigations of the British component of the ICE have confirmed this claim: only 12 instances of subjunctive clauses could be detected in the whole corpus. Of these, nine fell into the spoken data category, whereas three occurred in written language. With a frequency of occurrence of only about 0.02% in the British part of the ICE, the claim that the subjunctive is rare in contemporary British English use seems to be justified.

the two meanings potentially conveyed via this construction[55], however, only the quasi-imperative is of interest for the present purpose.

6.2.1.2 Performatives

One way to express an illocutionary force of a speech act on the surface of language is via Performatives. These Performatives, or, more precisely, performative uses of linguistic forms, can be characterized by their dynamic nature in that they do not state a proposition and hence cannot be classified with respect to the criterion of truth or falseness, but that they are performing an action at the very same moment they are uttered (Austin 1962: 6). Often, Performatives are referred to as verbs which occur in the indicative mood, first person singular or plural, and in the present tense (Bublitz 2001: 70). The most typical form of a performative has been provided by Levinson (1983: 244) as 'I (hereby) V_p you (that) S'', whereby V_p is a performative verb in the present indicative active and S' denotes a complement sentence.

Variation of this assumed typical form is nonetheless possible and is summarized by Bublitz (2001: 71), who notes that, under certain conditions also progressive verb forms (e.g. *I am asking you to take this chair*), passive constructions (e.g. *Passengers are warned…*) and modal verb constructions (e.g. *I must apologize for…*) may also function in a performative manner. Here, passive constructions as well as *let*-constructions and modal verb constructions are excluded from the Performatives category[56].

Two examples from the letter corpora, one from Britain, one from India, illustrate the use of Performatives:

We <u>ask</u> other families to join us.
<GUARD:30-10-04-13>

I <u>plead</u> that there should be a ban, atleast [sic] in our corporation limits, for a period of five years on any type of hartals.
<DECCA:02-11-04-8>

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[55] Leech (1987: 102f.) distinguishes between the meanings 'quasi-imperative' and 'plan for the future'.

[56] Here, passives and modal auxiliary constructions are subsumed under the Impositives category, whereas *let*-constructions are considered members of Conventionally Indirect Strategies.

Of course not all performatively used verbs are of interest for the analysis of strategies in REQUEST performance, but only those which share a directive impact in their proposition. Typical examples of these verbs may be, following Austin (1962: 154f.) and Searle (1979: 14), to *request*, *invite*, *order*, *command*, *direct*, *warn*, *beg*, *advise*, or *recommend*. A number of additional verbs falling into the same semantic category, following Wierzbicka (1987: 37-47, 49-62, 182-9) are *demand*, *tell*, and *instruct* as members of what she terms the $ORDER_1$ group; the verbs *beseech*, *implore*, *appeal*, *plead*, *apply*, and *urge* as members of her ASK_1 group; and the verbs *suggest*, *propose*, and *advocate* as members of her ADVISE group. These suggested word lists might be taken as a starting point for the identification of possible Performatives in letters to the editor. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that these lists are neither exhaustive nor based on analyses of authentic language material, but rather based on intuition. An attempt to compensate for this deficiency was made by (1) testing these word lists in the ICE-GB and in the ICE-India, and (2) by integrating Performatives which were observed in the Indian Letter Corpus.

Table 4 provides an overview about the distribution of performative uses of the suggested word lists across the written components of the ICE-GB and the ICE-India. Absolute frequencies are listed first and occurrences per thousand words are given in brackets.

Performatives	ICE-GB (ptw)	ICE-India (ptw)
request	2 (0.005)	58 (0.129)
invite	1 (0.002)	6 (0.013)
order	0 (0)	0 (0)
command	0 (0)	0 (0)
warn	0 (0)	0 (0)
beg	0 (0)	0 (0)
advise	4 (0.009)	0 (0)
recommend	1 (0.002)	4 (0.009)
demand	0 (0)	0 (0)
tell	1 (0.002)	1 (0.002)
instruct	0 (0)	0 (0)
beseech	0 (0)	0 (0)
implore	0 (0)	0 (0)
appeal	0 (0)	1 (0.002)
plead	0 (0)	0 (0)

apply	0 (0)	0 (0)
urge	2 (0.005)	0 (0)
suggest	3 (0.007)	4 (0.009)
propose	5 (0.012)	3 (0.007)
advocate	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
protest	1 (0.002)	1 (0.002)
total	21 (0.050)	78 (0.173)

Table 4: Performatives in the Written Components of the ICE-GB and the ICE-India

According to the results gained from testing the word lists in the written components of the two ICE corpora, only a small number of verbs were used performatively in writing. These are, following the tested word list results, the verbs *request*, *invite*, *advise*, *recommend*, *tell*, *appeal*, *urge*, *suggest*, *propose* and *advocate*.

Verbs which occurred in performative uses[57] in the letter corpora and which were furthermore incorporated into in this list are *encourage*, *ask (somebody to do something)*, *call upon (somebody to do something)*, *support* and *protest*.

Although this word list for potential performative uses within the semantic field of obligation and necessity is by no means exhaustive, it will be used as a starting point for a further comparison of Performatives in the individual Letter Corpora.

6.2.1.3 Obligation Statements

The third strategy of the Impositives group comprises Obligation Statements, and focuses on specific aspects of modality. Within this framework, it is the basic structure subject (excluding the sender) + modal auxiliary denoting obligation + lexical verb + object or other complementation which is of interest here. Central modals capable of expressing REQUESTs are *must* and *should* as well as the semi-modals *need to* and *have (got) to* and *ought to*[58]. This, however, only applies for deontic uses of these auxiliaries. Traditionally, two

[57] Verbs such as *agree*, *assure*, *doubt*, *applaud* also occurred in a similar form as the previously mentioned verbs; nevertheless, these have not been accounted as 'true' performative forms here as they primarily convey an evaluation (especially agreement or disagreement) with previously made propositions rather than they function as a REQUEST act.

[58] Other modals which might also express obligation are *shall*, *would*, *can* and *will*. For the present study, these have been neglected in favour of the more central modals and semi-modals of obligation.

meanings of the modal auxiliaries can be identified, one of which refers to aspects of assessments of truth or likelihood, and the other which refers to aspects linked to obligation or necessity (Lyons 1977: 823). 'Epistemic' or 'extrinsic' modality involves "making a judgement about the truth of the proposition" (Palmer 1990: 6), whereas 'deontic' or 'intrinsic' modality[59] is concerned with "influencing actions, states, or events" in the sense of Searle's (1969; 1979) speech act category of Directives.
The main difference between these two types of meaning is, following Quirk et al. (1985: 219), the element of human control over events, which is assumed to be typical of the deontic, but to be absent in epistemic modality. Biber et al. (1999: 485) also emphasize the aspect of the agent when they differentiate between epistemic modality which "refers to the logical status of events or states, usually relating to assessments of likelihood", and deontic modality which "refers to actions and events that humans (or other agents) directly control: meanings relating to permission, obligation or volition (or intention)".
These two types of modality can further be distinguished with respect to their time reference: Epistemic modality is usually linked to the speaker's attitudes towards events or states in the present or past, whereas deontic modality typically refers to events or states situated in the future (Huddleston/Pullum 2002: 178), and is linked to concepts such as 'intention', 'will' and 'desire' of the speaker (Lyons 1977: 825). From a diachronic point of view it can be stated that deontic modality is historically older (Lightfoot 1979; Traugott 1989) and usually considered the semantic 'core form' (Huddleston/Pullum 2002: 178).

In the following, semantic and syntactic characteristics of each of the modals and semi-modals within this field are presented in brief. Examples for the uses of the modals and semi-modals are provided from the ICE-GB. Additionally, I will provide information on the distribution of the individual modals whenever data is available.

[59] Terminology varies: 'epistemic' vs. 'nonepistemic' modality (Hoye 1997), 'epistemic' vs. 'root' modality (Coates 1983; Kennedy 2002), 'modality' vs. 'modulation' (Halliday 2004), 'extrinsic' vs. 'intrinsic' modality (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985; Greenbaum/Quirk 1990; Biber et al. 1999), 'personal' vs. 'logical' modal meaning (Biber et al. 2002).

***Must**:* It is generally accepted that the central modal verb *must* may be either used to convey (a) 'logical necessity', or (b) 'obligation' (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985; Biber et al. 2002). Using *must* in the sense of 'logical necessity' (epistemic meaning) exemplifies inferences made by the speaker with respect to likelihood. The clause *There must be buses going along Mansfield Road* (<ICE-GB:s1a-023 249>), for instance, reflects such en epistemic usage of *must*. What is further characteristic of epistemic uses of *must* is that often stative verbs occur as main verbs, and that temporal reference to the future is not permitted (Biber et al. 1999: 485; Leech 1987: 95). Employing *must* in the 'obligation' sense (deontic meaning), however, clearly involves an element of human control, i.e. speaker authority, on the addressee[60], as Leech (1987: 77) states:

> The usual implication of *must* (='obligation') is that the speaker is the person who exerts authority over the person(s) mentioned in the clause. Consistent with this principle, *I must* and *we must* convey the idea of SELF-OBLIGATION: the speaker exerts power over himself (and possibly others), e.g. through a sense of duty, through self-discipline, or merely through a sense of expediency.

In the example *My boss had said you must read those books* (<ICE-GB:s1a-016 171>), the speaker demands a certain form of action or behaviour from the addressee (i.e., compliance with the boss's order), and thus exercises authority over the addressee.

For the analysis of REQUEST acts in letters to the editor, all instances of *must* implying a deontic meaning have been taken into consideration.

With regard to the frequencies of the two modal meanings of *must* it should be noted that in British English both meanings seem to be fairly balanced in occurrence (Collins 1991; Hoye 1997). What does differ, in contrast, is the distribution of epistemic and deontic uses of *must* according to the medium: As recent corpus-based grammar studies have revealed (e.g. Biber et al. 2002), epistemic *must* is most frequently used in speech, whereas deontic *must* most frequently occurs in writing, especially in academic prose. The low number of occurrences of deontic *must* in speech has been linked to politeness and semantic force in face-to-face interaction, where the use of *must* might be felt as

[60] *Must* in this latter sense can furthermore be used for sarcastic utterances if combined with second person objects (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 225).

being too strong (Biber et al. 2002: 181). In writing, deontic *must* is to be found quite frequently, where it denotes either a strong sense of 'obligation', or is used to express 'necessity'.

In the written component of the ICE-GB, deontic *must* occurs with a frequency of 0.673 per thousand words (ptw), which is slightly higher than the frequency observed by Biber et al. for academic writing (1999: 491).

Should: Historically, the modal form *should* is the inflected form of *shall*, and formerly referred to the past tense. In contrast to *should*, which seems to have developed a wider range of potential meanings, *shall* only occurs in restricted contexts such as questions, where it is used to make an offer, in predictions with first person subjects, or in very formal contexts, where it is a polite, though becoming old-fashioned substitute for *will* (Biber et al. 2002: 182; Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 229f.). In essence, two basic meanings of *should* have been identified (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 227): (a) 'tentative inference', which corresponds to an epistemic use of the modal, and (b) 'obligation', which expresses a deontic use.

Epistemic *should* ('tentative inference') implies that the speaker tentatively assumes that his/her statement is correct, but ultimately lacks any evidence, as in the example *I think she should wait at the airport* (<ICE-GB:s1a-006 316>).

On the contrary, deontic *should* ('obligation') typically expresses the speaker's authority exercised over the addressee, as in *You should ask George the security guard how you can become an authorised person* (<ICE-GB:s1a-017 224>).

With respect to time distinctions, formally deontic *should* can refer to the past as well as to the present and future. Nevertheless, deontic *should* generally refers to the present and future, which is due to the fact that a directive impact is logically situated within this temporal frame. Past tense references linked to *should* do occur in reported speech contexts, and in constructions with hypothetical meaning (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 231f.). Of these, however, only the latter exhibit a 'true' reference to the past.

As concerns semantic force, *should* is generally classified as weaker in force than the modal *must* (Hoye 1997: 110); this claim might be reinforced by the fact that deontic *should* can imply that an action is desired, but may not be fulfilled

(e.g. *You should keep your ancestral paintings* <ICE-GB:s1a-007 154>, implying, for instance, 'I know about your plan of selling them'), whereas deontic *must* normally does not allow any refusal of fulfilment (e.g. *I must write that message* <ICE-GB:s1a-039 126> corresponds to 'I cannot but write that message') (Alexander 1988: 228; Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 227). Besides the hypothetical uses of *should*, however, the deontic use of this modal often marks personal obligation, in spoken as well as in written language. In combination with the passive voice, both *should* and *must* are used "to avoid explicit identification of the person who is obliged to act […]" (Biber et al. 1999: 500).

Of these uses of *should*, deontic meanings exhibiting present or future time reference were acknowledged but cases where *should* was part of a verb phrase in the present perfect have been neglected, as these rather functioned as EVALUATIONs than REQUESTs. Moreover, this study attempts to exclude all instances of hypothetical *should*. Whenever deontic *should* was used with an inclusive first person pronoun (*I*, *we*) it was categorized as a Suggestory Formulae, because the sender committed him/herself to the action as in other realizations of this strategy type.

With respect to frequency, it can be observed that *should* occurs with a quota of 0.864 ptw in ICE-GB (writing), which roughly corresponds to the frequencies for *should* in academic writing in the LGSWE corpus (cf. figure 4).

***Need to**:* Following Leech, *need to* as an auxiliary verb has become very rare (1987: 90), especially in US-American English. Usually, auxiliary *need to* is considered the negative and interrogative counterpart of *must* in both its epistemic and in its deontic sense.

Considering meaning, Leech (1987: 101) says that

> *need to* is half way between *must* and *ought to*: it asserts obligation or necessity, but without either the certainty that attaches to *must* or the doubt that attaches to *ought to*.

The following example from the corpus shows *need* as an auxiliary verb:

Well I need to get Clare a clock.
<ICE-GB:s1a-036 063>

Instances where *need to* was used as an auxiliary were integrated into the Obligation Statements category. Other uses of *need* as a main verb were classified into the Want Statements category.
In the written component of ICE-GB, auxiliary *need to* occurred only with a quota of 0.196 ptw.

Have (got) to*:* The semi-modal *have (got) to*[61] [62] is inflected for tense and person, and is closely associated with deontic *must* in meaning (Leech 1987: 79; Collins 1991: 157). Due to rare epistemic uses of *have (got) to*, I will deal with its deontic use exclusively. Here, deontic *have (got) to* most typically implies an external authority which lays an obligation on the addressee without further characterizing this external source. Accordingly, deontic *have (got) to* differs from deontic *should* in terms of subjectivity: whereas *should* usually is subjective, *have (got) to* is normally objective (cf. *You even have to pay extra if you want to have bread with your meal* <ICE-GB:w1b-002 142>). Most often, *have (got) to* typically denotes 'personal obligation', and occurs with highest frequencies in spoken language (Biber et al. 1999: 494). As noticed by Leech (2003: 74f.), there seems to be a tendency of *have (got) to* and other semi-modals to substitute the central modals denoting 'obligation', i.e. *must* and *should*.
After preliminary tests on *have got to* vs. *have to* in the Letter Corpora and in the ICE-GB, I concentrated on the more frequently used and older form, *have to*[63].
For the realization strategy type Obligation Statements, all instances of *have to* were included into the investigation.
In the ICE-GB, *have to* occurs with a frequency of 0.491 ptw in the written corpus material, which is slightly lower than the number provided by Biber et al. for academic writing (cf. figure 4).

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[61] Contrary to most other grammatical accounts on modality, Leech (1987) classifies *have (got) to* as one of the central modals.
[62] Traditionally, scholars has distinguished between *have to* as the historically older and more formal form, and *have got to* as a more informal form which typically occurs in speech and which has been used with a deontic meaning only since the twentieth century (Krug 2000: 74).
[63] The inflected form *has to* was also included.

Ought to*:* It seems to be generally agreed that both deontic and epistemic uses of *ought to* and *should* are very close in meaning (e.g. Perkins 1982; Palmer 1990). Hence, the sentence *I ought to bring the manual down* (<ICE-GB:1a-077 028>) could also be paraphrased by the sentence *I should bring the manual down*. In a great variety of contexts, *should* and *ought to* are assumed to be interchangeable (Palmer 1990; Hoye 1997). In contrast to *must*, *ought to* (as *should*) does not express the speaker's confidence that the advised or demanded action will be fulfilled, which leads Perkins (1982: 269) to call *ought to* "a conditional counterpart of *must*" (cf. *You ought to go and see that actually* <ICE-GB:s1a-025 026>, implying that the addressee will *not* be going to the event talked about). What becomes obvious when taking a look at the frequencies of *ought to* is that this semi-modal belongs to the least frequently used ones. In the same way as *should*, *ought to* is capable of expressing either 'tentative inference' or 'obligation', and often refers to the future.
Here, it is the deontic use which is of interest for Obligation Statements.
With respect to frequencies, it can be said that *ought to*-constructions are still very infrequent in writing (i.e. only 0.019 ptw in ICE-GB (writing)). Here, my findings from ICE-GB do not confirm Biber et al.'s (1999) observations gained from the LGSWE corpus.

Recent accounts on modals and semi-modals denoting obligation and/or necessity in diverse varieties of English have reported a great extent of variation from one national variety of English to another (e.g. Quirk/Greenbaum 1985; Collins 1991). Apart from intervarietal variation, also intravarietal variation of modals and semi-modals can also be observed. In British English, the distribution of modals and semi-modals denoting 'obligation' are as follows (Biber et al. 1999: 491).

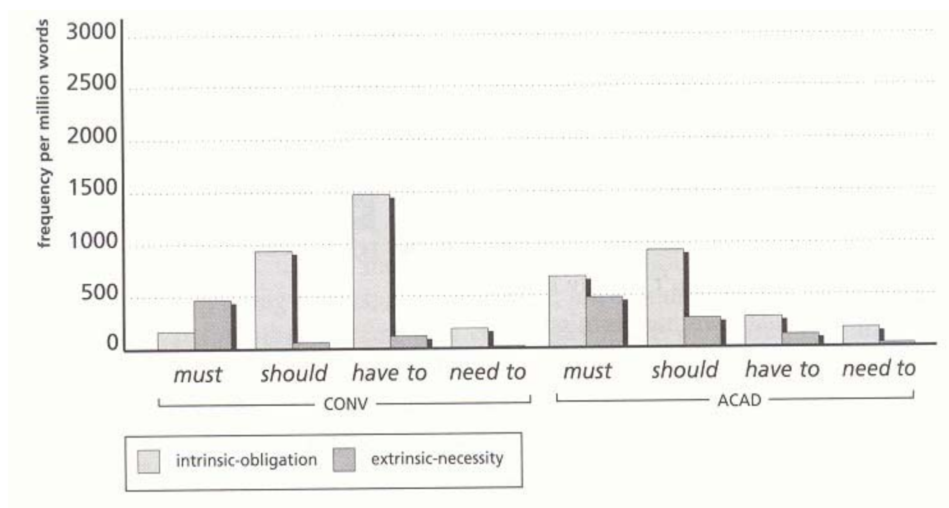

Figure 4: Obligation and Necessity Modals in the 40-million LGSWE Corpus
(Biber et al. 1999: 491)

What becomes clear at first glance is that modals denoting ‘obligation’ and ’necessity’ occur much more frequently in spoken genres (here: conversation) than in written ones (here: academic writing). This tendency has been confirmed for the whole class of modals by other corpuslinguistic studies on the distribution of modals in speech and writing (e.g. Kennedy 2002). Moreover, a considerable degree of variation between the individual modals was observed: whereas in speech the semi-modal *have to* shows the highest number in frequency, the modals *should* and *must* dominate in formal writing. The observation that *have to* increasingly substitutes modals of ‘obligation’/ ’necessity’, especially in informal genres of speech, was made in the context of Australian English by Collins (1991: 154), and this tendency may also appear in current British English. Comparing the frequencies of modals and semi-modals expressing ‘obligation’/’necessity’ with those of the overall group of modals and semi-modals, it becomes apparent that the former reveal lower numbers than the whole group (Biber et al. 1999: 493). As possible explanations, Biber et al. (1999: 489f.) propose that (a) politeness might account for a less frequent use of face-threatening language items, and/or (b) semi-modals gradually substitute some modal auxiliaries in informal genres.

6.2.1.4 Want Statements

Linguistic forms within this category express a desire of the sender for some future action to be performed. As the focus is on the sender and his/her wants or desires, constructions within this category do involve a first person subject (*I*, *we*), hence leading to the basic structure "*I*/*We* + lexical verb denoting a desire + object (+ *to*-clause)" or "*I*/*We* + lexical verb denoting a desire + *that*-clause". Nominal constructions stressing the beneficiary ('X wants Y') are regarded as instances of the Necessity Statement category.

In contrast to Obligation Statements, Want Statements are considered less direct as they usually do not focus on the agent of the desired action but rather concentrate on the origin/source of the desired action, namely the speaker/writer. Contrary to Necessity Statements, Want Statements reveal a higher degree of imposition, and hence make non-compliance of the addressee more difficult. The present investigation takes into consideration constructions including the lexical verbs *want*, *need*, *wish* and *hope*. This by no means is to be regarded as an exhaustive list; nevertheless, it may serve as one possible realization pattern of the Want Strategy type. The following example from the Letter Corpora illustrates this REQUEST act strategy by using the first person pronoun in the plural.

We <u>need</u> a statement of long-term policy, similar to that for child poverty, which puts employers on notice that they must prepare to pay the true costs of the labour they seek to profit from.
<GUARD:02-11-04-1>

6.2.2 Conventionally Indirect Strategies

In contrast to the category of Impositives, which is assumed to expose the highest degree of semantic force in obligation, Conventionally Indirect Strategies (CIS) include Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements, both of which are regarded less direct and less binding in semantic force than the former. Taking conventional processes of inference into consideration, however, reveals that CIS, despite their less direct manner than Impositives, are usually interpreted as what they are in fact – REQUEST acts as well. CIS are based on shared knowledge about linguistic and non-linguistic norms and behaviour, and hence are open for errors or misinterpretation when, for instance, language

learners of a different cultural background have acquired the rule system of that language, but still exhibit performance errors in interactions with native speakers. In many languages, one might claim after findings by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), CIS constitute the most widespread REQUEST act patterns, as they are potentially less face-threatening than Impositives, but more 'effective' in terms of achieving a particular (re)action of the receiver than Hints, which are open for misinterpretation but also for non-compliance.
For the present purpose, two strategies were identified: Suggestory Formulae and Need Statements.

6.2.2.1 Suggestory Formulae

In terms of Suggestory Formulae, I do acknowledge three constructions that serve as a suggestion or an invitation for performing a certain action in the future. The most distinguishing criterion for linguistic forms of this category is an inclusion of the sender as an agent of the desired future action[64]. This leads me to consider the following occurrences as instances of Suggestory Formulae:

The first construction explicitly includes the speaker as one of the agents of the future action and consists of an imperative introduced by the form *let ('s/us)*. These 'first-person inclusives' express the speaker's commitment to a certain action, and "prototypically involve a proposal for shared action by the speaker and the addressee(s), and in some cases by others as well" (Collins 2004: 301). *Let*-suggestories, or *let*-imperatives, as they are alternatively called, may convey "a range of illocutionary forces" (Collins 2004: 304f.), though most of them can be semantically located within the field of Directives[65]. The following utterance taken from the Indian Letter Corpus serves as an example for a *let*-imperative construction:

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[64] Performative uses of the verb *suggest* were not included here, but subsumed into the category Performatives.
[65] Collins (2004: 304f.) identifies the following illocutionary forces for *let*-imperatives in his data: they might express a wish (e.g. *Let's hope we come to a safer place*), a suggestion for joint future action (e.g. *Let's think about the present, shall we?*), or might operate as "thinly veiled directives" (e.g. *"Let's get on wi' t' game, then," Mick demanded*).

To cite a few [ways of spending money, N.O.], let the money be spent on the children in an orphanage, on old persons in a home for the aged, on the sick in a hospital or on poor animals in a zoo.
<DECCA:02-11-04-5>

The second construction within the CIS group occurs in the shape of elliptical interrogatives presuming a specific answer, thus resembling rhetorical questions.
Contrary to these, however, interrogatives within the CIS group allow a lesser degree of freedom when it comes to non-compliance of the desired action, which gives them a more direct character than rhetorical questions classified into the Hints group. Examples of elliptical interrogatives as Suggestory Formulae are *why (not)* - and *how about*-constructions, such as two examples from the British Letter Corpus illustrate:

If they [the media agencies, N.O.] feel so perturbed about traffic congestion, why do they not move to the outskirts of the city.
<DECCA:02-11-04-7>

How about reissuing it [John Peel's favourite song, N.O.] as a tribute, with all proceeds going to charities chosen by his family.
<GUARD:01-11-04-7>

Third, *can/could*-constructions with the intention of promoting a suggestion for future action have to be taken into consideration. Again, two examples from the Letter Corpora may show instances of Suggestory Formulae:

Alternatively, our Prime Minister could resume the mandate we gave him – to assert the will of the British people.
<INDEP:04-11-04-1>

Instead of spending money on flyovers and other cosmetics, the government can spend money on building a superb transport infrastructure, so that people can just start using it!
<DECCA:29-10-04-3>

6.2.2.2 Necessity Statements

The present category comprises statements denoting a necessity via impersonal constructions using stance adverbials. These impersonal constructions usually leave the origin of the desire of the future action open or appear in the guise of a common truth creating the impression of a common census on what is desirable in the respective society or community. Similar to Obligation Statements, the speaker/writer does not participate as an agent in the action; non-compliance, however, is easier here than in Obligation Statements. In contrast to Want Statements, the speaker/writer is only in the background, which might be linked to several reasons. One possible interpretation would be that the sender perceives him/herself rather as an 'advisor' than somebody giving directions for future actions. Another would be that the sender does not differ in intention but rather in strategy to achieve his/her aim. From this perspective, drawing on impersonal constructions which function as 'common truths' might be considered a more subversive strategy to influence the receiver than operating with more direct REQUEST strategies. The following examples from the Letter Corpora illustrate cases classified as Necessity Statements:

Sir, Now that the STF has done its designated job of nabbing or killing Veerappan, for which purpose it was primarily constituted by the government, it is the right time for the government to disband the STF.
<DECCA:04-11-04-3>

What is required is not Hindutva but 'Indutva' for our country – that which suits the needs and challenges of the country and applicable to all Indians irrespective of their caste, creed or religion.
<DECCA:08-11-04-6>

6.2.3 Hints

The Hints category comprises (a) Rhetorical Questions, (b) Predictive Statements, and (c) Allusions as most indirect realization strategies for REQUEST acts. All these subgroups leave the addressee the greatest degree of freedom for non-compliance and do not indicate the semantic force of obligation by conventional verbal means; hence they function as the most indirect verbal strategies.

Hints are regarded as face-threatening acts demanding redress on behalf of the speaker, which can either be directed towards the addressee's positive or negative face needs (cf. Brown/Levinson 1987). As with Rhetorical Questions, Predictive Statements and Allusions cannot be identified through corpuslinguistic tools but have to be accounted for manually, which is a time-consuming procedure. To a certain extent, although Predictives are often viewed as occupying the border between REQUEST and EVALUATION acts, they were nevertheless included into the analysis each time they supported previous REQUEST strategies. In cases where Predictive Statements followed realizations of EVALUATION and the whole letter lacked future reference. Predictive Statements most typically occur in the final section of letters to the editor, serving as an indirect instrument to signal the addressee that a certain course of action will take place if the addressee does not comply with the suggested alternative. Allusions even required a greater amount of inferential processes to be interpreted as most indirect REQUEST acts.

6.2.3.1 Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are interrogatives in form, although they function as strong assertions (Quirk/Greenbaum 1985: 825). In meaning, they can be distinguished from interrogatives in that they do not expect an answer. Rhetorical *yes-no* questions are classified according to their implied assertions into positive (e.g. *Can anyone doubt the wisdom of this action?* - implication: 'Surely no one can doubt…') and negative (e.g. *Haven't you got anything better to do?* – implication: 'Surely you have something better to do') questions. Rhetorical questions might also occur with a *wh*-element (e.g. *Who cares?* – implication: 'Nobody cares' or 'I don't care'). Rhetorical questions with a *wh*-

element, however, have been attributed to the CIS category Suggestory Formulae when the speaker/writer also participated in the desired action. In cases where the speaker/writer was distinct from the agent, rhetorical questions have been considered more indirect, as a higher freedom for non-compliance for the addressee was concluded. The following utterance exemplifies the use of a rhetorical question, which even resembles an exclamation, while at the same time it conveys a clear implication to refrain from a future action.

How can the courts trust the submissions made by such witnesses who turn against their own previous statements?
<DECCA:09-11-04-5>

6.2.3.2 Predictive Statements

As the linguistic realizations of Predictives are not as clear-cut as those of other categories, such as Mood Derivables or Obligation Statements, manual searches are required in studies that include Predictives. What seems to be an essential point for Predictives is that they refer to the future. The future tense, however, is not only created using the traditional tense category of the *will*- or *going to*-future[66], but it might also be expressed through the present tense which is usually accompanied by an additional future tense marker, for instance a time adverbial or an adverbial clause of time or condition (Biber et al. 2002: 152). Moreover, conditionals revealing a similar reference to the future have been examined for their potential use as Predictive Statements.

Within letters to the editor, Predictives tended to occur in the final section of the text, often acting as a support for previous REQUEST strategies employed. In determining if the Predictive could be counted as a possible instance of a REQUEST act or rather as an expression of an EVALUATION act, each example had to be decided individually. Here, tense and the relation of the potential Predicative Statement to its co-text (and instantiated speech acts therein) were considered as criteria for distinguishing between REQUEST and EVALUATION acts. Again, manual inspection proved to be the only solution for analysis.

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[66] The future tense may also be expressed by the modal *shall* (Biber et al. 2002: 153), though this use seems to be dramatically decreasing.

Examples for sentences classified as Predictives are given below:

Only when we realise that Kannada as a language is much, much bigger than Kannada films, mostly mediocre, do we serve the language.
<DECCA:02-11-04-1>

If the fare is increased further, many children may drop out of school.
<HINDU:09-11-04-3>

6.2.3.3 Allusions

The third substrategy included in the Hints strategy is termed 'Allusions'. These are conceptualised as the most indirect linguistic forms capable of conveying a REQUEST act. Of all REQUEST act strategies, Allusions require the most complex interpretation process which opens them up for misunderstandings as well as for non-compliance. The results gained through the DCT-method provided evidence for utterances which affirmed previously made REQUESTs or which commented on previously made REQUESTs.

In situation 2 (Indian restaurant), where the informants are assumed to be brought the wrong order, cases such as 'I ordered X' (implication 'this meal is not X, so this is not the correct order – please exchange it') were counted as instances of Allusions. Hence, emphatic declaratives, which stress what has previously been said, often occur as indirect REQUEST act strategies. Other linguistic forms which could be identified to function as Allusions were *if*-conditionals. One example for each of the two uses is given below.

In the Letter Corpora, Allusions appeared only marginally; in cases where they had been selected for REQUEST act realizations they often co-occurred with other REQUEST strategies, and hence served as supportive forms.

I have ordered for veg samosas.
<DCT: Indian target group>

There is much to be said for the disclosure of previous convictions. Presumably the defence would want a jury to know when their client has a clean record or a prosecution witness has a conviction for perjury. If we can trust juries at all, surely we can trust them better with more complete information.
<INDEP:29-10-04-3>

6.3 Summary

The selected framework for a description and analysis of REQUEST acts draws upon the model developed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), and introduces modifications to adapt it to the written text type letters to the editor. In essence, Blum-Kulka et al.'s proposed hierarchical ordering of the REQUEST strategy types Impositives – Conventionally Indirect Strategies – Hints with respect to a decreasing degree of directness has been retained.

Subtypes of the Impositives strategy type are Mood Derivables (with a special focus on imperative constructions, but also on the subjunctive), Performatives (explicit and hedged), Obligations Statements (mainly realized through deontic uses of modal auxiliaries) and Want Statements which draw on the basic pattern "pronoun in the first person + lexical verb denoting a want/wish/desire". With respect to frequencies of these structures as observed in other corpora (such as the ICE-GB or the LGSWE), one might assume that Obligation Statements would constitute the most often preferred REQUEST act strategy. One possible explanation for this claim is that Mood and Performatives might oppose conventions of politeness in leaving the addressee little space for non-compliance. A similar argumentation might be pursued when comparing Obligation Statements with Want Statements, in which the latter might be perceived as being less polite than the former due to their eccentric focus on the speaker/writer. Here, a clash between notions of politeness and directness clearly emerges[67]. Although Obligation Statements can be considered more direct than Want Statements, one might doubt whether the latter would be perceived as a preferable REQUEST act strategy. Nevertheless, it is clear that corpus-based evidence would be necessary to verify this assumption.

The CIS strategy type group was described as comprising Suggestory Formulae on the one hand and Necessity Statements on the other hand. Within the Suggestory Formulae strategy, four potential subcategories were established, including *let*-imperatives, *why (not)* - and *how about*- constructions, suggestions using the modals *can* or *could* as well as constructions of the pattern "first person pronoun + modal of obligation". The major characteristic of

[67] It is worth emphasizing that although the concepts of directness and (linguistic) politeness are linked with each other, this does not necessarily imply a causal relationship. Blum-Kulka (1987), for instance, has demonstrated that although often indirect REQUEST strategies tend to be regarded more polite than direct strategies this relation does not verify as a universally valid interpretation.

Suggestory Formulae lies in including the speaker/writer into the group of agents of the future action. Under the category of Necessity Statements predominantly impersonal constructions were subsumed, often involving stance adverbials denoting a necessity or requirement. Here, the speaker/writer was typically hidden and presented his/her REQUEST in a format which required a greater amount of inferential processes than the more direct strategy types. In general, one might expect that strategies of the CIS group would constitute the greatest amount of REQUEST acts, as they are less immediately threatening for the receiver than Impositives, though they are less prone to misunderstandings than Hints.

The last major strategy type, Hints, comprises the least direct of all the REQUEST act strategies and includes the three strategies Rhetorical Questions, Predictive Statements and Allusions. The Hints strategy type leaves the greatest degree of non-compliance compared to the other strategy types; yet, at the same time, they are also open to misunderstandings. Hints are assumed to be the most indirect REQUEST strategy type; this, however, does not imply that they are universally perceived as the most polite REQUEST forms (cf. Blum-Kulka 1987). Rather, notions of politeness linked to REQUEST strategies seem to exhibit variation across diverse cultures and languages.

7 REQUEST Strategies in Indian English

7.0 Observations from the Indian Letter Corpus

According to my findings, Indian letters to the editor do exhibit REQUEST acts, which are linguistically created through diverse linguistic strategies. What strikes the reader's eye when comparing Indian and British letters to the editor is that Indian texts do seem to be more direct and at the same time more demanding than their British counterparts. How this impression is created and up to which degree this hypothesis can be verified is the topic of the present chapter. Whereas the first part gives an account of the Indian letter material and identifies patterns of REQUEST strategies, the second part attempts to relate the findings from the letter corpus to observations from other reference sources. A summary of Indian preferences in strategy selection will close the present chapter.

7.1 Realizations of REQUEST Strategies in the Indian Letter Corpus

In what follows, the distribution of realization patterns of REQUEST acts in the Indian Letter Corpus is of special interest. First of all, realizations in the manner of the most direct and unambiguous strategy type, the Impositives group, will be explored. REQUEST acts drawing on Impositives can be characterized as strategy types with the highest potential for immediate threat to the hearer/reader as they leave little room for non-compliance. Then, more indirect REQUEST types, Conventionally Indirect Strategies (CIS), will be examined. In contrast to Hints, which mark an even more indirect strategy type, CIS are based on norms within the respective society or societal group on usage and the functions of these REQUEST strategy types. Hints are open to interpretations other than REQUEST acts, which means that they are also less effective for the speaker/writer and his/her underlying intentions within the speech act. Moreover, Hints cannot always draw on known patterns of usage and function, and therefore are prone to misunderstandings.

7.1.1 Impositives

In the Indian Letter Corpus, 300 instances of Impositives were identified. Of these, the majority were classified as Obligation Statements. In terms of how frequently different strategies occurred, Want Statements were observed as the second most often preferred REQUEST strategy type in Indian letters to the editor. The least often chosen were Performatives which make the intended REQUEST act unambiguously explicit. Table 5 provides an overview of absolute and relative frequency (per thousand words, abbreviated ‘ptw’) in occurrence of the four Impositives strategies within the Indian material.

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Impositives	300	6.765
Mood Derivable	27	0.609
Performatives	8	0.180
Obligation Statements	245	5.524
Want Statements	20	0.451

Table 5: Impositives in the Indian Letter Corpus

What becomes clear from this distribution of the strategies Mood Derivables, Performatives, Obligation Statements and Want Statements is that the most explicit strategies, Mood and Performatives, are selected less frequently than less explicit strategies such as Obligation and Want Statements. This is not surprising as Mood and Performatives indeed have a greater impact in terms of ‘face-threatening’ force. Hence Ervin-Tripp’s observation that imperatives, for instance, mainly occur either in hierarchically stratified contexts or among equals in family settings (1976: 35) matches the present findings of relatively low frequencies in the present setting. Obligation Statements, in contrast, clearly emerged as the preferred REQUEST strategy in Indian letters.

7.1.1.1 Mood Derivables

Basically imperative constructions were subsumed into the present category as only one instance of the subjunctive could be identified. All in all, 27 cases of (marked) Mood could be detected in the Indian letters, which makes, in comparison to other strategies of the Impositives group, the second out of four strategies chosen for REQUEST acts[68]. Imperative constructions which occurred in this context occurred with and without *do*-support. Imperatives were further distinguished into unmodified and modified constructions, the latter of which typically drew on the politeness marker *please*. Theoretically, also *be to*-constructions fall into this category; in practice, however, no instance for this pattern could be identified in the Indian data. *Let*-imperatives excluding the speaker were further integrated into the Mood Derivables strategy.

Here are some examples from the Indian Letter Corpus:

Make parking facilities compulsory for all commercial establishments of more than 500 square feet. Do not give licences to them if they cannot provide these facilities.
<DECCA:29-10-04-4>

Let all Corporators pass a resolution on a moratorium on bundhs.
< DECCA:02-11-04-8>

Let not politicians express their unsolicited views on what should be done with the Mutt.
<HIND:16-11-04-10>

It is time he relinquished his post.
<HIND:17-11-04-12>

7.1.1.2 Performatives

In the Indian Letter Corpus, Performatives denoting obligation/necessity only occurred with a very restricted number of verbs. These were, according to the findings, *request*, *appeal*, *suggest* and *protest*. In comparison to the results from the ICE-India, the overall occurrence of Performatives was slightly higher in the Letter Corpus (0.180 ptw) than in the ICE-India (0.173 ptw). Differences with respect to the range of performatively used verbs show that the ICE-India exhibits a wider range of Performatives than the Indian Letter Corpus.

[68] According to chi²-tests, Indian letter writers more regularly selected marked mood than one would have expected. This difference, however, did not prove statistically relevant.

Performatives	ICE-India	Indian Letter Corpus
request	58 (0.129)	1 (0.023)
invite	6 (0.013)	0 (0)
advise	0 (0)	0 (0)
recommend	4 (0.009)	0 (0)
tell	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
appeal	1 (0.002)	2 (0.045)
urge	0 (0)	0 (0)
suggest	4 (0.009)	3 (0.068)
propose	3 (0.007)	0 (0)
advocate	0 (0)	0 (0)
encourage	0 (0)	0 (0)
plead	0 (0)	1 (0.023)
ask	0 (0)	0 (0)
call upon	0 (0)	0 (0)
support	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
protest	0 (0)	1 (0.023)
total	78 (0.173)	8 (0.180)

Table 6: Performatives in the ICE-India and the Indian Letter Corpus

Two examples for Performatives from the Indian letters are provided below:

I, as a Bangalorean and one who pays his taxes regularly, protest against these moves of renaming streets that represent our lifestyle.
<DECCA:10-11-04-4>

I suggest that the BMP engineers undertake a trip to the capital and fan out in different directions outside the metropolis to see for themselves the condition of the roads.
<DECCA:01-11-04-1>

As these examples demonstrate, Performatives do occur in Indian letters to the editor, although the range of verbs used in this manner was restricted to the cases of *appeal*, *suggest*, *request*, *protest* and *plead*. Despite the fact that the relative occurrence of Performatives for the verbs *appeal* and *suggest* was higher than in the ICE-India, conclusions drawn from this small number of occurrences have to be treated with extreme caution. From the distribution of Performatives in the ICE-India, however, the question does arise how to interpret the outstanding use of *request* as a Performative. Do Indian REQUEST act realizations in (written) English require a use of the verb *request* to account fully as a REQUEST? Such a literal interpretation of REQUEST acts

would support researchers who claim that the ‘New Englishes’ tend to preserve conservative language structures and language use in comparison to the native varieties of English (e.g. Mair 2007). Further explorations could shed some light on this complex area but what has become obvious by now is that qualitative differences in the use of Performatives are very likely to exist between the two varieties of English.
Quantitatively, however, no significant differences between Indian and British English uses of Performatives could be detected.

7.1.1.3 Obligation Statements

The frequency of Obligation Statements proved to be the highest within the Impositives strategy type. Obligation Statements realizing REQUEST acts use the deontic sense of the modals and semi-modals *must*, *should*, *need to*, *ought to* and *have to*. Of these seven constructions, especially deontic *should* could be observed with an outstanding frequency (cf. table 7) in the Indian material. Therefore it is not surprising that such an outstanding use of Obligation Statements also displays statistical significance ($p<0.001$).

Modals	Indian Letter Corpus
must	22 (0.496)
should	201 (4.532)
have to	6 (0.135)
need to	9 (0.203)
ought to	0 (0)
cannot	5 (0.113)
would do well	2 (0.045)
total	245 (5.524)

Table 7: Deontic Modal Auxiliaries in the Indian Letter Corpus

Examples for REQUEST acts realized in the linguistic form of Obligation Statements are given in the following:

He has to realize that under no circumstance will India concede any territory to a country that lost one half of its population within 25 years of independence.
<HIND:29-10-04-10>

Politicians should keep away from religion and religious leaders from politics.
<HIND:13-11-04-6>

In the analysis of the Indian data, quantitative and qualitative differences in (semi-) modal usage could be identified. Most obviously, the most often preferred linguistic form of this REQUEST strategy is deontic *should*. The relatively high occurrence of deontic *must* come as a surprise as they express a strong degree of imposition and, accordingly, may be interpreted as highly face-threatening devices. Constructions employing *need to* as a deontic paraphrase occurred with a higher frequency (i.e. 0.203 ptw) than in the British Letter Corpus (0.110 ptw).
Such a distribution is surprising as a dramatical increase in the use of the semi-modal *need to* has been noticed, especially for contemporary *British* English (Leech 2003: 228). Higher frequencies of *need to*-constructions in the Indian material (compared to the British data) contradict this trend, and again question where within a dynamic framework the current status of Indian English can be located.
No occurrence of *ought to* was found in the Indian material and occurrences in the British Letter Corpus were rare. One possible explanation for this may lie in the tense reference of *ought to*, which is often linked to the past, and thus typically serves to express an EVALUATION rather than a REQUEST.
In addition, deontic uses of the modal *cannot* as well as modal idioms such as *would do well* were taken into consideration for the Obligation Statements strategy, though occurrences were only testified infrequently in both the Indian and the British Letter Corpus.

7.1.1.4 Want Statements

In the present category, only constructions in the active voice have been acknowledged. The basic structure of Want Statements consists of the structure “first personal pronoun + lexical verb denoting a REQUEST” on behalf of the speaker/writer. Sometimes, this structure was supported by stance adverbs such as *hopefully*, *fortunately*, etc. An example from the letter corpus illustrates an utterance classified as a Want Statement:

<u>We want</u> performance and not empty promises.
<DECCA:02-11-04-9>

In contrast to Obligation Statements where the focus is on the desired action, here it is the speaker/writer on whom the focus lies. Want Statements were classified into the Impositives strategy type as the desired action is explicitly provided by the speaker/writer. Compliance by the addressee is implied, but nonetheless is part of an inferential process. Whether or not the hearer/reader is willing to perform an act desired by the speaker/writer is likely to depend upon the textually established relationship between the communication partners. In cases where the reader either feels sympathetic towards the writer or accepts the writer's expertise in a particular topic compliance will be likely. If no positive emotional or rational relationship is built up between writer and reader, compliance will be more difficult as the writer-oriented source of the REQUEST may be interpreted negatively.

In the Indian Letter Corpus, personal pronouns (first person, both numbers) were correlated with the verbs *want*, *wish*, *need* and *hope* and tested on their distribution in the Indian Letter Corpus (cf. table 8).

PrN + lexical V	Indian Letter Corpus
I + want	1 (0.023)
We + want	2 (0.045)
I + need	0 (0)
We + need	3 (0.068)
I + wish	3 (0.068)
We + wish	2 (0.045)
I + hope	5 (0.113)
We + hope	4 (0.090)
total	20 (0.451)

Table 8: "*I*/*We* + Lexical REQUEST Verb" in the Indian Letter Corpus

Of these collocations, especially the patterns "*I + hope*" and "*We + hope*" appeared in the Letter Corpus. This might be due to the degree of imposition conveyed by the selected collocates: whereas collocates drawing on the verbs *want* and *need* clearly express a wish or desire of the writer, collocates with *wish* and *hope* seem more tentative than the former.

Nevertheless, quantitative observations on Want Statements have to be considered with caution due to the low number of overall occurrence in the Letter Corpus.

7.1.2 Conventionally Indirect Strategies

Previous studies on the use and distribution of Conventionally Indirect Strategies have revealed that CIS constitute the most often preferred REQUEST strategy type in several languages (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 130). Surprisingly, findings from the Indian Letter Corpus do not support this claim, but rather reveal a reverse trend, exhibiting preferences for either more direct or, paradoxically, more indirect strategy types. I do assume that this discrepancy is linked to the medium, as previous research on REQUEST acts has concentrated on spoken language, whereas here it is written language which is at the centre of interest.

CIS types in the present framework incorporate on the one hand Suggestory Formulae and on the other hand Necessity Statements. Of these, the latter occurred with a higher frequency in the Indian Letter Corpus (cf. table 9).

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
CIS	91	2.052
Suggestory Formulae Necessity Statements	29 62	0.654 1.398

Table 9: Conventionally Indirect Strategies in the Indian Letter Corpus

7.1.2.1 Suggestory Formulae

Based on theoretical considerations of the possible realizations of Suggestory Formulae as well as on observations from the Letter Corpora, the following subtypes were identified: (a) *let* (*'s*/*us*)-imperatives, (b) *why not-*/*how about*-constructions, (c) *can*/*could*-constructions, or (d) *would*-constructions.

In the Indian Letter Corpus, the overall frequency for Suggestory Formulae was 0.654 ptw. Of the subtypes mentioned, especially the modal pattern using *can* or *could* prove to be the preferred pattern by Indian letter writers. *Let* (*'s*/*us*)-imperatives and *would*-constructions were selected less frequently while *why not-*/*how about*-interrogatives only appeared marginally. In one case a construction using the modal *may* served as a suggestion for future action and hence was included into the figures.

Examples for utterances classified as Suggestory Formulae are provided here:

If Uma Bharti could be kept in a university guesthouse, why should not a similar privilege be extended to a venerated figure?
<HIND:15-11-04-19>

The Constitution can be amended to give some teeth to the post.
<HIND:01-11-04-8>

7.1.2.2 Necessity Statements

Necessity Statements constituted the dominant REQUEST strategy within the CIS group. In contrast to Obligation Statements and Want Statements, Necessity Statements are considered less direct, but also less strong in semantic force. Structurally, one attempts to capture this distinction through the search for impersonal constructions which neglect the naming of the agent of the desired action. Often, in Necessity Statements stance adverbials are employed to emphasize the illocutionary force of the utterance.

Frequently used patterns employ adjectives, verbs or nouns denoting a necessity, such as “it is necessary to”, “X is necessary”, “it is inevitable to”, “X is required to”, “what is required is”, “X needs”, “X is the need of the hour”. Moreover, existential *it-* constructions with a temporal reference are used to indicate a necessity (e.g. “it is time + noun/pronoun + subjunctive”). Sometimes, stance adverbials introduce subsequent imperative constructions, such as “the

solution to X is simple + imperative-clause". Necessity Statements can be considered a strategy with a relatively low degree of imposition placed upon the addressee. On the one hand, the source of the obligation is less obvious than in Want Statements, while, on the other hand the concrete agent of the desired future action often remains implicit. In contrast to the Suggestory Formulae strategy, the speaker/writer excludes himself/herself from the action. The following examples from the Indian Letter Corpus exemplify utterances categorised as Necessity Statements:

Judicial activism of this kind is necessary in these times.
<HIND:11-11-04-9>

The real solution is to restore the faith of the people in the public transport system.
<DECCA:29-10-04-3>

With a relative distribution of 1.398 ptw, Necessity Statements constituted a relatively frequently employed REQUEST strategy.

7.1.3 Hints

Of the three major strategy types ("Impositives – CIS – Hints") the latter verified as the second most often preferred REQUEST act pattern in the Indian material. Within the Hints group, Predictives in particular proved to be an often selected strategy. Rhetorical Questions constituted the other frequently chosen strategy, whereas Allusions were revealed to be only of marginal importance.

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Hints	218	4.916
Rhetorical Questions	83	1.872
Predictive Statements	121	2.728
Allusions	14	0.316

Table 10: Hints in the Indian Letter Corpus

In letters, Hints often preceded or succeeded other REQUEST act strategies, and hence typically occurred in 'clusters' of strategies. Often, Hints co-occurred with strategies of the Impositives group, which leads us to the assumption that they may function as mitigators or downgraders within the REQUEST act. Such a co-occurrence would also explain why Impositives and Hints constituted the preferred REQUEST strategy types.

7.1.3.1 Rhetorical Questions

In contrast to 'true' questions, Rhetorical Questions do not allow variation in the answer part, but they do already imply the only possible answer within their form. Rhetorical Questions may occur in medial or in final sections of the text body, and usually support other REQUEST act strategies.

Two examples from the Indian Letter Corpus are to illustrate the use of Rhetorical Questions as supports for other REQUEST strategies. In the first example, a Rhetorical Question followed by two Obligation Statements marks the end (and climax) of a letter to the editor. In the second example two Rhetorical Questions are embedded into two Impositives.

Isn't it shameful to our Government that just any VIP who comes to Bangalore speaks anything and we the people of Karnataka have to bear the brunt of their tirades? I think our Government should get enlightened at least now and start working on our infrastructural and developmental problems. We should not give anyone anymore chances henceforth to comment on our State or our city.
<DECCA:10-11-04-2>

Just as it can not be tolerated that people berate farmers it should be not tolerated that IT people be berated either. Is it a crime to ask for better infrastructure? Don't members of the IT industry pay taxes too? […] It is time he [Mr Gowda, N.O.] stopped trying to create more divisions among people.
<DECCA:22-11-04-2>

From observations of the material, it can be said that rhetorical interrogatives constituted a strategy frequently selected for either performing a REQUEST act or an EVALUATION act. Despite the fact that only rhetorical interrogatives of the former type were of interest here, Rhetorical Questions (i.e. REQUEST interrogatives) appeared with a relatively high frequency of 1.872 ptw.

7.1.3.2 Predictive Statements

Declarative sentences indicating that a certain action will take place in the future were classified as ‘Predictives’. In letters to the editor, Predictives often occur in the final section of the text body, and support other REQUEST strategies, especially Obligation Statements. Theoretically, Predictives may imply desired or undesired future actions, though, in practice, Predictives often seem to serve as illustrations of undesired actions, which, if the previously made REQUEST act will not be fulfilled, are regarded as consequences of this denied act. Semantically, Predictives function as mild hints (cf. Blum-Kulka et al. 1989), which do not only provide a prediction of a certain action in the future, but which also imply an element of stance mirroring the speaker/writer’s point of view on this future action. As Predictives do expose a relatively low degree of face-threatening force, it is not surprising that they occur relatively often in the Indian Letter Corpus (2.728 ptw), although statistically the frequency of Predictives should have been even higher. This gap between the desire for (linguistic) politeness and the desire to effectively achieve one’s aims becomes evident in the two most often preferred REQUEST strategies selected – Predictives on the one hand, and Obligation Statements on the other hand. Below are two examples for Predictives from the Indian letters to the editor. In the first example, the Predictive Statement follows an utterance categorized as a Suggestory Formula (*can*/*could*-construction subtype). In the second example, the Predictive precedes an Obligation Statement.

The Constitution can be amended to give some teeth to the post. <u>Unless a Governor is given a significant role, the post might as well be scrapped</u>.
<HIND:01-11-04-8>

<u>The [petrol price, N.O.] hike will lead to an increase in the cost of cereals, vegetables, milk, clothing, housing, education, travel and so on</u>. Instead of keeping parity with the international prices of crude oil, the Government should keep income growth as the criterion.
<HIND:09-11-04-5>

7.1.3.3 Allusions

Within the Hints Strategy Type, Allusions were only rarely observed in the Indian material (0.316 ptw). Typically, Allusions co-occurred with other, often more direct REQUEST act strategies and served as supportive moves.
Sometimes, the form of Allusions resembled the pattern observed in the DCT-data (i.e. repetitive declaratives, cf. 6.2.3.3). Two examples from the Indian newspaper *The Hindu* are to illustrate this point:

Sir, -- I do not understand why the Opposition Parties in Tamil Nadu are demanding Ms. Jayalalithaa's resignation when they swear by absolute transparency. Every citizen has a right to know what his or her elected representatives are up to.
<HIND:01-11-04-19>

Sir, -- The Rs. 20 increase in the cost of LPG and an increment of Rs. 5 every month is very harsh on the common man. The burden is unevenly distributed among the Government, the oil PGUs, and the consumers.
<HIND:08-11-04-4>

In the first example, it is a proposition regarding what can be assumed a generally accepted value within a democracy, namely transparency, which functions as an Allusion of a REQUEST act. Especially the co-occurrence of such a general truth with a previously named source of conflict (namely, a lack in transparency) establishes a reference to the previous co-text, and justifies the classification of the second declarative as an instance of an indirect REQUEST act.
The second example proceeds in a similar manner in that again a conflict is given first (i.e. an increase in oil prices and its effects for the common people) before a declarative statement functioning as an Allusion (oil price policy should be more balanced) subsequently follows. What is evident from these examples more generally is that for Allusions, the role of the co-text seems to be important for the interpretation process. Thus, the classification of potential instances of Allusions acutely depends on preceding or following pieces of text, and demands a relatively complex process of interpretation.

7.2 Summary of the Findings from the Indian Letter Corpus

Within the Indian Letter Corpus, 609 instances of REQUEST realizations were detected. Nearly half of these (49.1%) were classified as cases of the Impositives group, 15% were classified as cases of Conventionally Indirect Strategies, and about 35.9% as instances of the Hints group.

In the Impositives group, especially the REQUEST strategy of Obligation Statements occurred with an outstanding frequency of 5.524 ptw. Thus it is not surprising that the significance of the distribution of Obligation Statements can also be statistically verified ($p<0.001$). The second most often preferred strategy were Mood Derivables and Want Statements with a relative frequency rate of 0.609 ptw and 0.451 ptw respectively. Performatives showed the lowest relative number of occurrence (0.180).

Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements constituted the two REQUEST strategies of the CIS group. Of these, Necessity Statements occurred with a higher frequency (i.e. 1.398 ptw) than Suggestory Formulae (i.e. 0.654 ptw).

The Hints group comprised the three REQUEST strategies Rhetorical Questions, Predictive Statements and Allusions. Here, Predictives verified as the most often preferred strategy (2.728 ptw). Table 11 summarizes absolute and relative numbers for the distribution of REQUEST strategies across the Indian data.

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Impositives	300	6.765
Mood Derivable	27	0.609
Performatives	8	0.180
Obligation Statements	245	5.524
Want Statements	20	0.451
CIS	91	2.052
Suggestory Formulae	29	0.654
Necessity Statements	62	1.398
Hints	218	4.916
Rhetorical Questions	83	1.872
Predictive Statements	121	2.728
Allusions	14	0.316

Table 11: REQUEST Strategies in the Indian Letter Corpus

To interpret these findings correctly it is necessary to correlate data from the Letter Corpora with data from other reference sources. In the following, observations from Indian reference books, findings from the ICE-India and observations from empirical research conducted in Mumbai, India, are provided to enable such correlations.

7.3 Reference Data from Additional Sources

As the previous section has demonstrated (cf. 7.1), an analysis of the Indian Letter Corpus has revealed certain preferences with respect to the use of REQUEST strategies in Indian letters to the editor. However prevailing these findings might be, they nonetheless require reference data from other sources to verify their validity. Therefore, in the following, I shall give an account of three potential reference sources, i.e. (a) reference grammars, (b) data from electronic corpora, and (c) DCT-elicited empirical data.

In the case of Indian English, however, the first source proves problematic insofar as reference grammars with an explicit focus on the Indian variety of English are still lacking. This phenomenon can be linked to the ambivalent status of, and attitude towards, this variety both within the country and abroad. Even if, linguistically speaking, no variety of English is 'better' or 'worse' than another, the labelling of 'Indian' English may not be accepted in all contexts. Language teaching in India especially seems either to ignore the local character of this variety altogether, or to account for these local aspects in error sections, hence suggesting that a local usage of English is deficient in comparison to the reference variety, British English. An example from an Indian guidebook on English highlighting such an 'error' tradition will be given in the next section. Concerning authentic language material, the Indian component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-India) will be utilised. Due to the fact that the ICE-India has neither been tagged nor parsed yet, some searches remain somewhat eclectic.

In addition to this, findings from empirical data elicited by the DCT-method are also presented for discussion.

7.3.1 English Language Instruction in India

As with Europe, the acquisition of English is an important prerequisite for career opportunities and mobility within India. Due to the fact that English in India constitutes one out of the country's two or three major languages[69], one may assume that all Indians must at least posses some basic degree of language proficiency in English. Surprisingly, this assumption is denied by most Western scholars (e.g. Kachru 1990; Görlach 1994; Görlach 2004; Hansen et al. 1996), who claim that the percentage of the English-speaking population would not constitute for more than 4 to 10 per cent of the population. Even Indian scholars deplore the poor performance of Indian pupils and students in English, which, according to the Indian perspective, is due to poor teaching materials. Verma (1994: 124) comments on the situation in India as follows:

> The teaching of English in India has been little better than a joke. On the one hand we are not letting the regional languages assume their legitimate educational role because of the need for English. On the other, the way we teach English accomplishes nothing worthwhile.

A similar picture has been provided by Chelliah's (2001) content analysis of Indian 'Common Errors in English' guidebooks (cf. 10.4). One example of such a guidebook is *Common Mistakes in English* by Sam Phillips (2001), which aims at assisting the language learner in his/her self-studies. As the title indicates, this guidebook clearly distinguishes between the learner's errors and correct language use, and provides word lists and sentence lists which give examples of 'erratic' and 'correct' English. This distinction is even evident in the introduction, which states:

> This book has been created specifically to deal in detail with the common errors committed by the students and laymen in their writing and speech. It, being so comprehensive, may be used very profitably as a reference book both by the students and the teachers. It is primarily meant for the students to help them learn principles of everyday usage which often pose problems. It aims at giving the readers a proper and in-depth understanding of correct and good English which consists of spellings, usage, idioms, phrases, construction, punctuation, etc.
> (Phillips 2001: 5)

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[69] One can speak of two major languages when referring to the country's official languages (i.e. Hindi and English), but of three languages when focusing on India's three-language education policy.

Issues covered in this guidebook are spelling, grammar and idioms, to each of which several chapters are devoted in order to illustrate ‘wrong’ and ‘right’ uses. What makes this dichotomy problematic is its attitudinal implication that ‘wrong’ uses seem to be specific to either learner English, or, probably, Indian (learner) English, whereas ‘right’ uses are given as ‘standard’ English, which presumably corresponds to the British variety of English[70].

The topic of modality, which is of interest for information on realizations of REQUEST acts, appears in a chapter on the use of modal auxiliaries. The following pieces of information on modal meaning and usage are given:

> *Should* is used to denote surprise, duty, obligations, supposition, condition and future in the past. *Would* is used to express request, desire, past habit, willingness, determination, unreal condition, etc. *May* is used to indicate purpose, permission, possibility and desire. *Might* […] denotes possibility but then there is an element of doubt. *Might* also expresses politeness, suggestion, purpose and desire. (Phillips 2001: 65)

This short instruction is accompanied by an exemplary sentence list to illustrate ‘correct’ usage, although in fact the examples do not always match with what has been stated before. For *should*, several examples of ‘correct’ usage are given to denote “possibility”, “politeness”, and “surprise”.

The following sentence list for modal usage (Phillips 2001: 68) illustrates this point:

possibility	*I shall have seen him if he had been in town* (‘wrong’) vs. *I should have seen him if he had been in town* (‘correct’)
politeness	*Would I carry your box for you?* (‘wrong’) vs. *Should I carry your box for you?* (‘correct’)
surprise	*It is strange that you would fail* (‘wrong’) vs. *It is strange that you should fail* (‘correct’)

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[70] Historically, British English has clearly functioned as the reference norm for the Indian context. In the recent past, however, an increasing number of Indians have emigrated to the United States or have started to work for US-companies (especially in the call-centre industry) in India. For these reasons, one can conclude that the role of American English may strengthen in the future.

Despite the previously mentioned capability of *should* to denote “obligation”, no examples with *should* as the correct form are provided. Ironically, it is the other way round: to express the concepts of “obligation”, “force”, “suggestion” and “command”, uses with *should* are marked as ‘wrong’, and ‘corrected’ by constructions using the modals *must* or *ought to* (Phillips 2001: 70f.):

obligation	*You should obey your parents* (‘wrong’) vs. *You ought to obey your parents* (‘correct’)
force	*You should perform your duty* (‘wrong’) vs. *You must perform your duty* (‘correct’)
suggestion	*You should walk faster if you want to catch the train* (‘wrong’) vs. *You must walk faster if you want to catch the train* (‘correct’)
command	*You should pay your taxes regularly* (‘wrong’) vs. *You ought to pay your taxes regularly* (‘correct’)

Apart from its prescriptive impact, this guidebook, in my opinion, creates more problems for the language learner than it solves. Lacking semantic distinctions between the modal auxiliaries enforce the problem of modal usage. The especially high frequencies for the modal *must*, which, according to British grammars, cannot be used in this deontic sense without running the risk of serious face-damage, illustrates an apparent discrepancy between a perceived foreign norm and an indigenous performance.

For other linguistic forms comprised in the REQUEST strategy framework, such as mood, performatively used verbs, *let*-imperatives, lexical constructions used in REQUESTs or rhetorical questions, no information could be gained from Phillips’s language instruction guide (2001: 162). To attain a more complex picture of how language instruction in English takes place in India would demand further content analyses of Indian teaching materials.

7.3.2 Reference Corpora: The ICE-India and the ICE-GB

To enable comparisons between results from the Indian Letter Corpus and the ICE-India on the one hand, and to correlate these findings with the results from the ICE-GB is the major aim in this section. Due to the fact that the ICE-India has not been tagged or parsed yet, grammatical searches via corpuslinguistic tools are unavailable. Accordingly, the data gained from the ICE-India has to be considered with caution when it comes to statistical reliability. In the following, observations for the two major REQUEST strategy types, Impositives and CIS, are given with reference to the written components of the ICE-India and the ICE-GB. Due to the fact that an easy identification of Hints based on structures is problematic they have to be ignored here.

For the Impositives group, the search for imperative constructions as the major formal pattern could only be performed via a lexical search involving the politeness marker *please*, which was assumed to typically co-exist in REQUEST acts. Unfortunately, there was no solution concerning how to grasp plain imperatives so, for that reason, I had to concentrate on modified imperatives in both corpora. In the ICE-India, 214 hits occurred for the search on *please* and, of these, 174 proved to be imperative constructions (i.e. a quota of 0.386 ptw). In the ICE-GB, only 54 occurrences of modified imperatives could be found in the written component, which makes a quota of 0.127 ptw. Two conclusions follow these observations: (a) that imperative clauses modified by *please* tend to occur three times more often in Indian writing than in British writing, but also that (b) no claims on plain imperative constructions can be made due to the ICE-India's lack in grammatical annotation, and that unfortunately (c) no comparison in frequency between the Indian Letter Corpus and the ICE corpora could be drawn as the former includes all imperatives, whereas the data from the ICE-India and the ICE-GB only provide information on modified imperatives.

Second, the distribution of Performatives is a chief concern. Drawing back on the word lists established earlier (cf. 6.2.1.2), the distributions in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB can be summarized as follows:

Performatives	Indian Letter Corpus	ICE-India	ICE-GB
request	1 (0.023)	58 (0.129)	2 (0.005)
invite	0 (0)	6 (0.013)	1 (0.002)
advise	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0.009)
recommend	0 (0)	4 (0.009)	1 (0.002)
tell	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	1 (0.002)
appeal	2 (0.045)	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
urge	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0.005)
suggest	3 (0.068)	4 (0.009)	3 (0.007)
propose	0 (0)	3 (0.007)	5 (0.012)
advocate	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.002)
encourage	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
plead	1 (0.023)	0 (0)	0 (0)
ask	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
call upon/on	0 (0)	0 (0)	(0)
support	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
protest	1 (0.023)	0 (0)	1 (0.002)
total	8 (0.180)	78 (0.173)	21 (0.050)

Table 12: Performatives in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

From the occurrences of these verbs with a first person pronoun (singular and plural) the following trends can be observed:

First, the relative frequencies of Performatives are lowest in the ICE-GB and highest in the ICE-India, the Indian Letter Corpus being situated in a medial position with respect to overall frequencies. The Indian Letter Corpus showed occurrences of Performatives of about four times higher than the ICE-GB and, moreover, the ICE-India even revealed matches over ten times more frequently than its British counterpart. Second, concerning the individual Performatives, an enormous degree of variation could be observed. The only performative verb which occurred in all three corpora was *suggest*; furthermore, the Indian Letter Corpus and the ICE-India furthermore shared the performative *request*, while the ICE-India and the ICE-GB both exhibited *recommend*.

Examples for performative uses as they occur in the ICE-India are given below:

Appeal:

<u>It is our appeal</u> that particularly all the new members should attend this event with large numbers.
<ICE-IND:W1B-013#43:1>

Suggest:

So I suggest that you select the items and write your proposal accordingly.
<ICE-IND:W1B-005#58:1>

Propose:

I propose, therefore, to touch on some known classics, and on a couple of new American voices that have lifted prose to a level where it pleases and charms, compels and holds.
<ICE-IND:W2B-001#27:1>

Request:

I request you kindly to keep a paternal eye on the development in regard to this thesis.
<ICE-IND:W1B-002#166:1>

Third, modal auxiliary constructions denoting obligation are open for a contrastive analysis. According to the previously established framework, deontic uses of the modals *must* and *should* as well as the semi-modals *need to*, *ought to* and *have to* may function as REQUEST act realizations. In addition, a few cases using deontic *cannot* and *would do well* were observed in the Indian Letter Corpus (cf. table 13). For these latter cases, contrastive data from the ICE-India and the ICE-GB could not be gathered as this would have required a search which not only included lexical and grammatical, but also semantic aspects; unfortunately, such a task, however, cannot be performed by corpuslinguistic tools.

In the data from the Indian Letter Corpus, Obligations Statements in particular proved to constitute an often preferred REQUEST strategy. Of the modals and semi-modals under investigation, it was especially the modal *should* which was used with an outstanding frequency in the letter corpus (i.e. a quota of 4.532 ptw). Modal constructions drawing on *must*, *need to* and *have to* followed in terms of most frequent usage. What strikes the reader’s eye when comparing the frequencies of the (deontic) modals in the ICE-India and the ICE-GB is that Indian English and British English do not exhibit significant differences in modal use, at least with respect to *must*, *should* and *have to*. Relating the findings from the Indian Letter Corpus to the ICE-India and the ICE-GB, however, reveals that modals and semi-modals denoting obligation actually occur with higher frequencies than we would have expected from the ICE-corpora data.

According to my interpretation, this confirms the assumption that one salient factor influencing modal usage can be attributed to distinct text types.

Modals	Indian Letter Corpus	ICE-India	ICE-GB
must	22 (0.496)	235 (0.522)	285 (0.673)
should	201 (4.532)	327 (0.726)	366 (0.864)
have to	6 (0.135)	250 (0.555)	208 (0.491)
need to	9 (0.203)	33 (0.073)	83 (0.196)
ought to	0 (0)	3 (0.006)	8 (0.019)
cannot	5 (0.113)	---	---
would do well	2 (0.045)	---	---
total	245 (5.524)	848 (1.884)	950 (2.242)

Table 13: Deontic Modal Auxiliaries in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

Fourth, constructions of the pattern "personal pronoun (first person) + lexical verb denoting a REQUEST" have to be considered. For the three corpora, the following picture emerges:

PrN + lexical V	Indian Letter Corpus	ICE-India	ICE-GB
I + want	1 (0.023)	28 (0.062)	41 (0.097)
We + want	2 (0.045)	14 (0.031)	7 (0.017)
I + need	0 (0)	18 (0.040)	5 (0.012)
We + need	3 (0.068)	9 (0.020)	12 (0.028)
I + wish	3 (0.068)	25 (0.056)	13 (0.031)
We + wish	2 (0.045)	8 (0.018)	0 (0)
I + hope	5 (0.113)	107 (0.238)	136 (0.321)
We + hope	4 (0.090)	5 (0.011)	6 (0.014)
total	20 (0.451)	214 (0.475)	220 (0.519)

Table 14: "*I*/*We* + Lexical REQUEST Verb" in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

In general, it can be said that Want Statements occur only with a relatively low frequency in the Indian Letter Corpus (0.451 ptw). Both the ICE-India and the ICE-GB exhibit higher frequencies, especially with respect to the "*I + want*" and "*I + need*" patterns. What is striking is that all patterns with a personal pronoun in the plural were observed with higher frequencies in the Indian Letter Corpus than in the ICE-India and the ICE-GB. One possible interpretation of this observation would be that a distinct focus on the group rather than on the individual in the Indian context was chosen. In my opinion, however, such an

interpretation is too speculative as (a) data from the ICE-India does not confirm this hypothesis, and (b) this contradicts the role in which letter writers in India and Britain present themselves: whereas in India letter writers typically appear as individuals and private persons, British letter writers present themselves in nearly half of all letters either as members or as representatives of groups, institutions or organizations (cf. 10.2).

In the ICE-data both from India and especially from Britain, numbers for the pattern "*I/We* + *hope*" are problematic in that they display *all* occurrences of these patterns, irrespective of whether a 'true' deontic meaning is present or the construction is rather used as a politeness marker, which has little resemblance to the concept of obligation.

For the CIS group, *let*-imperatives were compared across the three corpora. Other linguistic forms, such as impersonal constructions using stance adverbials could not be analysed in the ICE-corpora, as this would have demanded a combined search for grammatical but also for semantic aspects. As searches for semantic and pragmatic aspects of language up to now have remained a task of manual inspection, a comparison of *let*-imperative constructions serves as one example for CIS REQUEST strategies.

let-imperatives	Indian Letter Corpus	ICE-India	ICE-GB
let ('s/us) + imp.	7 (0.158)	30 (0.067)	11 (0.026)

Table 15: *Let ('s/us)*-imperatives in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

As table 15 shows, *let*-imperative constructions involving the speaker/writer as one of the participants of the suggested action do occur rather infrequently in the British Corpus, whereas the ICE-India and the Indian Letter Corpus reveal a higher number of uses. The Indian Letter Corpus nearly shows a quantity that is nearly nine times higher than the ICE-GB. Although it is important that these results be considered with caution, the trend for a higher use of inclusive *let*-imperatives in Indian letters to the editor cannot be denied. To what extent British sources also exhibit a similar trend will be dealt with in sections 8.1 and 8.2.

7.3.3 Empirical Data: the Indian Target Group

To obtain an idea of how Indians might perform the speech act REQUEST in their cultural context, the method of the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was applied. The questionnaire developed for this purpose comprised four distinct situations which demanded verbal complementation in the form of a REQUEST act by the informants. These questionnaires then were distributed among Indian students at Dr. BND College, Mumbai, India. All in all, 110 responses were obtained via this method. Factors included in the descriptions of the situations were (a) the setting (private vs. public), (b) the relative social rank between the communication partners (higher, equal, lower) and (c) the relation between the communication partners with respect to familiarity.
The results for the linguistic realizations of the REQUESTs in the following four situations are presented below:

Situation 1:

The first situation is located in the private sphere ('at home'), and involves "the speaker" and "the younger brother" as participants of the conversation. The younger brother has been continuously disturbing the speaker, so that it becomes necessary for the latter to talk to the sibling and put an end to the distraction. Of the 110 questionnaires, 106 could be used for analysis.
In this intimate context, where informal communication is possible and social distance is very low, instances of the REQUEST act were essentially drawn from the Impositives group. Clearly, imperative constructions constituted the most frequently chosen strategy to convey the demand for an end of the disturbance to the communication partner (93 out of 106, i.e. 87.7%). These can be further differentiated into unmodified or plain imperative constructions (53 instances, i.e. 50%) on the one hand, and modified imperative constructions (40 instances, i.e. 37.7%) on the other hand. Interrogative constructions only occurred in 13 instances, which leads to an overall frequency of 12.3% in this situation. In the traditional REQUEST framework by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), these interrogatives would count as CIS types. Sometimes, the REQUEST acts proper were accompanied by either a WARNING (e.g. calling one of the parents to solve the conflict) or an offer of REPAIR (e.g. promise a shared activity later on).

Examples from situation 1, India:

Impositives (Mood):
Don't disturb me.
Stop irritating me!
Please stop disturbing me!
Please be quiet I am doing my report […]

CIS (Interrogatives):
Will you please stop disturbing me?
Will you please stop irritating me or should I throw you out of the room?

The high frequency for imperatives in situation 1 support Ervin-Tripp's (1976: 35) claim that imperatives do typically occur in very hierarchical contexts or in family settings, where relationships between communication partners are assumed to be of an asymmetrical character. An asymmetrical relationship between the speaker, the "older sister", and the "younger brother" was created in situation 1 and, subsequently, the relative status between the communication partners seems to be of major importance.

Situation 2:

A restaurant constitutes the setting for the second situation. Here, the speaker acts as the "customer", who is a vegetarian and who complains to the "waiter" about wrongly serving non-vegetarian food. In this situation, the relationship between the participants is different from the previous example. The setting is located in the public sphere and, moreover, the relationship between the communication partners can be characterized by a higher degree of social distance. Concerning the relative status between the communication partners one might guess that the "customer" is higher in rank than the "waiter".
For this situation, 106 answers could be used for analysis. Of these, imperative constructions again proved to be the most frequently occurring realization pattern (80 instances, i.e. 75.4%), followed by interrogative constructions (11 instances, i.e. 10.4%) and declarative constructions (statements) (11 instances, i.e. 10.4%). The imperative group again could be further distinguished into unmodified and modified imperative constructions; here, modified constructions most often relying on the politeness marker *please* (54 instances, i.e. 50.9%) clearly dominated over unmodified imperative constructions (26 instances, i.e. 24.5%).

Referring to the established REQUEST strategy framework this means that Impositives constitute the most often preferred strategy type followed by CIS and Hints.

Examples from situation 2, India:

Impositives (Mood):
[…] Just go and get the correct food for me.
[…] Take it back and give me vegetarian samosas.
Please bring me my order.
Please take the samosas back and bring the vegetarian samosa[s].

CIS (Interrogatives):
Can you please replace my order?
Excuse me, [this] may be a mistake [but] you have served me non-veg samosas. Would you kindly exchange them?

Hints (Declaratives/Statements):
I think you are deaf. I have ordered vegetarian samosas.
I have not ordered this. I have ordered vegetarian samosas.

What strikes the Westerner's eye in these responses suggested for a situation like this is that often exclamations of disbelief or anger or even accusations precede the actual REQUEST act. Examples such as *You idiot!* or *Are you deaf?!* were frequently observed in the verbal complementation of this situation. In my opinion, possible reasons for such an extreme behaviour (from a European perspective) go back to the religious and societal peculiarities of the Indian culture (if there is anything such as *one* Indian culture). In India, food does not only mirror individual preferences, but it also gives insights about religious affiliations and group memberships. In most Indian restaurants, the menu is clearly differentiated into vegetarian and non-vegetarian food, and sometimes even into further subcategories of vegetarian food (e.g. food suitable for the Jains, who do reject all vegetables which have grown underground, such as potatoes, onions, etc.). To serve the wrong food in this context can not only be interpreted as a disregard for the customer's food habits, but also as a disregard for one's 'spiritual health'.

Situation 3:

Situation 3 serves as an example for a written complementation. In this instance, the informants are requested to write a short letter to the editor to

demand that Tsunami victims in the south-east of India still need support from the government and that financial aid must not stop at present. In this situation, the relationship between the communication partners is reversed, as the student (the “letter writer”) is in the role of being dependent on the “editor”, who might select the letter for publication or ignore it. Therefore, it can be assumed that in this case the preferred REQUEST strategies would be more indirect than in situation 1 and 2. A second difference lies in the fact that here it is only a written response and not an assumed spoken reaction codified in writing which is produced here. All in all, 97 responses could be collected for this situation.
Out of all responses, the most dominant REQUEST strategy type again proved to be the Impositives group. In contrast to the two previous situations, however, here it was the Obligation Statement category which proved to be the preferred REQUEST strategy (58.7%). Imperatives (predominantly modified imperatives) were used by 26.8% of the “writers”. Performatives contributed with 11.4%, which makes an overall of 96.9% for the Impositives group. Only a very small minority of respondents (3.1%) used strategies of the Hints group to convey their demand for action.

Examples from situation 3, India:

Impositives (Mood):
Do not grab the support as people still have hope.
There are many responsibilities remaining so don’t bring the support for Tsunami victims to an end, let it continue they way it is.
Please support the Tsunami victims in south-east India by giving money.
Please don’t stop the support for the Tsunami victims.

Impositives (Performatives):
So I hereby request everyone to continue to extend support to the victims.
I request each of you not to stop supporting the Tsunami victims as they still need our help […].

Impositives (Obligation Statements):
For some more years the support must continue.
So this [support, N.O.] should not be stopped as it would be like another disaster and would destroy them [the people, N.O.] completely.

Hints (Predictive Statements):
Not only the money will help but the support of the Indian people is most important.

Situation 4:

The last situation of the questionnaire was situated in a work setting, and included the speaker as the "shop owner" and the communication partner as the "shop assistant". The "shop owner" has noticed that the "shop assistant" has been giving discounts to his/her friends and now wants this procedure to be stopped. The assumed conversation between the communication partners was therefore intended to create a strong REQUEST act which could even be considered a WARNING. Of 110 informants, 102 completed this task.

Unsurprisingly, Impositives again proved to be the clearly preferred REQUEST strategy type. Within the Impositives group, it was the strategies Mood (45.1%), Performatives (15.7%) and Obligation Statements (14.7%) which were mainly selected. Interrogatives (CIS) occurred only with a quota of 5.9%. A surprising aspect of these results was the frequency of Hints with 18.6%, which would have been much lower according to previous assumptions.

Examples from situation 4, India:

Impositives (Mood):
Don't give discounts to your friend from now-onwards and change your behaviour.
Please stop giving discount, and work according to the business.

Impositives (Performatives):
I request you to stop this immediately.
I am warning you not to do this again.

Impositives (Obligation Statements):
See son, you should keep your personal life and professional life different.
You can't give discounts to your friend whenever he comes and takes clothes.

CIS (Interrogatives):
[…] why are you giving it [discount, N.O.] without asking me?

Hints (Rhetorical Questions):
What the hell are you doing? Do you want me to be[come] a beggar as you are [giving, N.O.] discounts?

Hints (Predictive Statements):
This behaviour of yours will not be tolerated any more.

Despite this distribution of REQUEST act strategies, in the present situation a combination of strategies occurred with relative frequency. In this instance, the strategies in the individual letters were only classified for their dominant chosen

strategy. This, however, does not imply an either-or decision as the combinations of “Performative + Mood” and “Interrogative + Mood” were especially evident.

All in all, the following conclusions can be drawn from the empirical study conducted in Mumbai:

(1) In speech (cf. situations 1, 2, 4), imperative constructions of the Mood group could be clearly identified as the preferred REQUEST act strategy, whereas in writing (cf. situation 3) Obligations Statements clearly outnumbered other REQUEST strategies. This corresponds to former observations on the use of imperatives in speech and in writing (e.g. Biber et al. 2002: 255).

(2) Relative social rank constituted a major factor for the selection of REQUEST strategies: according to the data, at any point where the speaker/writer was (or felt) superior in relative rank (cf. situation 1, 2, 4) to the addressee, the chances for him/her to pick more direct strategy types were higher than when he/she felt lower in social rank than the communication partner.

(3) In the business context, most direct REQUEST strategies (i.e. Mood and Performatives) and most indirect strategies (i.e. Rhetorical Questions and Predictives) tended to be used as major REQUEST act realizations. The high frequency of the latter can be explained through the former in that strategies of the Hints group may mitigate the semantic force conveyed through Mood and/or Performatives.

7.4 Summary and Conclusion

As the previous sections have shown, both similarities and differences between Indian English and British English REQUEST act realizations can be perceived. The extent to which these similarities and differences are confirmed by insights from reference sources will be summarized in the following.

With respect to imperative constructions, which have been taken as the typical case of marked mood to express obligation, the results from the ICE-corpora suggest that at least imperative constructions modified by the politeness marker *please* occur at least three times more frequently in Indian

English than in British English. Observations from the empirical DCT-study emphasize the salient role of imperative constructions for the realizations of REQUEST acts in the Indian context, especially in spoken language. Nevertheless, what remains to be considered is the factor of relative social rank between the communication partners, which seems to significantly influence the selection of one or more REQUEST strategies. Due to the fact that letters to the editor are composed in the written mode and usually reflect an asymmetrical relationship in social rank between the writer and the editor (the latter being superior in rank to the former), lower frequencies of imperatives could have been expected in comparison to oral text types. What was confirmed by data from the ICE-corpora, however, is that, in written language letters to the editor have to be considered as a text type which utilizes more direct REQUEST strategies than other text types.

The use of Performatives constitutes a less often selected strategy for REQUEST act realizations. One possible explanation involves the concept of politeness, and attributes the relatively low frequency of Performatives to their potentially face-threatening impact. In situations where there are more clearly defined hierarchies and social stratification, the use of Performatives might be more typical. The list of verbs which were tested for performative uses in the Indian Letter Corpus and the ICE-corpora showed that the ICE-India exhibited not only the highest frequency of Performatives, but also the greatest range of verbs used in this manner. The ICE-GB, in contrast, provided the least frequent results while the Indian Letter Corpus was located in the medial position. In my opinion, these observations on the use of Performatives could be interpreted in correlation with social variables such as social rank and relationship between the communication partners: one could therefore argue that, in India, social stratification is more prominent than in Britain, which in turn is also mirrored in the linguistic structures being typically employed in asymmetrical communication. This, however, remains a tentative assumption, which would require further investigations for verification.

From the Indian language instruction book (Phillips 2001), one may have guessed that, in Indian English expressions of ‘obligation’ would tend to use

modal auxiliaries which are rather strong in semantic force, such as *must* and *ought to*. A comparison of the distribution of the modals *must*, *should*, *have to*, *need to* and *ought to* in the two ICE-corpora, however, does not support this assumption. In particular, the results for *must*, *should* and *have to* from the ICE-India and the ICE-GB clearly exhibit similar frequencies in the two varieties of English. Uses of *need to* and *ought to*, however, are more widespread in (written) British English than in (written) Indian English. *Ought to* seems to be especially rare in written Indian English, thus supporting the claim that Indian English is more conservative than British English (e.g. Mair 2007). Comparing the frequency of (deontic) modal usage in the Indian Letter Corpus with the ICE-corpora reveals that modals denoting obligation do occur more often in the text type letters to the editor. The extent to which the distribution of Obligation Statements differs from the British letters remains to be examined (cf. 8.1).

Want Statement strategies have been observed to be quite evenly distributed in the Indian material (both the Letter Corpus and the ICE-India) and in the ICE-GB. Taking the number of the personal pronouns into consideration only reveals that both ICE-corpora clearly show higher frequencies for the singular, whereas in the Indian Letter Corpus the relation between pronouns in the singular and in the plural tends to be more balanced. The hypothesis of a differing perception of the individual in Western Europe and in Asia, as suggested by Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw (2003) (cf. 10.2), therefore cannot be supported from my corpus material.

The findings on Impositives in the three corpora can be illustrated in the following way (cf. figure 5).

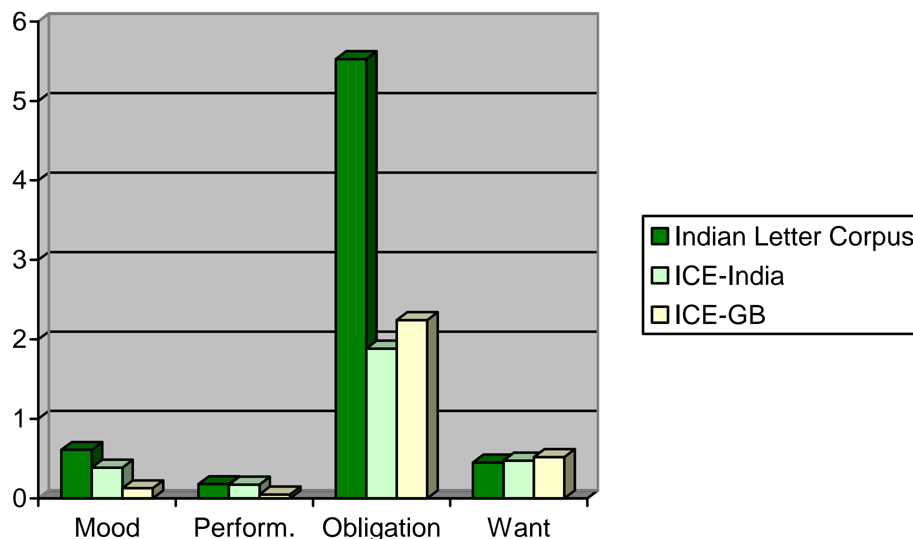

Figure 5: Impositives in the Indian Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

Evidence from the Indian Letter Corpus showed that Suggestory Formulae conveyed via the use of the *let*-imperative were more widespread in British English than in Indian English. Yet this lower frequency could also be linked to the extraordinarily high representation of Obligation Statements in the Indian material. If such a consideration can be verifiable, then Indian English letter writers could be assumed to prefer REQUEST act strategies excluding the speaker/writer, whereas British writers would use both of these REQUEST strategies. In my opinion, this claim can be further underlined by a relatively high frequency of Necessity Statements in the Indian Letter Corpus, which employs mainly impersonal constructions accompanied by stance adverbials.

Claims on the distribution of Hints in Indian and in British English cannot be made on grounds of electronic corpora, as Hints cannot be grasped in form and thus deny any searches based on automatic procedures. What can be assumed from the findings of the Indian Letter Corpus is that strategies of the Hints and the Impositives group constitute REQUEST act realizations which are more often selected than strategies from the CIS group. Within the three major strategy types, Obligation Statements, Predictive Statements, Rhetorical Questions and Necessity Statements constitute the clearly preferred REQUEST act strategies in the Indian Letter Corpus.

8 REQUEST Strategies in British English

8.0 Overview

In the next sections, I will present the findings from the British Letter Corpus with reference to the REQUEST strategy framework established in Chapter 6. Initially, the focus will be on Impositives, followed by a description and interpretation of the occurrences of CIS. Finally, the results for Hints as REQUEST acts are presented for discussion. All instances of strategy types and strategies will be accompanied by examples from the Letter Corpus. In the second section of the chapter, data from the three reference sources will be taken into consideration.

8.1 Findings from the British Letter Corpus

In comparison to the preferences of REQUEST act strategies in the Indian Letter Corpus, results from the British Letter Corpus reveal a slightly different picture. In general, it can be said that the British texts appear to be less direct and demanding in semantic force in comparison to the Indian letters. A discussion of the distribution of the individual strategies sheds light on this first impression. Moreover, data from reference data (reference grammars, ICE-corpora, empirical findings) are taken into consideration.

8.1.1 Impositives

In the British Letter Corpus, 296 instances of Impositives were detected, which corresponds to a quota of 2.965 ptw. In contrast to the Impositives quota found in the Indian Letter Corpus (6.765 ptw), it becomes obvious that the Impositives strategy type in British letters is less dominant than in the Indian material. Within the Impositives group, however, both Letter Corpora exhibit a strong preference for Obligation Statements to realize REQUEST acts. As in the Indian Letter Corpus, Performatives constituted the least often selected strategy for REQUEST acts (cf. table 16).

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Impositives	296	2.965
Mood Derivables	24 (16)	0.240 (0.160)
Performatives	19	0.190
Obligation Statements	211	2.114
Want Statements	42	0.421

Table 16: Impositives in the British Letter Corpus

8.1.1.1 Mood Derivables

Comparing the strategy Mood Derivables reveals that British letter writers tend to use imperative constructions less frequently (0.240 ptw) than their Indian counterparts (0.609 ptw). Of all instances classified as Mood Derivables here further modifications have to be acknowledged. The first amendment tackles the concept of irony: out of 24 imperative constructions in the British Letter Corpus, 8 uses in fact clearly convey irony. It is therefore debatable whether these instances could be counted as ‘true’ REQUEST act realizations or are better excluded. Irony poses a problem to the REQUEST act framework as linguistic forms used ironically usually do not refer to a future action but comment on an action which has already taken place in the recent past. In the present case, the ironic uses have been included into the Mood Derivables group, though such a classification remains problematic. The second amendment is linked to the scope of linguistic forms classified under the strategy Mood Derivables. As has been mentioned before, not only imperatives, but also subjunctive and *be to*-constructions fall into the Mood Derivables strategy type. Due to the overwhelming frequency in use of imperatives these have been treated as the most typically occurring forms within this REQUEST strategy. In the British Letter Corpus, however, it is important to consider *be to*-constructions as well.

A search with the MP2.2 concordance program, for instance, displays 35 hits for *is to*-constructions. Further, similar searches for the other inflections (*am to*, *are to*) would have to be conducted. Of all these hits, *be to*-constructions with an imperative meaning would have to be further distinguished from constructions

with the meaning ‘plan for the future’ (Leech 1987: 103), and constructions where *be* functions as a lexical main verb followed by a *to*-infinitive.

Taking these two amendments into consideration would lead to a further decrease in the quota of British English imperative use. At the same time, it becomes clear that qualitative differences in REQUEST act strategies do exist as British letter writers additionally draw on *be to*-constructions with an imperative meaning.

Examples from the British Letter Corpus illustrate ‘typical’ instances of the Mood Derivables strategy:

Don’t give your hard-earned cash to companies that treat their employees badly.
<GUARD:15-11-04-12>

Invest now in stopping it [climate change, N.O.], and we protect our economy so that it can support a higher proportion of retired people.
<INDEP:03-11-04-6>

8.1.1.2 Performatives

In the British Letter Corpus, the frequency for Performatives proved to be only slightly higher (0.190) ptw) than in the Indian material (0.180 ptw). Concerning the range of verbs being used in a performative manner, the verbs *suggest*, *call on*, *call upon*, *ask*, *encourage*, *support*, *propose* and *urge* can be found. Of these, *urge* and *ask* can be characterized those verbs with the strongest semantic force denoting obligation. This is in marked contrast to the Indian Letter Corpus, where only 5 verbs occurred in a performative use, namely *suggest*, *appeal*, *plead*, *protest* and *request*. What is evident from these findings is that the range of Performatives is differentiated to a greater degree in the British Letter Corpus, although the semantic force of Performatives seems to be stronger in the Indian Letter Corpus. The following examples of Performatives are taken from the British material:

As part of a radical overhaul of the family justice system, we are proposing to establish proper guidelines of family justice: one that is open, fair and accountable.
<GUARD:03-11-04-12>

We urge everyone to bear in mind that those MPs claiming low expenses are quite probably exploiting their staff and/or not doing their job to the best of their ability.
<INDEP:02-11-04-4>

According to the findings, the distribution of Performatives in both Letter Corpora reveals qualitative differences rather than quantitative ones ($p>0.05$).

8.1.1.3 Obligation Statements

As in the Indian Letter Corpus, Obligation Statements constituted an often preferred REQUEST act strategy. In contrast to the former, however, Predictive Statements even outnumbered Obligation Statements in the British material. The distribution of the individual modal auxiliaries in the Obligation Statements strategy is listed below (cf. table 17).

Modals	British Letter Corpus
must	32 (0.321)
should	134 (1.342)
have to	12 (0.120)
need to	11 (0.110)
ought to	2 (0.020)
cannot	14 (0.140)
would do well	6 (0.060)
total	211 (2.114)

Table 17: Deontic Modal Auxiliaries in the British Letter Corpus

As in the Indian Letter Corpus, deontic *should* again is represented with the highest frequency (1.342 ptw) within Obligation Statements; *must* follows second, which corresponds to the observations from the Indian Letter Corpus. Third, *cannot*-constructions with the aim of preventing a certain future action to take place were also identified in the British material. This does not correspond to the findings from the Indian Corpus, where *need to*-constructions followed in the third place.

Two examples from the British Letter Corpus will illustrate modal usage as cases of Obligation Statements:

Decisions made by parents must be valued and supported, whether it means they stay at home, work part-time and flexibly, or full-time.
<GUARD:13-11-04-2>

Failing this [policy] the government should postpone the authorisation of any new casinos until after the new gambling commission has been established, then go back to parliament with a comprehensive and coherent casino policy which minimises social costs and maximises economic benefits.
<GUARD:17-11-04-8>

The category Obligation Statements in both varieties of English exhibits statistically relevant deviances between expected and observed frequencies: in the British Letter Corpus, Obligation Statements occurred with a lower than expected frequency ($p<0.001$), whereas Obligation Statements in the Indian Letter Corpus were employed more often than expected ($p<0.001$).

8.1.1.4 Want Statements

Frequencies for the use of Want Statements did not show significant differences between Indian and British letters to the editor. In British English letters, Want Statements could be observed with a slightly higher frequency than one would have expected, although this deviance did not prove statistically significant ($p>0.05$). From the text material, especially the pattern “personal pronoun + lexical REQUEST verb” was elicited as a typical example of a Want Statement. These were further divided into singular and plural uses of the pronoun in the first person. What becomes evident from the analysis (cf. table 18) is that the plural uses of the personal pronoun tended to be slightly preferred over singular uses. Furthermore, the lexical verb *need* exhibited higher frequencies than the verbs *want*, *wish*, *hope* or other verbs. If uses of the verb *hope*, however, can be counted as literal expressions of a wish or desire, or should rather be regarded as instances of conventionalised, ‘empty’ phrases, remains disputable.

PrN + lexical V	British Letter Corpus
I + want	3 (0.030)
We + want	2 (0.020)
I + need	0 (0)
We + need	17 (0.170)
I + wish	0 (0)
We + wish	5 (0.050)
I + hope	10 (0.100)
We + hope	5 (0.050)
other	10 (0.100)
total	42 (0.421)

Table 18: "*I*/*We* + Lexical REQUEST Verb" in the British Letter Corpus

8.1.2 Conventionally Indirect Strategies

Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements have been analysed as members of the CIS strategy type. CIS can be characterised as more indirect strategies than those of the Impositives type. They draw on conventionalised linguistic forms to express a REQUEST act and thus are perceived as less face-threatening than Impositives. Table 19 gives a first overview about the overall distribution of Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements in the British Letter Corpus; the two individual strategies will be discussed in the following.

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
CIS	176	1.763
Suggestory Formulae	98	0.982
Necessity Statements	78	0.781

Table 19: Conventionally Indirect Strategies in the British Letter Corpus

8.1.2.1 Suggestory Formulae

In British letters to the editor, Suggestory Formulae were employed with a frequency of 0.982 ptw. Results gained by the chi²-test affirm ($p<0.01$) that this occurrence of Suggestory Formulae constitutes a significantly higher number in the British Letter Corpus than one would have expected. In the Indian Letter Corpus, in contrast, Suggestory Formulae were underrepresented ($p<0.01$) so that the cross-cultural difference in the distribution of this strategy becomes

even wider. Linguistic forms functioning as Suggestory Formulae were (a) *let*-imperatives, (b) *how about*/*why not*-constructions, (c) *can*/*could*-constructions, (d) *would*-constructions, (e) *may/might*-constructions and (f) constructions using the modal *should* with first person plural reference[71]. Of these, especially constructions employing the modals *can* or *could* constitute the preferred substrategy (47 out of 98 instances). Constructions using the modal *would* were selected 19 times while *let*-imperatives as well as *may*/*might*-constructions were chosen 12 times each. The other two strategy subtypes (b) and (f) only occurred marginally.

The following examples from the British material illustrate the distinct realizations of Suggestory Formulae:

However, let us preserve the full spelling of 'cough': In the theatre and concert hall we can all recognise its anglo-Saxon [sic] guttural ending.
<INDEP:25-11-04-16>

Why can't we have woman bishops, when the head of the Church of England, the Defender of the Faith, no less, is the Queen?
<GUARD:04-11-04-21>

He [Mr Thomas, N.O.] could start with the realisation that reggae singers don't make "rap songs".
<GUARD:23-11-04-17>

A good first step to regenerating rural railways would be to introduce a reasonable fare regime.
<GUARD:25-11-04-18>

If he [Henry Porter, N.O.] wants an example of grotesque thuggery, he might look at events in Amsterdam on Tuesday, in the enlightened European Union.
<GUARD:04-11-04-5>

Perhaps Mr Thomas should seek to learn a little about the reggae artists that his government seeks to demonise.
<GUARD:23-11-04-17>

[71] Two examples for this construction were detected in the material, both of which were accompanied by the stance adverb *perhaps*, which softens the degree of imposition even further.

8.1.2.2 Necessity Statements

Realizations of Necessity Statements appear in various linguistic forms. The most prominent constructions identified in the British Letter Corpus were the lexical units (a) *X needs Y*, (b) *the only solution/answer is to do X*, (c) *it is time X does Y*, (d) *it is vital/essential/necessary to do X*, and derivations of these types. As a REQUEST act strategy, Necessity Statements both in the Indian and in the British material reflect much variation with respect to linguistic realizations. The frequency of Necessity Statements in the British Letter Corpus is slightly below expected occurrences (which would be, according to chi^2-tests, 82.0 instances), although this difference, however, is of no statistical relevance ($p>0.05$). A similar picture was observed for Necessity Statements and, although occurrences of Necessity Statements were slightly higher than expected, this deviance could not be statistically verified.
Examples for linguistic structures that use the Necessity Statements strategy are given below:

The stabilisation of Afghanistan, authorised by the UN, needs NATO.
<GUARD:10-11-04-9>

The answer is for consumers to vote with their wallets.
<GUARD:15-11-04:12>

It's time for him [Tony Blair, N.O.] to stop wearing sycophantic Tory blue shirt and tie.
<GUARD:20-11-04-18>

It is more important than ever for us to stand together and continue the fight against the politics of intolerance, insularity and fear that Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and the others thrive on.
<INDEP:08-11-04-6>

8.1.3 Hints

The Hints strategy type is assumed to function most indirectly when it comes to express a REQUEST act. Of the three REQUEST strategy types, Hints demand the most complex interpretation process and are potentially open to misunderstandings as well as non-compliance. In the British Letter Corpus, Hints were observed with a higher than expected frequency, although this

difference did not prove to be statistically relevant (p>0.05). Of the three Hints strategies, especially Predictives were used most frequently (cf. table 20).

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Hints	390	3.907
Rhetorical Questions	98	0.982
Predictive Statements	277	2.775
Allusions	15	0.150

Table 20: Hints in the British Letter Corpus

8.1.3.1 Rhetorical Questions

In the British material, Rhetorical Questions could be observed with a frequency of 0.982 ptw. This roughly corresponds to the expected number for this category in the British Letter Corpus, and hence shows little deviation between expected and observed occurrences. In the present study, only Rhetorical Questions with future reference were included into the analysis; cases with past reference were not included as REQUEST act realizations, but were regarded as instantiations of EVALUATION acts and thus excluded.

Rhetorical interrogatives were problematic insofar as they have the capability to function as linguistic realizations of two REQUEST act strategies, namely as instances of Rhetorical Questions (Hints) and as instances of Suggestory Formulae (CIS). A differentiation between the two was conducted on semantic grounds, proposing that cases of CIS are stronger in appellative force than cases of Hints. Moreover, rhetorical interrogatives classified as Suggestory Formulae involved the speaker/writer as one of the agents of the proposed future action, whereas, in cases of Hints, the speaker/writer excluded himself/herself as agents of the desired action.

The following two examples from the British Letter Corpus are to illustrate interrogative sentences classified as Rhetorical Questions.

So, as a hi-tech alternative (or supplement), is it not possible in the age of the speed camera to install a device capable of detecting if the rails are not in full view at the time the gates are due to descend?
<GUARD:09-11-04-3>

Given that most ATMs are outside banks or supermarkets (Report, November 11), surely it should be possible to cut the £60m losses substantially by a daily inspection of the machine by branch staff to ensure that no illegal mechanisms had been attached?
<GUARD:15-11-04-4>

8.1.3.2 Predictive Statements

In both the Indian and the British Letter Corpus, Predictives dominated within the Hints strategy type. With respect to the relation between expected and observed occurrences of Predictives, chi²-tests showed that in the British Letter Corpus more Predictives were employed than expected ($p<0.01$), whereas in the Indian Letter Corpus fewer Predictives were chosen than expected ($p<0.001$). In general, the preference for Predictive Statements can be explained by their low degree of imposition which is put upon the addressee(s), as the focus is upon action rather than the agents. Predictives usually topicalize future developments assumed to follow an action which is considered either desirable or undesirable. That is why structurally Predictives often make use of the *will*-future or employ conditional constructions.

Semantically, Predictives also imply a moral element, whereby the speaker/writer suggests that he/she is in the position to judge which course of action is morally 'right' or 'wrong'. To change a certain course of action and hence to establish a basis for the morally 'right' way is the often encoded message in Predictives.

Two examples from the letter corpus serve as examples for the use of Predictives in British English:

Even so, many will miss the detail and read Windsor as a rejection of gay and lesbian people [within the Church]; in fact it calls for continuing dialogue.
<INDEP:03-11-04-8>

My point was that children need a loving, permanent, stable home where they know they belong, come hell or high water. Flitting from one parent to the other will not usually give them that and also carries the risk of neither parent giving the job their full commitment.
<INDEP: 09-11-04-9>

8.1.3.3 Allusions

In the Indian Letter Corpus, linguistic forms serving as Allusions for REQUEST acts had been observed to occur mainly in the periphery. The same holds true for the British Letter Corpus, though the frequency in use proved to be even lower (0.150 ptw) than in the Indian Corpus (0.316 ptw). While in the Indian material repetitive declaratives represented the salient linguistic structure for Allusions, however, the British texts showed preferences for conditionals. In the following, two examples illustrate such a usage.

If we can trust juries at all, surely we can trust them better with more complete information.
<INDEP:29-10-04-3>

You report […] that the Christian Institute has spent £ 20,000 on an advert promoting a Commons amendment to wreck the civil partnership bill. That would feed 5,000 families for a month in Sudan, provide clean drinking water for 650 families in Guatemala or make 2,000 homes in Britain safe and secure for the elderly.
<GUARD:11-11-04-8>

The first example poses the question of trustworthiness in jurisprudence after an inconvenient incident in the recent past. The use of the *if*-conditional exemplifies the writer's impression of a lack in transparency and underlines his/her scepticism, which, as we can assume, is implied to be shared by the general public. At the same time, the writer appeals to the potential members of the jury to alter their behaviour in the future if they want to regain the public's confidence in jurisprudence.

The second example operates on the basis of an analogy, contrasting a negatively evaluated action, the spending of an enormous amount of money for an advert, with a range of possible (positive) actions which could have been feasible with the same amount of money (feeding families abroad or renovating homes in Britain). Sometimes, stance adverbs accompany the analogical principle of composition, and also stress an element of EVALUATION:

Sadly, while light rail has been extensively used in Europe, this government pursues the easy option by cynically pushing infrastructural responsibility on to already hard-pressed councils to distance itself from probable closures.
<GUARD:15-11-04-19>

Due to the low occurrences of Allusions within the chosen text type, I shall not discuss this REQUEST strategy any further. To fully account for the realizations and the distribution of Allusions as a REQUEST act strategy would require additional analyses of other text types which is beyond the scope of the present study.

8.2 Summary of the Findings from the British Letter Corpus

All in all, the British Letter Corpus exhibited 862 instances of REQUEST act realizations. Of these, the majority were identified as members of the Hints group (42.8%). Impositives contributed to 37.9% of all REQUEST act realizations and, in 19.3% of REQUEST acts, Conventionally Indirect Strategies were used.

The most direct REQUEST strategy type, Impositives, exhibited a similar trend as the Indian material in that Obligation Statements with a relative frequency of 2.114 ptw by far outnumbered all other REQUEST strategies. In contrast to the results from the Indian Letter Corpus, however, Mood Derivables (0.240 ptw) were selected less often than Want Statements (0.421 ptw). Performatives revealed to be the least frequently chosen strategy which corresponds to a similar trend in the Indian data.

Observations on Conventionally Indirect Strategies exhibited differences between the Letter Corpora, as British letter writers tended to use Suggestory Formulae more often than the Indian writers. Accordingly, Necessity Statements showed slightly lower frequencies in use in the British than in the Indian material.

Within the Hints group, Predictive Statements appeared most regularly (2.775 ptw). Allusions constituted the ed strategy least often selected (0.150 ptw). The Hints strategy type hence reveals many similar trends in the two Letter Corpora. Table 21 summarizes the findings from the British Letter Corpus.

REQUEST Strategies	absolute frequencies	frequencies ptw
Impositives	296	2.965
Mood Derivable	24	0.240
Performatives	19	0.190
Obligation Statements	211	2.114
Want Statements	42	0.421
CIS	176	1.763
Suggestory Formulae	98	0.982
Necessity Statements	78	0.781
Hints	390	3.907
Rhetorical Questions	98	0.982
Predictive Statements	277	2.775
Allusions	15	0.150

Table 21: REQUEST Strategies in the British Letter Corpus

8.3 Reference Data from Other Sources

In order to interpret the findings gained from the British Letter Corpus, it is necessary to include reference data from other sources. In the present study, this data can be differentiated into three groups, two of which consist of language material, whereas the other source gives an impression of what norm-providing literature can contribute to the topic. Here, the norm-providing source chosen for British English are the grammar books by Biber et al. (1999; 2002), Quirk et al. (1985) and Alexander (1988). The language material taken into consideration comprises (a) data from the ICE-GB and (b) DCT-elicited empirical data on REQUEST acts.

8.3.1 Reference Grammars

In the past, grammars pursuing a prescriptive approach did not offer any information on the frequency or distribution of linguistic forms. With a shift in attitude towards a descriptive approach, this gradually changed. Here, I will therefore concentrate on contemporary grammars by Biber et al. (1999; 2002) and Alexander (1988) to see what they might contribute to the frequency and

distribution of linguistic forms which can be used as REQUEST strategies. Hints as the most indirect and also most vague category within the framework can hardly be accounted for from possible forms and therefore had to be excluded here.

Mood as a grammatical category traditionally comprises the indicative, the imperative and the subjunctive. Whereas the indicative as the regularly occurring and unmarked form is rarely commented on, the latter mood categories have received more attention. As the structure and use of imperatives according to Quirk et al. (1985) and Alexander (1988) has already been described (cf. 6.2.1.1), only Biber et al.'s (2002) comments on the distribution of imperative clauses shall be presented here.
With respect to frequencies of imperative clauses, Biber et al. (2002: 255) list conversation as the register showing the highest number of occurrences. Comparing the four registers conversation, fiction, news and academic writing leads to the following picture:

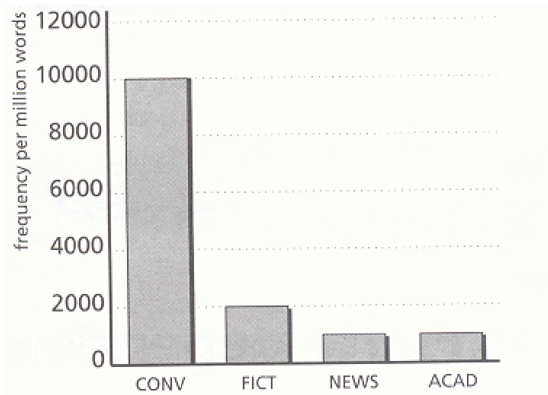

Figure 6: Imperative Clauses in British English
(Biber et al. 2002: 255)

According to these findings based on an analysis of the 40-million LGSWE corpus, imperative clauses occur ten times more often in speech than in news texts or academic writing, and five times more often than in fiction. Biber et al. seem to be surprised by the relatively high number of imperative clause in news texts and academic writing, and comment on possible reasons: "In fact, imperatives are more frequent than questions in news and academic writing, presumably because writers can use them to manipulate the reaction and

behaviour of the reader" (Biber et al. 2002: 225). Unfortunately, what remains unacknowledged in this argument focussing on the successful compliance on behalf of the addressee is that notions of politeness should also be taken into consideration as more frequent uses of imperatives do not necessarily make compliance more likely than employing other, more indirect REQUEST act strategies.

In search of modal usage for REQUEST act realizations, reference grammars only offer scarce amounts of information. Alexander (1988: 223), for instance, only offers the modals *will*, *would*, *can* and *could* in interrogative constructions under the label "using modals to ask someone to do something". Later on, when it comes to the semantic force of the individual modal auxiliaries capable of expressing obligation, Alexander (1988: 228) provides the following hierarchy (in decreasing order with respect to semantic force): *must*, *have got to* and *have to*, *need to*, *be to*-constructions, *had better*, *ought to* and *should*. Further information on appropriate uses of the individual (semi-)modals and modal-like constructions, however, are not provided. Furthermore, Biber et al. (2002) also do not assist the language learner in modal usage, although at least preferences for usage in written and spoken genres are presented. Concerning modals with intrinsic or personal (i.e. deontic) meaning, Biber et al. (2002: 180) identify *should*, *must* and *have to* as most frequently used modal auxiliaries for written genres, whereas for spoken genres *have to* is put in first place, followed by *should* and *must*.
For the realization of REQUEST acts, these pieces of information are only of restricted use. What can be concluded from Alexander's (1988) advice on how "to ask someone to do something" is that interrogatives may be perceived as the most adequate structures for REQUEST acts in spoken language. Data on the distribution of *should*, *must* and *have to* in speech and writing (Biber et al. 2002) at least confirm those three modals as the most prominent candidates for Obligation Statements.

The present framework considers Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements as members of the Conventionally Indirect Strategies type. As Necessity Statements, unfortunately, only occur as lexical bundles, they do not

form constituents of grammar books. Though the topic of stance becomes increasingly acknowledged in grammars, specific uses of Necessity Statements cannot be observed in this source. That is why, for the category of Conventionally Indirect Strategies, I have to instead draw on realizations of Suggestory Formulae, i.e. *let ('s/us)*-imperative constructions.

Following Biber et al. (2002: 254), *let ('s/us)*-imperatives constitute a special case of the imperative used "to express a suggestion involving both the speaker and the addressee". Although no frequency accounts are provided for this use of the imperative, Biber et al. comment later on that the collective *let*-imperative also serves as an alternative to interrogatives in REQUEST contexts and, although it is more face-threatening than interrogatives, it is less face-threatening than the second-person imperative (2002: 433). Concerning various degrees of politeness, we can therefore assume that frequencies of *let*-imperatives would be higher than frequencies of Mood Derivables.

8.3.2 The ICE-GB and the ICE-India

In the following, the distribution of Impositives and Conventionally Indirect Strategies within the ICE-GB in comparison to the results from the British Letter Corpus will be presented. Additional references to the Indian data are provided whenever necessary.

The Impositives strategies under inspection were Mood Derivables, Performatives, deontic modals expressing obligation, and constructions of the pattern "*I*/*We* + *want*/*need*".

The distribution of indicative, imperative and subjunctive clauses in contemporary British English as represented in the ICE-GB reveals the following trend: the British component of the ICE gives a total sum of 62,620 clauses of spoken and written language. Of this total amount, 1,671 cases were listed as imperative clauses, which corresponds to 2.67% of all clauses. About two thirds of all the imperative clauses (i.e. 1,001 cases) are derived from spoken language data. According to my interpretation, this reflects a wider range of use of imperatives in speech in comparison to writing. This trend was also confirmed by the DCT-data, where the use of imperatives was lowest in

situation 3 in comparison to the other situations which were assumed to take place in face-to-face interactions.

The ICE-India, due to being an electronic corpus without grammatical annotation, denies a search on the distribution of mood within the language material. The only roundabout procedure to search for imperative-constructions is via a lexical search on the modifier *please* and a manual inspection of all proceeding hits.

In the written component of the ICE-India, modified imperative constructions were identified with a quota of 0.386 ptw. Within the British material, modified imperatives contributed for about a third of the Indian quota (i.e. 0.127 ptw). This, however, tells us nothing about the distribution of other modified imperatives or of the distribution of plain imperative constructions. To assume that Indians employ imperatives more often than their British counterpart can therefore only remain a speculation.

Despite the fact that corpuslinguistic tools have been expanded in their range of potential applications during the last decades, semantic and pragmatic aspects still cannot be detected automatically. As a consequence, searches for performative uses of verbs still exclusively rely on automatic word search options and, more essentially, on manual searches. Even the ICE-GB, which is a parsed corpus, proves to be of restricted help here. As no list of all performative uses of verbs could be elicited via corpuslinguistic tools, and manual searches of two 1-million corpora cannot be conducted within the scope of this investigation, only a selection of verbs which were assumed to be performatively used was tested in the corpora. This list of verbs draws on Wierzbicka (1987) and, in addition, includes all instances of performatively used verbs from the Letter Corpora (cf. 6.2.1.2). Of these, observations on the verbs *appeal*, *suggest*, *propose* and *request* shall be presented in the following.

Appeal: Surprisingly, the verb *appeal* only occurs once with a first person subject and with present time reference, i.e. *Now I appeal to the House with the sense of fairness that we always have in this place* <ICE-GB:s1b-051 145>. It is not surprising that performatively used *appeal* occurs in a public speech, i.e. a text type which is performed orally, but which is based on a written script.

Suggest: The Performative *suggest* comprises 14 hits in the corpus. Three of these occurred in written language, all others were detected in speech. Most of the performative uses (i.e. 12 out of 14 cases) implied a first person speaker in the singular, and only two used first person subjects in the plural. The distribution of the forms reveals that *suggest* is often modified or weakened by the modal *would* or by *be going to*-constructions preceding the main verb, such as:

Well I would suggest that you sort of write or speak to Grandma <,> uhm.
<ICE-GB:s1a-095 299>

Another possible modification of the illocutionary force was to use the semi-modal *dare*:

And dare I suggest that this is the match-winner <,,>.
<ICE-GB:s2a-008 012>).

Nevertheless, *suggest* occurred to a similar degree unmodified, i.e. in ‘plain’ constructions of “personal pronoun + lexical verb”. Most often, it was the first person singular pronoun which was used in these constructions.

Propose: The verb *propose* only occurs five times in the corpus, one of which was derived from spoken material:

I propose Denis <unclear word> to carry on as Treasurer if he’ll be happy and be able to do it.
<ICE-GB:s1b-078 097>

Four examples derived from writing, such as the following:

I would therefore like to propose a solution which would enable you to store what farm machinery and other useful junk (whether for cannibalisation or sentimental value) but allow us to open up the view from our garden.
<ICE-GB:w1b-020 156>

The use of the verb *propose* seems to constitute one possibility for making a suggestion or expressing a REQUEST act which is not too strong in semantic force.

Request: *Request* in performative use only occurred twice in the ICE-GB. Both instances could be identified in writing, and both showed internal modification:

I believe we should have this assessed for patenting by our patent agents and I propose to send your description to them and request that they respond to you directly.
<ICE-GB:w1b-030 046>

I would like to emphasise the need for confidentiality and to request that no public disclosure takes place before we have completed the assessment.
<ICE-GB:w1b – 030 048>

I would tentatively assume that this is an indicator of the potentially high degree of face-threatening impact of performative *request* in British English.
The overall frequencies of Performatives in the British Letter Corpus in comparison to the ICE corpora are given in the following.

Performatives	British Letter Corpus	ICE-GB	ICE-India
request	0 (0)	2 (0.005)	58 (0.129)
invite	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	6 (0.013)
advise	0 (0)	4 (0.009)	0 (0)
recommend	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	4 (0.009)
tell	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	1 (0.002)
appeal	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.002)
urge	3 (0.030)	2 (0.005)	0 (0)
suggest	6 (0.060)	3 (0.007)	4 (0.009)
propose	1 (0.010)	5 (0.012)	3 (0.007)
advocate	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
encourage	2 (0.020)	0 (0)	0 (0)
plead	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
ask	3 (0.030)	0 (0)	0 (0)
call upon/on	2 (0.020)	0 (0)	0 (0)
support	2 (0.020)	0 (0)	1 (0.002)
protest	0 (0)	1 (0.002)	0 (0)
total	19 (0.190)	21 (0.050)	78 (0.173)

Table 22: Performatives in the British Letter Corpus, the ICE-GB and the ICE-India

A comparison of modal auxiliary constructions was conducted for an analysis of the strategy Obligation Statements. Occurrences of the modals and semi-modals *must*, *should*, *have to*, *need to*, *ought to*, *cannot* and *would do well* in a deontic sense were counted in the British Letter Corpus and compared to

frequencies in the ICE corpora (cf. table 23). What strikes the reader's eye is that the overall numbers for deontic modals do not show much variation in between an occurrence of 1.9 to 2.3 ptw. As in the Indian Letter Corpus, the modal *should* revealed highest frequencies in use. However, frequencies of modal usage in the British Letter Corpus were less evenly distributed than in the ICE-GB (and the ICE-India). This again emphasizes the hypothesis that observations on modal usage in letters to the editor are partly due to the variable text type.

Modals	British Letter Corpus	ICE-GB	ICE-India
must	32 (0.321)	285 (0.673)	235 (0.522)
should	134 (1.342)	366 (0.864)	327 (0.726)
have to	12 (0.120)	208 (0.491)	250 (0.555)
need to	11 (0.110)	83 (0.196)	33 (0.073)
ought to	2 (0.020)	8 (0.019)	3 (0.007)
cannot	14 (0.140)	---	---
would do well	6 (0.060)	---	---
total	211 (2.114)	950 (2.242)	848 (1.884)

Table 23: Deontic Modal Auxiliaries in the British Letter Corpus, the ICE-GB and the ICE-India

Constructions of the pattern "*I*/*We* + lexical REQUEST verb" as instances of the Want Statements strategy are of further interest for comparison. An overview of the use of this pattern in the corpora leads to the following results:

PrN + lexical V	British Letter Corpus	ICE-GB	ICE-India
I + want	3 (0.030)	41 (0.097)	28 (0.062)
We + want	2 (0.020)	7 (0.017)	14 (0.031)
I + need	0 (0)	5 (0.012)	18 (0.040)
We + need	17 (0.170)	12 (0.028)	9 (0.020)
I + wish	0 (0)	13 (0.031)	25 (0.056)
We + wish	5 (0.050)	0 (0)	8 (0.018)
I + hope	10 (0.100)	136 (0.321)	107 (0.238)
We + hope	5 (0.050)	6 (0.014)	5 (0.011)
total	42 (0.421)	220 (0.519)	214 (0.475)

Table 24: "*I*/*We* + Lexical REQUEST Verb" in the British Letter Corpus, the ICE-GB and the ICE-India

As in the Indian data, Want Statements in the British Letter Corpus do not signify a frequently selected REQUEST act strategy. Results in all corpora

oscillate between 0.42 and 0.52 occurrences ptw which is relatively infrequent compared to the use of other strategies. Conversely, in the British Letter Corpus, however, the pattern "*We + need*" occurred with a relatively higher frequency than the other forms. One might discuss if this could be interpreted as a piece of further evidence for the salience of REQUEST acts within the text type letters to the editor.

Let-imperatives as instances of the Suggestory Formulae strategy are represented in the three corpora as follows:

let-imperatives	British Letter Corpus	ICE-GB	ICE-India
let ('s/us) + imp.	17 (0.170)	11 (0.026)	30 (0.067)

Table 25: L*et ('s/us)*-imperatives in the British Letter Corpus, the ICE-GB and the ICE-India

Results concerning the use of inclusive *let*-imperatives are surprising insofar as occurrences in the British Letter Corpus revealed to be highest (0.170 ptw) within all corpora despite contrary expectations from the British reference corpus. Although the discrepancy in the use of *let*-imperatives between lowest frequency of use in the ICE-GB and highest frequency of use in the British Letter Corpus is somewhat unanticipated, it is obvious that *let*-imperatives in both Indian and British texts tend to be used more often in letters to the editor than in other written text types.

8.3.3 Discourse Completion Tests: the British Target Group

Despite various efforts, the British target group provided only a limited number of answers (i.e. 34 responses). In order to compare these results with the data from the Indian target group, frequencies of REQUEST act strategies were compared on grounds of relative numbers. The British questionnaire version showed slight variation with respect to the descriptions of the situations, but ultimately attempted to create comparable REQUEST contexts.

Situation 1:

The first situation is located within the family, and involves the "speaker" and a "younger brother" as communication partners. Within the concrete context, the younger brother continuously bothers the speaker, who himself/herself is occupied with paper work for, so that the latter is urged to admonish the sibling to end this disturbance.

Of 34 responses, the majority of the informants (73.5%) decided on imperative constructions to convey their wish to be left alone. Imperatives chosen were to a similar degree either unmodified (13 responses) or modified (12 responses) by (a) the politeness marker *please*, (b) a question tag, or (c) an expression weakening the force of the imperative. Six informants (17.65%) preferred interrogative constructions in communicating with the "younger brother". One informant opted for a Want Statement strategy of the unusual form "*I* + *need* + *you* + *to* + verb denoting action". Two informants (5.9%) used Hints to express their demand.

Examples from situation 1, England:

Impositives (Mood):
Go away! Stop disturbing me, I'm busy!
Leave me alone, I'm trying to work!
Want Statement:
I have to get this report finished for my boss, I really need you to stop disturbing me.

CIS (Interrogatives):
Would you please stop bothering me?
I'm trying to do a report. Can you go away?

Hints (Predictive Statements):
If you don't stop disturbing me I'm taking away your drum kit.
I need to get this done. I'll come and see you later.

The high frequency of imperatives in this situation matches previous findings on the use of imperative constructions in the private sphere (Ervin-Tripp 1976), according to which intimate relationships between communication partners allow a higher usage of such constructions without threatening the face of the partner. Nevertheless, it strikes the observer's eye that most of the informants, despite choosing imperative constructions, preferred additional modification,

often in the form of an additional comment on the urgency of the task, in order to soften the force of the imposition transferred to the “brother”.

Situation 2:

Situation 2 is located at a restaurant and involves a customer-client situation between the speaker as “customer” and “the waiter”. Despite an order of vegetarian food, the meal served is non-vegetarian and thus it becomes necessary for the speaker to complain to the waiter about the wrongly placed order.

In this situation, the answers revealed a higher degree of variation with respect to the diverse strategies of imposition. Out of 33 responses, strategies of the CIS and the Hints group proved to be clearly preferred (48.5% and 42.4%, respectively) while imperative constructions could only be observed in 3 cases (i.e. 9.1%). In this situation, no other REQUEST strategies were employed.

Cases where the (correct) order was simply repeated as well as cases which functioned as clarifying statements were counted as instances of the Hints strategy type.

One informant even mentioned he/she wouldn’t even perform this act, but rather ask someone else to do it.

Examples from situation 2, England:

Impositives (Mood):
This is not what I ordered. Please bring me the … which I ordered.

CIS (Interrogatives):
Could you bring me the meal I ordered?
I’m sorry to bother you but this is not my order and I am a vegetarian. Could you please change it?

Hints (Allusions):
Sorry, but I ordered a vegetarien [sic] meal and this isn’t vegetarien [sic].
Sorry, but I think there might have been some sort of mistake – I ordered something different.
I’m afraid this isn’t what I’ve ordered.

As the results from this situation demonstrate, the majority of the informants seem to feel obliged to draw on more indirect strategies to perform the complaint. Affirming Ervin-Tripp’s (1976) assumptions about a decrease in the

use of imperatives in constellations with greater social distance or familiarity, unmodified imperative constructions were totally absent here.

Situation 3:

Contrary to situations 1 and 2, the following situation does not focus on spoken interaction, but rather draws on realisations of a REQUEST act in writing. In the proposition given, it is the topic of safety of British airports which requires a reaction on behalf of the "writer" via the form of a letter to the editor in a newspaper. The underlying intention of the writer, as suggested, is to demand improved safety conditions at British airports.

All in all, 29 informants provided verbalisations for this situation. Nonetheless, in contrast to results gained from the previous situations, however, the distribution of REQUEST strategies were more dispersed, including examples of Mood Derivables, Performatives, Obligations Statements, Want and Necessity Statements as well as Interrogatives and Hints.

Concerning relative frequency, Necessity Statements (34.45%), Hints (24.2%) and Obligation Statements (17.2%) tended to be preferred. Of the modal auxiliaries denoting obligation, British informants especially seem to prefer *need to*-constructions whereas Indian informants tended to opt for *should*-constructions.

Examples of situation 3, England:

Impositives (Mood):
The conditions of safety in British Airports are bad, please make them safer for the general public.
Please consider a revision of airport security policy.

Impositives (Obligation Statements):
Security in airports needs to be address [sic] and conditions need improving.
I am concerned over the safety of airports and feel that security should be revised and checked over.
The government must make sure that airport authorities sharpen up their act.

Impositives (Want Statements):
We need better conditions at airports.

CIS (Necessity Statements):
I think that the conditions of security at the airports are in need of improvement urgently.
I think there is a need to revise and check the security needs in British airports.

Hints (Allusions):
I believe airport security is inadequate.

What becomes obvious when comparing these observations to the results from situation 1 and 2 is that imperative constructions as instances of marked mood seem to occur more frequently in speech than in writing, and more often in informal than in formal situations. One might further assume that imperative constructions would be considered less problematic with respect to face needs in the private sphere, where social distance is likely to be rather low.
Hence, we can therefore assume that the formality of the situation, the medium, and the social relationship between the communication partners essentially influence the choice of linguistic forms. From the distribution of REQUEST act realizations in written text types, we can assume that impersonal forms were considered more appropriate than personal forms for the given context.

Situation 4:

In the last situation, the speaker acts as an owner of a tobacco shop who has to remind his shop assistant that discounts for private customers will not be tolerated in the future. The hierarchical relationship between these participants, “shop owner” and “shop assistant”, can be characterised by social distance and dependence of one participant (“shop assistant”) on the other (“shop owner”).
In contrast to the other situations, where more direct REQUEST strategies (situation1), more indirect strategies (situation 2) or a combination of strategies were observed (situation 3), in this situation it was typical for both most direct and most indirect strategies to be employed. Of all REQUEST strategy types, Hints (50.1%) and Impositives (32.4%) (especially Obligation Statements and Performatives) were most frequently selected. In several instances, Hints and Performatives strategies co-occurred in a single utterance.

Examples from situation 4, England:

Impositives (Mood):
Please stop giving discounts to your friends or I will fire you!

Impositives (Performatives):
[…] if you continue your behaviour I'll have no other option but to fire you – consider this an official warning.
This is your last warning before I have ultimately to fire you.

Impositives (Obligation Statements):
I regret having to tell you this, but I have noticed you have been giving discounts to a number of customers unnecessarily. This must stop.

CIS (Interrogatives):
I'm not very pleased about your behaviour, so could you please improve it or I'll have to take this further.

Hints (Predictive Statements):
If you continue [to give discounts to your friends] I will take the money from your wages.
Seriously, this is your last chance. Any more of this and you're gone.

8.4 Summary and Conclusion

As the analysis of the Indian and the British letter corpora has shown language users of both varieties of English do share similar tendencies in REQUEST strategy selection. For the British informants, the following observations could also be made:

From observations of the four corpora, it has already been noted that imperative constructions as the 'typical' marked case of the Mood Derivables strategy are employed more often by Indian than by British text producers. This trend has been clearly confirmed by the results of the DCT-data, where the quota for imperative constructions in the four imagined situations was as follows:

Situation 1: 89.6% (India) vs. 73.5% (Britain)
Situation 2: 75.2% (India) vs. 9.1% (Britain)
Situation 3: 26.8% (India) vs. 6.9% (Britain)
Situation 4: 45.1% (India) vs. 8.8% (Britain)

According to the results of the letter corpora and the distribution of preferred REQUEST strategies as reflected in the DCT, the use of imperatives constitutes a more widespread phenomenon in Indian English than in British English. We can only speculate why there has been such an increase in the occurrence of

this particular linguistic form; in my opinion, possible explanations may lie either in the area of language contact and interference or in processes linked to second language acquisition.

In both Britain and India, Performatives did not represent a frequently chosen strategy for REQUEST acts. Politeness might be one underlying factor which contributes significantly to this low frequency of usage. In the DCT-data, Performatives only occurred in situations 3 and 4 and, whereas in writing (situation 3), the Indian informants showed a higher quota than their British counterparts (11.4% vs. 6.9%), in situation 4, which was assumed to be a face-to-face interaction of a clearly defined hierarchy between the interlocutors, the Indian informants used Performatives less often than the British (15.7% vs. 20.6%).

Modal auxiliaries denoting obligation (Obligation Statements) proved to be the most significant REQUEST strategy for both Indian and British letter writers, even if the British text producers were again outnumbered by Indian usage. Results from the DCT-data confirm this trend, as in situation 3 and 4 when British users opted for REQUEST strategies other than Obligation Statements more often than the Indian informants. It is surprising, however, that this trend could not be confirmed by results from the ICE-corpora, where only little divergence in (deontic) modal usage has been detected. According to my interpretation, this discrepancy can be explained on grounds of unevenly distributed REQUEST acts in diverse text types. For letters to the editor, Obligations Statements do present a culture-specific REQUEST act realization pattern.

Want Statements, on the contrary, did not prove to be cross-culturally relevant. Following the distribution of Want Statements in the Letter Corpora, more similarities than differences, both between the letter corpora and the two local variants of the ICE-project, were identified. Even the empirical data from England and Mumbai do not offer significant discrepancies in the use of Want Statements.

Below, the distribution of strategies of the Impositives group in the British Letter Corpus, in the ICE-GB and in the ICE-India is illustrated in figure 7 below.

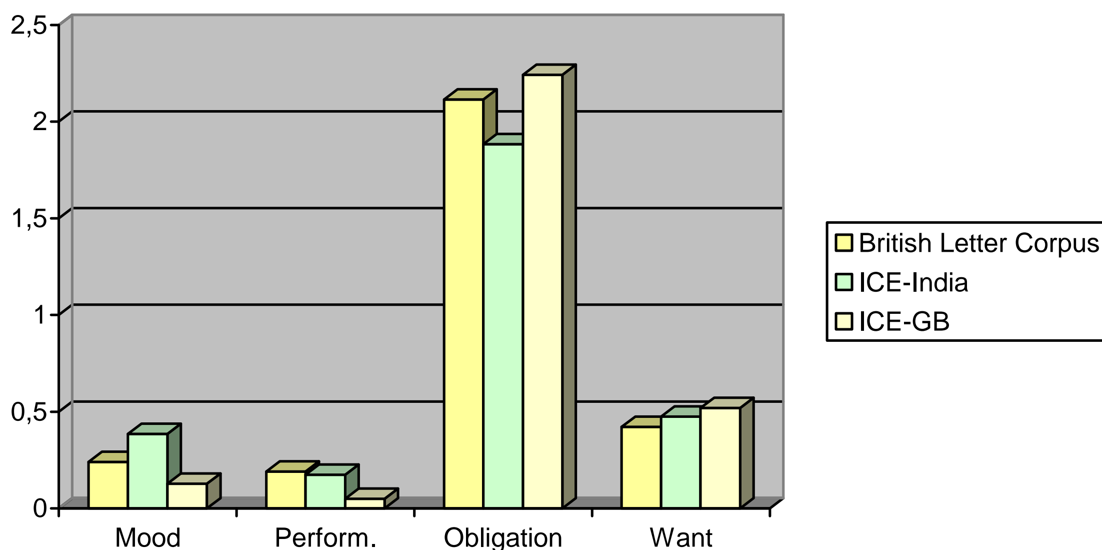

Figure 7: Impositives in the British Letter Corpus, the ICE-India and the ICE-GB

The frequency of *let*-imperatives as the main indicator for Suggestory Formulae shows a higher degree in use in British English compared to Indian English. In addition, British writers were also more likely to employ Necessity Statements than their Indian counterparts. Linked to the higher quota of imperatives used by Indian text producers, it seems probable to conclude that Indian English writers/speakers tend to prefer more direct strategy types to express REQUEST acts, whereas British English language users would rather draw on Conventionally Indirect Strategies.

9 Results from the Letter Corpora: A Brief Comparison

In the following, previous findings from the Indian and the British Letter Corpus will be summarized. To provide an easier overview of similarities and differences, the major results are reproduced in a diagram format (cf. figure 8). The investigation on REQUEST act realizations in the Indian and in the British Letter Corpora has revealed divergent preferences in REQUEST strategy selection. Of the three major REQUEST strategy types, strategies of the Impositives group proved to be the preferred strategy chosen by the Indian letter writers, while their British counterparts tended to select strategies of the Hints group slightly more frequently than Impositives. For both varieties, Conventionally Indirect Strategies constituted the least often selected strategy type.

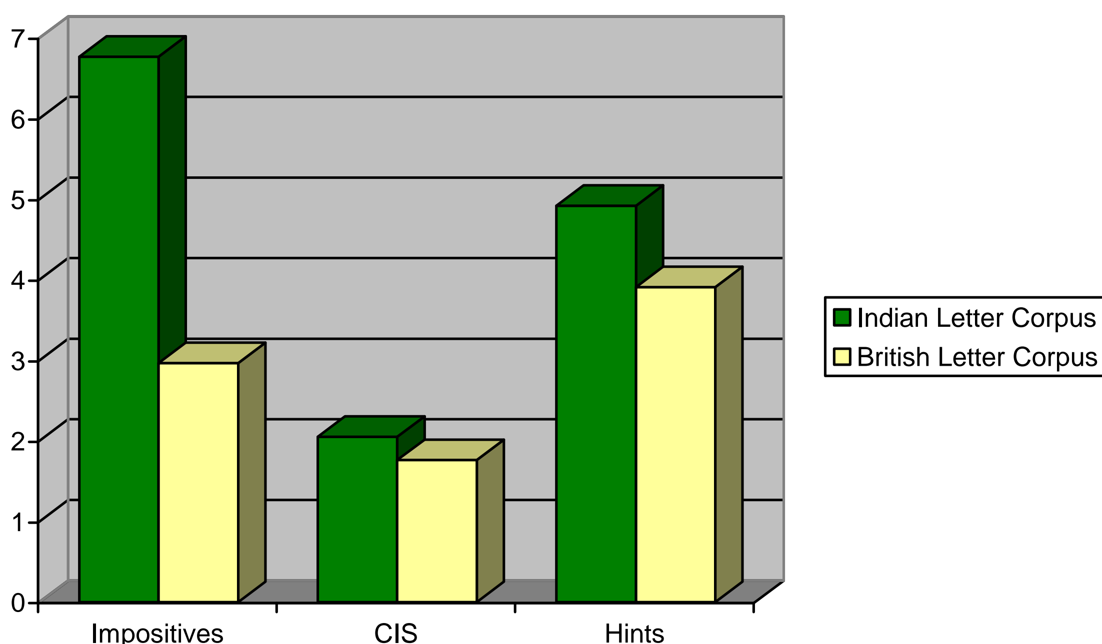

Figure 8: REQUEST Strategies in the Letter Corpora (ptw)

Within the Impositives group, the REQUEST strategies Mood Derivables, Performatives, Obligation Statements and Want Statements were investigated. Of these, Obligation Statements clearly constitute the preferred REQUEST act strategy in both Letter Corpora. However, as figure 9 illustrates, the relative

frequency in the distribution of Obligation Statements differed between Indian and British English in that the former tended to use Obligation Statements two to three times more often than the latter.
For the category Mood, the picture seems to be similar, though on a lower level of frequency. In the use of Performatives, only little divergence could be observed in the material. Similarly, the analysis of Want Statements revealed only insignificant differences in frequency of use.

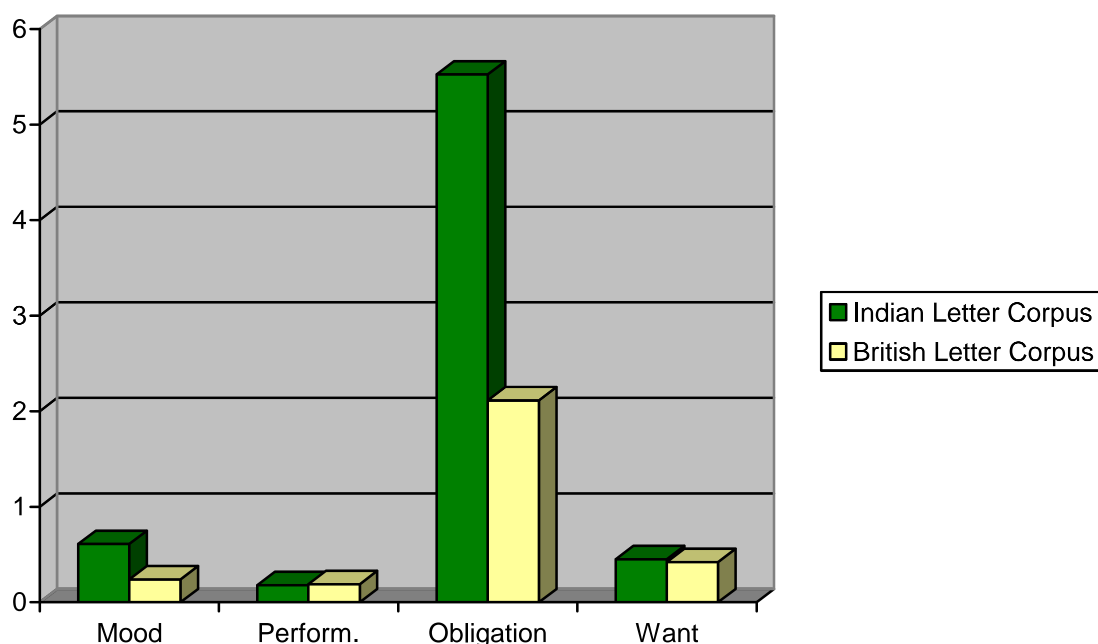

Figure 9: Impositives in the Letter Corpora (ptw)

Conventionally Indirect Strategy types, which were previously observed as being the dominant REQUEST strategy type in spoken interaction of native speakers of English (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 125), did not prove to be comparably relevant in the present text type. Indeed, on the contrary, both more direct and more indirect strategies were preferred in favour of CIS by Indian and British letter writers alike. A closer look at the distribution of Suggestory Formulae and Necessity Statements demonstrates that British letter writers tended to choose Suggestory Formulae more often than their Indian counterparts. If we remember that forms representing the Suggestory category typically implied the speaker/writer as a potential agent of the future action this

means that, conversely, that Indian letter writers appear less often in the role of a participating agent of the desired action (cf. figure 10).

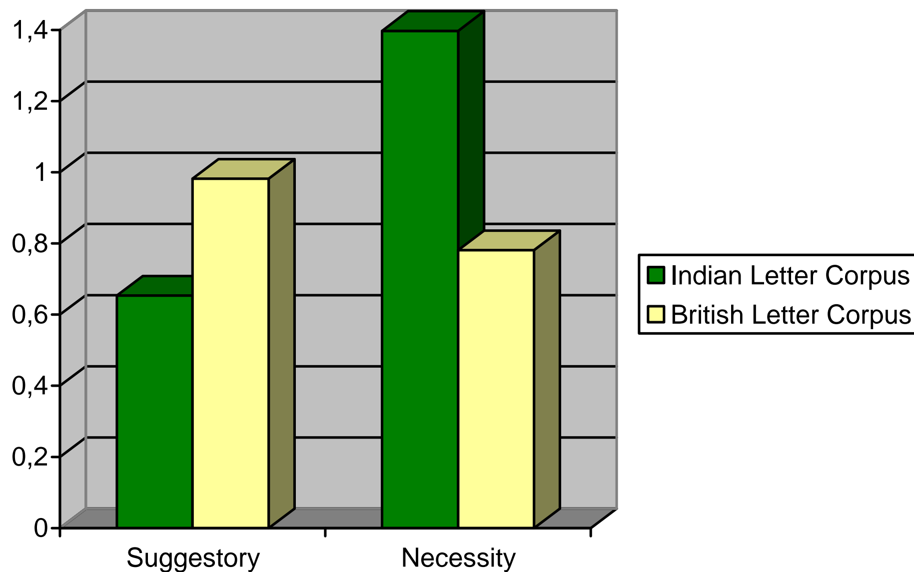

Figure 10: Conventionally Indirect Strategies in the Letter Corpora (ptw)

Apart from Impositives, Hints constituted an important source for REQUEST act realizations. In the British Letter Corpus, strategies of the Hints group were selected even more often than strategies of the Impositives group. Within the Hints strategy type, especially Predictive Statements in particular proved to be a cross-culturally relevant REQUEST strategy. In both Indian and British letters, strategies of the Impositives group tended to co-occur with strategies of the Hints group. This, according to my point of view, can be attributed to the relatively high impact of 'face-threatening' force implied in Impositives, which in turn could be mitigated by the additional use of Hints. Paradoxically, the necessity of the demanded action is at the same time underlined by the use of these Hints. Hence, the function of Hints can be perceived as twofold: as mitigators of Impositives on the one hand, and as reinforcing devices on the other.

10 REQUEST Strategies in Distinct Cultural Settings

10.0 Interpreting Variation: Possible Models of Explanation

To explain cross-culturally distinct preferences for realizations of REQUEST acts denies an easy solution. In the following, five possible explanatory models are discussed in an attempt to establish a starting point for further discussion. The first and the second possible interpretations will focus on the entity of the text type, whereas the third suggestion considers grammatical change as the motivating force for cross-cultural differences in REQUEST act realization strategies. An acquisitional perspective is provided in the subsequent interpretation and, finally, a variationist approach acknowledging indigenization will be suggested for consideration.

10.1 Indian and British Letters to the Editor Revised: Same or Different?

One possible explanation for quantitative and qualitative differences in the distribution of linguistic forms instantiating a REQUEST act within the Letter Corpora concentrates on the entity 'text type'. The present study had assumed that texts from both countries do belong to a common text type, letters to the editor, which does not show much variation across cultures. To see if this hypothesis is valid for the case of India and England, criteria for text type classification have to be re-considered. Afterwards, I will attempt to prove *ex negativo* that letters to the editor in both countries have to be counted as members of one common text type category.

Definitions of text types, or genres[72], often focus on factors such as the structure of texts, style, topics, the context (e.g. participants, setting, circumstances of text production and text reception processes), and/or the dominant communicative function or purpose of texts.

Of these, especially the notion of the 'communicative purpose' has received considerable attention (e.g. Werlich 1976; Brinker 2001; Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993; Conrad/Biber 2001).

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[72] The term 'genre' seems to be preferred in the British tradition of Genre Analysis, Register Studies and Applied Linguistics (e.g. Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993), whereas on the continent the term 'text type' is used more frequently. Although distinctions between these terms have been attempted (e.g. Biber 1988), both terms are used synonymously here.

Swales (1990) offers the following definition for a (linguistic) genre:

> A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constraints choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, examples of genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community.
> (Swales 1990: 58)

For the present text type under consideration, letters to the editor, the "set of communicative purposes" for German, French and Russian texts were identified as EVALUATIONs on the one hand, and REQUESTs on the other hand (Wetzel 1998). A glance at the Letter Corpora from India and Britain reveals a similar picture, as the following two examples illustrate:

Sample text from India:

Sir, The frequent reports of chain snatching causes dismay at the inadvertent display of gold ornaments by our women. Women who are alone or on deserted roads are targeted usually in the early mornings or late at night. Ideally, women should refrain from wearing any jewellery and if compelled to wear it because of special occasions like weddings or social functions should do so with their husbands and relatives at hand. Women should change over to imitation jewellery that has the same glitter minus the value. Over time, criminals would be dissuaded from chain-snatching.

H N Ramakrishna, Bangalore
<DECCA:04-11-04-5>

In this Indian letter, both EVALUATION and REQUEST acts can be identified. Within the overall structure of the text, it becomes obvious that the writer begins with a cross-reference to an established topic (chain-snatching), continues with his perspective on the occurrence of this problem (at night or in the early morning; women without company are affected), provides his suggestion for women and their families how to deal with the problem (women wearing jewellery should be accompanied by relatives), and ends with a prediction on

how the problem will diminish (thieves will be discouraged from chain-snatching if women wear imitation jewellery) according to his evaluation of the situation.
REQUEST and EVALUATION acts can also be detected in the following letter from the British Letter Corpus.

Sample text from Britain:

Sir: President Bush will continue his simplistic military approach of trying to solve the deep problems of the Middle East by killing innocent civilians in Iraq, Iran and Syria, but doing nothing to encourage a fair settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. He will block international treaties, ignore environmental commitments, and bribe countries to accept his world view. But the European Union with its 350 million people can project a united view indicating that his approach is unacceptable, and will have economic consequences. We don't have to stand by and see the gains of the past 50 years squandered. We should be firm but honest to our US ally, and say things must change in the second term.

Janet Salmon, Richmond, Surrey
<INDEP:05-11-04-5>

In this text from Britain, the writer reveals a reverse order of REQUEST and EVALUATION acts in that first a comment on the US-American foreign policy promoted by President Bush is given (Bush cannot solve the problems in the Middle East, Bush's policy hinders international cooperation), before demands for future action (European people should stand against Bush's current policy and support US Americans who strive for changes) appear in the final section of the letter.
What becomes evident from these and other examples is that REQUEST and EVALUATION acts in fact do constitute communicative acts typically performed in letters to the editor[73] – irrespective of which of the two cultures under consideration writers belong to.

Comparing the structure of letters to the editors in the two corpora also exhibits more similarities than differences: Both letter groups reveal the typical three-fold structure (i) form of address, (ii) body and (iii) information on the identity of the text composer. However, the assumption that part (i) appears to

[73] This refers to Indian letters to the editor composed in English; assumptions about this text type in Indian languages can not be made here.

be on the verge of becoming an optional component of letters to editor can be perceived especially in online editions of letter columns, where a form of address is often omitted. Such a development is not surprising in that the typical form of address chosen, *Dear Sir,* has nowadays become an empty formula. In contrast to the letter writing traditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where indeed it might have been the editor of a paper to whom a letter was primarily addressed, now a shift in the primary addressee can be assumed to have taken place. Reinforced by ongoing processes of technological innovation, newspapers have increasingly enlarged their online editions. A focus on interactivity as a modern component of online publications has also found its way into the opinion column, where some papers even offer an on-the-spot reply button linked to published letters. According to my observations, however, these slight differences from the traditional three-fold letter structure are in fact due to changes of the medium (from print to online editions) than to any cultural difference.

In language style, Indian and British letters again show certain similarities: both letters groups make use of typical formulas of address and farewell, though reductions seem to have become more and more popular. Usually, letters to the editor reflect the perspective of a text producer in the first person singular, although a small number of examples –from both Letter Corpora- use the first person plural perspective instead. Letters to the editor may also imply temporal reference to the past as well as to the future, depending on the prevailing communicative act performed in the respective text or text section. Whereas text sections performing EVALUATION acts typically refer back to the past, REQUEST acts regularly refer to the future, and thus employ higher frequencies of present and future tense constructions than EVALUATIONs. Another typical feature of the language in letters to the editor is intertextuality, i.e. a text’s connection to other texts. These other texts are usually established as topics of public interest beforehand, and have appeared in the same or another newspaper. Giving a cross-reference to an already established topic at the beginning of a letter has become a common component in letters to the editor. The degree and relevance of intertextuality, however, seems to be open to variation. Drewnowska-Vargáré (2001), for instance, has demonstrated that

intertextuality in Polish and in Hungarian letters is less frequently found than in German counterparts. Comparing the Indian and the British letter corpora reveals a similar tendency. Here, the Indian letter writers use intertextual references less frequently than British letter writers. As a consequence, Indian letters are more open to new topics, even for those which still have to prove if they are worthy of public debate.

The criterion of a shared topic as one distinguishing feature for text type classification can not easily be applied to letters to the editor. As actually any topic of potential interest for the public can be handed in for publication, the range of potential topics is infinite. During November 2004, for instance, British letters dealt with a range of international and national topics from the Gaza conflict, al-Qaida or the US-American election to the bill on gambling, housing conditions, or fathers' access rights. Indian papers differed slightly in that the frequency of letters dealing with international topics was far below the frequency to be found in British letters. To illustrate this point, six daily editions of the Indian and the British newspapers each were analysed with respect to topics.
In the Indian material, 85.4% of all letters dealt with topics of interior politics (in the widest sense). In contrast to this, international politics constituted the main topic in only 2.7% of the Indian letters while social issues comprised 7.9% and cultural issues occurred with the relative frequency of 3.3%. Environmental issues appeared only in the periphery (0.7%) whereas scientific topics did not appear during this time span.
British letters to the editor, on the other hand, revealed a more balanced picture in the distribution of topics: international politics appeared in 33.3% of all British letters, followed by cultural issues (20%), politics of the interior (17.8%) and social issues (17.3%). As with the Indian letters, topics linked to environmental (5.8%) and scientific issues (5.8%) were only marginally important.
Although such a categorization should not be overemphasized (due to the limited time span of the analysis on the one hand, and a remaining element of subjectivity within the categorization process on the other hand) tendencies in topic selection do emerge. Thus, Indian letters reveal an enormous frequency of topics on political issues within the country. In contrast, political topics located outside India were of minor interest during the same time span. The picture

from the British Letter Corpus is more balanced; here, political topics linked to the US-American election campaign, al-Qaida, and military operations in the Middle East had a greater relevance than in India. Despite these tendencies in topic distribution observed for the respective period, the criterion of 'topics' seems to be of restricted use for the present text type.

Contextual factors involved in the production and reception processes of letters to the editor can be assumed to be of a similar character: writers compose letters for publication, which in turn have to 'pass' the editorial staff's approval before being selected for the opinion column. What strikes the reader's eye when comparing Indian and English letters is that a small number of Indian writers consider the editor to be the primary addressee of the text. Though this phenomenon occurred rather infrequently in the Indian Letter Corpus, it appeared in the British letters *only once*[74].

From what has been observed in the analysis of Indian and British letters, the following conclusions arise:

(1) Contextual features of Indian and British letters do show slight differences with respect to the primary addressee(s): whereas Indian letters occasionally include the editor as a participant in the communication, British letter writers usually treat the editorial staff as mediators of their texts, but not as active participants. To gain more insights into this phenomenon, however, would require further investigation of editorial practice.

(2) Topics do not constitute a promising criterion for text type distinctions in the present case as actually nearly any topic may become an issue of public interest. The only observation which could be made via a content analysis of a sample was that Indian letters seem to concentrate more on Indian than on international topics. A similar impression arises when one reads news sections in Indian papers, which often do not provide more than two pages on international issues.

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[74] In this case, the writer wanted to emphasize his left-wing affiliation with the editor by using the address formula *Dear Comrade Editor*.

(3) Stylistic devices applied in Indian and British letters indicate more similarities than differences. Nonetheless, variation in the realization of REQUEST acts can clearly be detected.
(4) Structurally, Indian and British letters resemble each other to a high degree. A move away from the empty address formula at the beginning of the letters seems to be promoted by medial changes in both countries.
(5) Common to the Letter Corpora in both countries is the phenomenon of REQUEST acts, though linguistic instantiations of these acts tend to reflect cross-cultural differences when it comes to preferred strategies.

In the light of so many similarities between letters in India and letters in England, the only conclusion is that both text groups have to be counted as members of the same text type. Apart from EVALUATION acts, REQUEST acts constitute typical elements in Indian and British letters to the editor, and justify a classification under one category.

10.2 Dynamics of the Text Type or Cultural Encodings in Language?

Apart from the question of whether or not Indian and British letters to the editor could be attributed to distinct linguistic text types, which admittedly would be an odd interpretation, developments in communicative styles and social values attached to text types demand further discussion. Whereas the former implies changes within the text type as well as presumably changing conventions for written English(es) around the world, the latter concentrates on possible changes in social factors as possible motivations for distinct frequency patterns in both Indian and in British REQUESTs.
As the previous re-examination on the text type question has demonstrated, letters to the editor in India and in England do belong to the 'same' text type. Nevertheless, a closer look at the British letters reveals that these texts also exhibit relatively numerous examples which do not match the classical modes of composition where an individual text producer expresses his/her opinion on current topics and demands future action. On the contrary, British letter writers often present themselves not as individuals, but as members or representatives of a group, organization or institution. Such a role of the letter writer, however, is

more typically attributed to public relations texts than to letter communication. The following two examples from the British Letter Corpus are to illustrate this point:

Example 1

Reform of libel law
Two other anomalies in the present law can have especially disastrous effects on small organisations. One is that not only the author, editor or publisher of an allegedly offending item can be sued, but also bookshops or libraries with the item on their shelves. And even if a defendant wins the case in terms of damages, they still be bankrupted by the legal fees.
An example of this is the way that one of London's last independent radical bookshops, Housmans, still has a five-figure debt to clear - following a notorious case when it was sued by someone criticised in an anti-fascist magazine it stocked - because the impecunious litigant who brought the case hasn't the resources to comply with the court order to pay the shop's costs.

Albert Beale
Housmans Bookshop
<GUARD:02-11-04-7>

In this text, the letter writer not only criticizes the current laws within the field of publishing and book selling (even book sellers may be sued and made bankrupt), but he also presents a self-image of his business (London’s last independent radical bookshops), which would be rather expected in either texts with an predominantly informative character (if composed from an ‘objective’ perspective other than Mr Beale) or advertisements (presenting a ‘subjective’ point of view). To come across such an example in an argumentative text group seems to be a rather unusual occurrence.

Example 2

Free vote on smacking
We are extremely concerned that, in the children bill currently before the Commons (Report, October 28), Labour MPs may not be allowed to vote freely according to their conscience on whether children should have the same protection as adults under the law on assault. Giving children such equal protection is a fundamental human rights principle - there is no excuse for the smallest and most fragile of people having less protection. We should not be put in the intolerable position of choosing between political principle and party loyalty.
There are many precedents for allowing a free vote on important matters of principle and conscience, including the votes that abolished corporal punishment in schools.

All professional associations working with children and families agree that giving children equal protection is workable and would provide necessary clarity in the law. They also agree that anything less than equal protection would create legal ambiguity, parental confusion and professional uncertainty.
In this context, the government's offer of a free vote on clause 56 of the children bill is an insult. This flawed proposal, which would continue to give children less protection, is both unprincipled and, in the view of child protection agencies, unworkable.
We have been allowed to vote according to our conscience on protecting foxes. Protecting children properly is at least as worthy of a free vote.
The fair and traditional way forward is a free conscience vote on giving children equal protection from assault.

David Hinchliffe MP
Hilton Dawson MP
Julie Morgan MP
Win Griffiths MP
and 20 others
<GUARD:29-10-04-8>

The second example differs in so far from the previous text to a certain extent in that here there no obvious advertising character present. Nevertheless, a certain (positive) self-image of these specific Members of Parliament (we do care for the protection of children) can be detected; in particular, the contrast established between demanded “party loyalty” and the MPs’ “conscience” is employed to highlight the strength of character of these persons as responsible politicians. That this presentation of the politicians in the long run should contribute to the popularity of the MPs, however, cannot be denied.

As these two examples have demonstrated, letter writers may appear in the role of a representative or member of a group, organization or institution. The British Letter Corpus provides numerous examples of not only political groups and organizations (e.g. Peace Now UK), but also companies (e.g. British American Tobacco), scientific institutions (e.g. Wallasey Heart Centre) and social organizations (e.g. British Red Cross) appearing as ‘agents’ in the letters column. It is therefore unsurprising that relating the number of letters with authors in the role of a representative to the overall number of letters in the British Letter Corpus this results in a quota of 16.6%. The Indian Letter Corpus, in contrast, exhibits only one example of an author acting as a representative, which accounts for merely 0.2% of all letters in the Indian Corpus.

Apart from the role of a representative of a group/organization/institution, the British Letter Corpus also exhibits a second interesting role of the letter writer when he/she acts as an individual, but also emphasizes his/her authority as an expert by attributing a scientific, religious or aristocratic title to his/her first and last name. Of 859 letters, 79 letter writers provided an additional title to accompany their writers' personal details, which constitutes 9.2% of the total British Letter Corpus.

In the Indian Corpus, on the other hand, only 1.1% of all letter writers used additional titles. Furthermore, the range of possible titles attached to the writer's name was more limited in that exclusively military titles were used.

The purpose of providing additional titles can be regarded in relation to authority and expertise which the writer attempts to convey via this naming procedure. Moreover, British letter writers may consider their chances of being selected for publication higher if their status as experts is displayed.

The picture which emerges from these observations in the British Letter Corpus is that letters to the editor seem to be overlapping with or even move towards the structure of promotional text types. Such a view departs from concepts of 'text type' or 'genre' in traditional text linguistics in that a dynamic element is introduced. Bhatia emphasizes this aspect when she states that

> although genres are often identified on the basis of their integrity, which is a reflection of their conventionalized characteristics, they are far from static. Most of them are dynamic, in the sense that they can be exploited to respond to novel rhetorical contexts, and thus have the propensity for innovation and further development.
> (Bhatia 2004: 25)

In addition, Bhatia's idea of 'genre colonies' as "groupings of closely related genres serving broadly similar communicative purposes, but not necessarily all the communicative purposes in cases where they serve more than one" (2004: 59) is pertinent for the present case of 'merging' letters to the editor in Britain. Adopting the concept of the 'genre colony' therefore allows us to classify British letters to the editor into two genre colonies: first, into the colony of argumentative genres, where letters to the editor could count as a 'core member', and, second, into the colony of promotional genres, where British letters would appear as a 'peripheral member'. In the long run, such a

development is likely to imply a shift in the possible functions of letters to the editor. Whereas until the recent past EVALUATION and REQUEST acts have been identified as prototypical speech acts performed in this text type, other acts such as SELF-PRESENTATION have only recently been observed.
Debates on the potential relationship between the linguistic and the extralinguistic world have been ongoing since discussions on the so-called Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis[75] started in the 1950s. A recent account of this issue appears in Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw (2003), where the authors discuss reflections of cultural norms and beliefs in grammar. In their study on verb complementation patterns in standard Indian English, Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw (2003) have detected peculiarities in Indian English complementation patterns for verbs denoting the action of giving somebody something; according to their findings, Indian texts preferred argument structures which emphasize the thing provided rather than the person for whom it is provided, whereas British texts were observed to focus either on the person or the goal of the action (Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw 2003: 158). One of the explanations offered is of interest here, as it takes a cultural dimension into account. Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw comment as follows:

> A speculative explanation which accepts that the formal difference [in verb complementation patterns] reflects a functional or semantic one would have to argue that this has to do with different ways of perceiving the world. Northern European cultures could have been more influenced by subjectivism, and see the individual as being at the center of the world, while South Asian cultures might tend to view the individual as part or a small object in a larger whole. (Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw 2003: 159)

[75] The Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis in essence claims that the structure of one's language affects cognitive processes of perceiving reality and that therefore thought is relative to the language in which it is conducted. This Hypothesis exists in a 'weak' and in a 'strong' version, of which the 'weak version' has survived until today. The most often quoted passage with respect to the Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis is taken from Whorf (1956 [1940]: 213): "We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, because we are parties to an agreement to organize it that way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language."

For the present case, similar observations could be made: whereas Western examples of letters to the editor emphasizing the act of SELF-PRESENTATION are centred on the speaker/writer who wishes to appear in a positive light, Indian letters only rarely focus on the text producer himself/herself, but rather on a subject matter. Hence, Indian letters appear to be typically topic-oriented, while British letters oscillate between being topic-oriented and text producer-oriented.

From what has been said, these differences within the text type can be attributed to two distinct interpretations: first, one could assume that the text type letters to the editor in Britain has been developing into the direction of public relations texts, a direction which cannot be observed in Indian texts at present; second, one could assume that there is indeed a cultural dimension encoded in linguistic structure – although such an interpretation, as Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw (2003) themselves admit, remains highly speculative.

Another possible interpretation for these cross-cultural differences between Indian and British letters might be linked, quite paradoxically, to the previous suggestion, i.e. a convergent development of the varieties of English. Usually referred to as *colloquialization* or *Americanization*, some scholars have assumed that varieties of English world-wide would gradually become more similar in written language (e.g. Crystal 2003; McArthur 2004; Gupta 2006). According to this prediction, speech would continue to exist in local variants or even become more dissimilar from one region to another, whereas written communication would merge into one more or less global written variety of English. According to this line of argumentation, the US-American variety of English would become the new reference model for all other varieties of English due to its economic and political dominance. Taking current developments in the modal system (cf. 10.3) of contemporary varieties of English into account would lead to the conclusion that Indian English 'lags behind' both American English and British English.

10.3 Modality on the Move: Developments in Current British English

A third interpretation of the findings assumes that modality, which has been used as one primary indicator of REQUEST realizations in the present investigation, would be the key for cross-cultural variation in REQUEST acts.

What has been observed since the 1980s is a reorganization of the modal system in native varieties of contemporary English (Mair 2006: 100, 2007). According to Leech's corpus analysis (2003: 223) on the frequency and use of modal auxiliaries from the 1960s to the 1990s, English modals in both British English and American English have declined significantly in their frequency of use. In British English, overall frequencies of modals reflect a reduction from occurrences of 14.6 ptw in the 1960s to 13.3 ptw in the 1990s; in American English, a similar decline could be observed from 13.2 ptw in the 1960s to 11.9 ptw in the 1990s (Leech 2003: 226). Confirming previous assumptions about the role and relationship of British English and American English with respect to language change and development, Leech (2003: 227) concludes that "this finding is consistent with the generalization […] that many changes in recent English have been led by American English, with British English following on in its wake, rather than vice versa […]".

Which of the modals have suffered most from this decline in frequency? Based on a contrastive analysis of the Brown and the LOB corpora on the one hand, and the Frown and FLOB corpora on the other hand, Leech offers an overview of major changes in the frequency of individual modals:

Modal auxiliaries	British English	American English
would	-11.0%	-6.1%
will	-2.7%	-11.1%
can	+2.2%	-1.5%
could	+2.4%	-6.8%
may	-17.4%	-32.4%
should	-11.8%	-13.5%
must	-29.0%	-34.4%
might	-15.1%	-4.5%
shall	-43.7%	-43.8%
ought (to)	-44.2%	-30.0%
need (n't)[76]	-40.2%	-12.5%
total	-9.5%	-12.2%

Table 26: Changes in Modal Usage in British and American English (1960s to 1990s) (Leech 2003: 228), modified)

[76] The table follows Leech, who included *need (n't)* here as *need (not)* + bare infinitive. This does not give any information on the distribution of the semi-modal *need to*, which has increased dramatically in the past few decades.

Exemplified by this data, it seems that, particularly for British English, the modals *shall* and *must* as well as the semi-modal *ought (to)* have been declining. Developments in American English reveal a similar trend, though the distribution of individual modals exhibits divergences, such as the development of *need* + bare infinitive, the decrease of which seems to be taking place on a much more reduced level in comparison to trends in British English.
Concerning use and meaning of the modal auxiliaries, Leech had identified four potential senses for *should*, i.e. (a) weak inference (epistemic), (b) weak obligation (deontic), and (c) putative/quasi-subjunctive, and (d) *should* co-occurring with a first-person subject, hence being used in the sense of *would* + first-person subject. The distribution of these meanings as observed through a comparative analysis of the LOB corpus (1960s) and the FLOB corpus (1990s) led to the following picture:

Should	LOB	FLOB
weak inference	11% (147)	9% (106)
weak obligation	50% (653)	65% (749)
putative	20% (263)	12% (136)
should= would	7% (96)	11% (122)
unclear	11 % (147)	11% (122)

Table 27: Meanings of *should* in the LOB and in the FLOB Corpus
(Leech 2003: 233, modified)

What becomes clear here is what Leech has termed a "trend towards monosemy" (2003: 234) for the modal *should* in that uses of the deontic meaning ('weak obligation') have been increasing, especially for the benefit of putative senses of *should*. For the modal *must*, both uses of the epistemic and of the deontic meaning have been recorded as declining (Leech 2003: 233). One point which is still hotly debated is the relation between the decline of the central modals on the one hand, and the rise of the semi-modals on the other hand (e.g. Collins 1991; Kennedy 2002; Leech 2003; Smith 2003). Despite increased uses of some of the semi-modals (e.g. *have to*), especially in spoken language, however, the rise of the semi-modals cannot compensate numerically for the decrease of the core modals (Mair 2006: 103).

But why has the modal system been subject to such changes? This is a question that is difficult to answer and, up to now, searches for explanations have remained tentative. Mair (2006: 110) posits two possible causes: (1) changes in stylistic norms, referring to what is defined as *colloquialization* of language, and (2) 'true' grammatical changes, though he does not make any further attempts to specify the origin or cause of this process.

With respect to absolute numbers, it can be summarized that in British English modals do tend to occur in higher frequencies than in American English, whereas relative numbers within the developments in the use of modal auxiliaries reveal that more dramatic changes have taken place in American English than in British English during the second half of the twentieth century.

If the assumption concerning the leading role of American English for "current English" (whatever that is) holds true as Leech (2003) and others (e.g. Krug 2000; Mair 2006) have suggested, one can assume that present-day modals in British English would find themselves either at the beginning of, or even already within, such a process of change, too.

Based on this idea of distributional changes in contemporary British English, one could assume that Indian English might occupy an even more distant point on the periphery in relation to the 'core' of change, as Quirk might put it.

10.4 REQUEST Strategies in Indian English as Interlanguage Phenomena

Another possible interpretation for cross-cultural differences in the realization of REQUEST acts can be attributed to divergent language acquisition processes (of English) both in Indian and in Britain. In a non-native context such as India, English is typically learnt as a second or even third language at school. That pedagogical goals and approaches to language learning, however, differ in Indian education policy in comparison to the British or the US-American system has been demonstrated by Chelliah (2001).

In her content analysis of English language instruction guidebooks[77] composed by Indian authors dating from the years 1998 to 2000, Chelliah reached rather depressing conclusions with respect to the quality of Indian language teaching materials. According to Chelliah's observations (2001: 161), especially the use

[77] Known as 'Common Errors in English' (CEIE) guidebooks (Chelliah 2001: 161).

of outdated methods of language teaching (which emphasize memorization in favour of a more interaction-based approach), and an examination-centred evaluation of the learners' progress have to be regarded as negative influences on language learning. Based on a prescriptive approach, these Indian guidebooks in essence provide large lists of sentences in a right/wrong format, which are often separated from grammatical rules (Chelliah 2001: 162ff.). The sources for these sentence lists usually remain obscure and exhibit, according to Chelliah (2001: 165), errors which do not even appear to be typical learner errors. What makes Indian language guidebooks even more problematic is the perceived divergence between a norm which is clearly oriented towards British English, and the poor performance of the authors of these guidebooks, which is summarized as follows:

> There is little present in these books to aid in the actual acquisition of English. The lack of genuine learner errors and contrasts of English with regional Indian languages subtracts from the usefulness of these books as self-help guides or as teachers' aids. The lack of fluency exhibited by the authors in both an Indian English variety and/or some foreign English variety makes the book highly unpredictable, thus hindering students' efforts at inductive rule formation. Overt rule presentation is patchy and poorly illustrated by the right/wrong sentence lists.
> (Chelliah 2001: 172)

One conclusion from Chelliah's study is that language teaching in India seems to make effective language learning a difficult task. One might assume that, as a result of these 'obstacles' within the language acquisition process of English in the Indian context, a fairly great number of English learners in India would not complete the acquisition process, but stop at an earlier point within language learning.

This view of an 'incomplete' language acquisition process has also been in the focus of many interlanguage studies. The term *interlanguage* (IL) goes back to the 1970s when it was introduced by Selinker, though considerations of learners' errors in the second-language (L2) acquisition process have been in the centre of contrastive linguistics and error analysis since the 1950s (Tarone 1998: 390). According to Selinker (quoted in Tarone 1998: 391), interlanguage can be defined as a separate linguistic system which can be observed when

adult L2-learners attempt to express meanings in the respective language which they are in the process of learning. The IL system incorporates not only the traditional linguistic dimensions (i.e. phonology, morphology and syntax) but also includes lexical, pragmatic and discourse aspects. In contrast to first-language (L1)-acquisition processes operating during childhood, interlanguage usually only affects the L2-acquisition of adult learners[78]. Central to the notion of IL is the concept of *fossilization*, which refers to phenomena resulting from the prematurely ended language acquisition process of the learner. Though fossilization has been considered a central characteristic of IL, there is no consensus about the inevitability of fossilization as the last step for the adult L2-learner in approaching the target language (Tarone 1998: 394). Similarly, disagreement on the reasons for fossilization prevails, ranging from neurological to sociolinguistic explanations.

The question now is if these observed differences in Indian English REQUEST strategies in letters to the editor can be accounted for from an acquisitional perspective. In this connection, it is worth commenting on two aspects of the IL hypothesis for the Indian context.

First, what does not correspond to common understandings of individual IL development is that in India English is usually not acquired during adulthood, but earlier. Even if degrees of proficiencies in English seem to be linked to social factors such as education, social status, etc. and exhibit an enormous degree of variation in the country, the acquisition process at latest begins with class five in higher primary education (K. Sridhar 1989: 23). Assuming that the majority of Indians do take part in the education system[79], one can conclude that at least a basic language competence in English should have been acquired by the age of fifteen. A lack of exposure to English as one possible cause for an IL development in children seems to be very unlikely for the Indian situation, where English, apart from Hindi, serves as a national lingua franca and is widely used in the public domain, such as the media, business and trade,

[78] In the 1990s, this claim of IL scholars was slightly modified due to findings which gave evidence of IL phenomena in children's L2-acquisition; IL phenomena had been found when the children produced only a limited amount of L2-output with native TL speakers (Tarone 1998: 393).

[79] According to the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education and Literacy (Indian Government 2005), literacy rates are highest for the southern state Kerala (c. 90%), and lowest for regions in the north-east, such as Bihar (c. 47%).

politics or administration. For young Indians, at least in urban areas, the use of English even seems to enter the private sphere. Taking these aspects into consideration, I cannot but assume that the development of an IL system in young Indians would constitute a rather untypical case in the L2-acquisition process.

Hypothesizing that the whole variety of Indian English would have become fossilized due to an increasing lack of exposure to contemporary British English would constitute an alternative point of view. Such a claim would imply that British English still functions as the target language variety, whereas Indian English operates as the IL variety. However, such a classification would reaffirm old prejudices of Indian English as a 'deficient' variety of English. In addition, the notion of homogeneous varieties of both Indian English and of British English proves problematic. If British English was established as the target language, and Indian English made up the IL variety, which of India's twenty-two scheduled languages[80] would then serve as the native language?

The following figure illustrates the complex linguistic situation in the country (only major languages are listed).

Figure 11: Major Languages of India (Hickey 2004: 640)

[80] The number of scheduled languages only reflects governmental acknowledgements of a number of languages, and does not provide an authentic picture of the overall language situation. Depending on the sources, between 100 and 200 local languages are assumed to be found in India.

According to the 2001 Census of India, twenty-two languages were registered as scheduled languages across the country. Of these, the languages with the highest numbers of speaker were Hindi (c. 422,000,000), Bengali (c. 83,400,000), Tamil (c. 74,000,000), Marathi (c. 71,900,000), Urdu (c. 51,600,000) and Gujarati (c. 46,000,000). In India, Hindi and English serve as official languages, though they may fulfil distinct functions with respect to the user (e.g. according to his/her regional background) or use (e.g. according to occupational registers). For several of the Northern states of India[81], Hindi is both a mother tongue and a lingua franca. Within the area of Dravidian languages families in the South, the status of Hindi is so low that it is English rather than Hindi which tends to be used as a lingua franca.

Due to this complexity of the language situation in India, I do not consider the idea of Indian English as an IL variety an adequate explanation. Despite the fact that 'conservative' features (in comparison to contemporary British English) within the New Englishes have been observed, this does not mean that the New Englishes have 'ended' in their development. Rather, I would consider it more likely that the New Englishes behave similarly as pidgin and creole languages which, after a phase of superficial stagnation afterwards gradually expand in complexity of structure. This leads me to the last explanation suggested for an interpretation of the letter data.

10.5 Nativization, Pragmatic Transfer and Cultural Difference

In contrast to the previous explanation focusing on cross-cultural divergences in language use from an acquisitional perspective, this explanation considers aspects of language contact essential for an interpretation.

The term *nativization* here is used synonymously with the term *indigenization* and follows Moag (1992: 235) in that it is understood as "a process of language change by which the new variety of English becomes distinct from the parent imported variety, and from other indigenized varieties elsewhere"[82]. Moreover, nativization is assumed to affect the structure of the respective variety, leading

[81] E.g. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar or Madhya Pradesh.

[82] The aspect of distinctiveness (or similarities) between indigenized varieties has been disputed, and is still open for controversy. Similar contextual and acquisitional conditions for the development of the new varieties have been stressed e.g. by Platt et al. (1984).

to “the emergence of locally distinctive linguistic forms and structures” (Schneider 2007: 71).

Typical features of structural nativization occur on the phonological, the lexical and the grammatical dimension of language:

Phonology

- a shortening of vowels (in many African Englishes)
- a lacking distinction in vowel length (especially in South-East Asian Englishes)
- the replacement of central vowels by front vowels or back vowels (e.g. in West African Pidgins)
- shortening or monophthongization of diphthongs (e.g. in South-East Asia, West Africa and the Caribbean)
- the replacement of [θ] and [ð] by dental or alveolar stops (e.g. in Indian English or Black South African English)
- a reduction of aspiration word-initially (e.g. in Indian English)
- a shift of stress in complex words
- substitution of syllable-timed rhythm for stress-timed rhythm (e.g. in Maori and Aboriginal Englishes, in most Asian and many African and Caribbean Englishes)

Lexis

- lexical expansion based on a small number of word-formation processes
- borrowings from indigenous languages, coinage, semantic changes

Grammar

- wide range of variability in many New Englishes
- some structures can be attributed to processes of language transfer
- many New Englishes show strategies of simplification
- linguistic variability correlates with a social and functional stratification of language (as in British English)
- innovations of New Englishes frequently occur at the interface between lexis and grammar

Table 28: Features of Structural Nativization
(Schneider 2007: 73-83)

What might be possible causes for such nativization processes?

In essence, Schneider (2007: 89ff.) offers the following three explanations:

(1) Due to close interrelations between language and culture one might claim that language is “a mirror of the culture which is expressed by it” (Schneider 2007: 88). This point of view draws back on considerations by Olavarría de Ersson/Shaw (2003) who observed contrasts between Northern European and Asian cultures, e.g. in the value attributed to the individual and to the whole as reflected in verb complementation patterns.

(2) A number of shared features in New Englishes can at least partly be explained by universal processes operating in L2-acquisition, such as processes of inflectional simplification or overgeneralization.
(3) Languages might follow a teleological development towards “a coherent language type” (Schneider 2007: 89). Even so, why this idea of a ‘drift’, which goes back to Sapir (1985 [1933]), should typically apply to the New Englishes, however, remains unclear in Schneider’s suggestions.

Apart from preliminary studies on structural nativization in the New Englishes, investigations of pragmatic forms of nativization are still lacking. Instead, pragmatic issues are dealt with from a perspective focusing on the transfer from one language (L1) to another (L2).

As cross-cultural studies on REQUEST acts in some of the New Englishes have shown, transfer phenomena and nativization processes typically occur in multilingual contact situations. In the following, two studies on modality and REQUEST acts in two varieties of the New Englishes in Africa will briefly be presented.

The first study was carried out by Nkemleke (2005), and investigates the use and distribution of the modals *must* and *should* in Cameroon English. Based on a contrastive corpus analysis of modal usage in a Cameroon corpus (i.e., the CCE) and a British corpus (LOB), Nkemleke finds that deontic or root meanings of *must* and *should* occur with much higher frequencies in Cameroon English than in British English (2005: 43). However, the uses of *must* and *should* in Cameroon English exhibit restrictions in syntactic environment and context of use. The distinction between formal and informal language and its effects on modal usage therefore seems to be rather blurred in CamE (Nkemleke 2005: 63).
What makes this investigation problematic from my point of view is the comparability of corpora chosen for analysis: whereas the Cameroon corpus was compiled during 1992 and 1994, the British corpus goes back to the 1960s. Admittedly, Nkemleke has tried to compensate for this lack in time by including Coates’s dissertation on the semantics of British modals (1983), although this

also draws on older sources. Any potential development of modality in either variety, it seems, was thus excluded from this investigation. At the same time, Nkemleke's findings on modal usage in contemporary Cameroon English should not be neglected, as they do reveal higher frequencies of deontic modals in this local variety of English – an aspect, which will be focused on in the next section.

In his investigation of REQUEST patterns in black South African English (BSAE), Kasanga (2006) has detected many similarities between BSAE and a local language, Sesotho sa Leboa (SeL), when it comes to strategy preferences for REQUEST acts. Based on Blum-Kulka et al.'s REQUEST act typology (1989), Kasanga identified a strong preference for the use of explicit Performatives both in BSAE and SeL, whereas British English would favour more indirect interrogative constructions (termed 'Query Preparatory' according to the CCSARP model) (2006: 70). The use of Suggestory Formulae as a REQUEST strategy located between direct and indirect measures does not occur in either BSAE nor in SeL, reflecting another cross-cultural difference in comparison to British English (Kasanga 2006: 71). Due to an observed mismatch between naturally-occurring REQUEST and DCT-elicited REQUESTs in BSAE, Kasanga comes to the conclusion that educated bilingual speakers of BSAE and SeL are aware of the cross-cultural differences in linguistic REQUEST behaviour, and even do *deliberately* accommodate their performance of this speech act to local norms (2006: 73). It therefore comes as no surprise that Kasanga (2006: 77) claims that "[…] speakers of BSAE appreciate the idea of 'owning' their own variety of English". Although this quotation clearly reflects Kasanga's attempt to promote an acceptance of BSAE as a 'full' variety of English, the following two aspects remain for discussion.
First, what becomes evident through Kasanga's study is that REQUEST acts in this local variety of South African English do exhibit enormous differences in comparison to British English. Furthermore, as a 'new' variety of English, BSAE prefers more direct REQUEST act strategies than the native variety, British English, and this might result in miscommunication when speakers of both varieties of English interact with each another.

Second, the source of these differences in pragmatic norms is identified as originating in language contact contexts, which enable transfer processes from (native) indigenous languages to the local variety of English to take place.
The extent to which these results of these two preliminary investigations on modality and REQUEST acts in new varieties of English can be generalised for other New Englishes still remains unclear. Nevertheless, the fact that indigenous languages and local forms of English do in fact influence and shape each other, however, cannot be ignored.

Another aspect linked to the question of nativization and the development of Indian English tackles the topic of iconicity. Iconicity, according to Haiman (2006: 457), is "the idea that a formal property in a sign corresponds through similarity to a property of its referent". In opposition to *iconic signs*[83] there are *symbolic signs*, which show an arbitrary relation between the (linguistic) form and the referent denoted by it. The third class of signs identified by semiotic theory (e.g. Peirce 1985) has been defined as *indexical signs*, and exhibits a limited degree of motivation between the form and its referent through relations of contiguity or causation.
Iconicity can be observed in distinct dimensions of linguistic description, such as phonology, morphology and syntax. In addition, recent research has also demonstrated that iconicity can even operate at the textual (e.g. Nänny/Fischer 2006) and the discourse-pragmatic (e.g. Bergien 2007) dimension of language.
The phenomenon of iconicity is in a complementary distribution with conventionalization, i.e. the iconic interpretation of linguistic forms is assumed to decrease and finally be lost when conventionalization processes become prominent. Nevertheless, iconicity constitutes a widespread phenomenon in language, which leads Haiman (2006: 458) to conclude that iconicity may be salient in "[…] signalling between speakers who share no common conventions […]". It is thus not surprising that iconicity has been attributed especially to Pidgin and Creole languages, which have emerged to fulfil basic communicative needs due to a lack in a shared lingua franca between communication partners.
Following these observations, one might ask oneself if the 'New Englishes' also exhibit a higher degree of iconicity than the 'old' varieties of English. On a

[83] The distinction has been developed for the classification of (linguistic) signs, although later on also larger units than signs were included.

morphological dimension, for instance, reduplication has been identified as an example of iconicity that serves to indicate the repetition of an action, a frequentative activity, plurality, intensity or continuity (Nänny/Fischer 2006: 467). In Indian English, reduplication can be quite frequently observed in spoken interactions; could this therefore support the hypothesis of Indian English being 'more iconic' than British English? Obviously, the issue is more complicated than this. For the Indian situation, interference phenomena also have to be taken into account. In Hindi, but also in other Indian languages, repetition, reduplication and paired words are commonly used forms to express emphasis, duration, intensity and other meanings (Gatzlaff-Hälsig 2003: 41f.). Hence, to identify the motivation for the frequent use of repetitive patterns in the morphology and syntax of Indian English would require further information on the structure and use of indigenous languages in India. To what extent Indian languages can be considered varieties which expose a higher degree in iconicity than, for instance, Western European languages constitutes an interesting question, which, unfortunately, cannot be resolved. The advantage which clearly emerges from questions like these is that notions such as 'fossilization' or 'lag', which always carry an implication of deficiency attributed to the non-native varieties of English, could be abolished in favour of the concept of iconicity.

11 Retrospect and Prospect

The present study has attempted to elaborate on linguistic REQUEST act realizations in the text type letters to the editors in two distinct cultural settings. From the analysis of REQUEST acts performed in the Indian and the British Letter Corpora and the inclusion of additional reference sources such as reference grammars, electronic corpora and empirical data, the following conclusions emerge for cross-cultural REQUEST act research in general, and the relationship between Indian English and British English in particular.

Indeed, the findings from the Letter Corpora support the hypothesis of varying preferences in both Indian and in British REQUEST act performance in English. Impositives as the most direct REQUEST strategy type were seen to be used more frequently by Indian letter writers, while Hints as the most indirect strategy type constituted the preferred source for REQUEST performance of British letter writers. Moreover, Hints displayed an interesting strategy type as they tended to co-occur with other REQUEST strategy types. Particularly in the Indian material, Hints co-occurred with Impositives, which supports the assumption that Hints function as mitigators or downtoners of the degree of imposition posed upon the addressee(s). At the same time, however, Hints may also be employed as enforcing devices, as semantically they usually emphasize the need for a certain action to be performed[84].

Common trends in both Corpora were (a) that letter writers from both cultures do not use Conventionally Indirect Strategies as a frequent resource for REQUEST act realizations, and (b) that within the Impositives strategy type Obligations Statements in particular proved to be the dominant individual REQUEST strategy.

Information on REQUEST act realizations gained from the reference sources partly confirmed the results drawn from the Letter Corpora: within the Impositives strategy type, especially Mood Derivables, i.e. imperative constructions, tended to occur more often in Indian English, both in the Letter Corpus and the reference sources such as the ICE-India, as well as in the empirical data. The distribution of Performatives revealed only few contrasts between the two Letter Corpora; moreover, intervariatal uses of Performatives

[84] On the contrary, Hints may also stress the need to refrain from a certain future action.

(Indian Letter Corpus vs. ICE-India) did not confirm significant differences. Obligation Statements dominated over all other REQUEST strategies and their outstanding frequency in the Indian Letter Corpus indicates that especially modal usage in Indian English diverges considerably from modal usage in current British English. Comparative tests on modal usage in the ICE reference corpora and content analyses of Indian teaching material confirm such an interpretation.

Apart from these findings which attempt to enrich the REQUEST research tradition in introducing a new focus on one of the ‘New Englishes’, namely Indian English, the present study has further raised a couple of questions which have only been covered superficially.

One field of study which is open for future research is genre analysis. In this area, not only the current status of letters to the editor as a text type (or genre) both in India and in Britain, but also current developments in this text type raise interesting questions. Indeed, one might ask from observations in the British material whether or not letters to the editor are on their way to merging with promotional text types and therefore can be considered an example of the increasingly noticed phenomenon of ‘genre mixing’ (Fairclough 2003; Bhatia 2004)? If this is the case, then it seems likely to assume that currently the role of the opinion column in newspapers is also undergoing essential changes. To what extent the relationship between text types of the dominant functions EVALUATION, INFORMATION, REQUEST and SELF-PRESENTATION or PROMOTION will develop poses an interesting topic for genre analysis.

Another question which has remained on the periphery of this study tackles future topics in variation studies. As this investigation has aimed to show, aspects of cross-cultural pragmatics constitute a rather unexplored, but potentially exiting area of study of the ‘New Englishes’. In my opinion, it is not only the analysis of individual phonological, morphological or grammatical features which contributes to our understanding of Indian English. Rather, the interrelation of linguistic form and extra-linguistic function shed light on how Indian English differs from its genetic ‘parent variety’, British English. The

reasons for these differences, not only in terms of lexico-grammar but also in the interrelation between lexico-grammar and pragmatics are complex and manifold. To describe and analyse them not only constitutes a task for sociolinguists and researchers in applied linguistics, but it could also serve as a valuable source for the branch of language teaching in the future.

Of course, the development of the Englishes, both in terms of native and non-native varieties that exist individually and/or in relation to each other, remains an issue of current debate (e.g. Gupta 2006; Schneider 2007; Mair 2007) and it is evident that questions regarding a common 'core' or 'world standard' of English in the twenty-first century will remain a topic of burning interest not only from a linguistic perspective but also beyond it.

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Appendices

Appendix I

A. Indian Letters to the Editor (selection[85])

B. British Letters to the Editor (selection)

Appendix II

A. Discourse Completion Test: the Indian Target Group

B. Discourse Completion Test: the British Target Group

Appendix III

Statistics on the Distribution of REQUEST Strategies in the Letter Corpora

[85] Due to the enormous size of the Letter Corpora, only a small selection of letters to the editor can be presented here. The selection was conducted on a judgement sample and represents examples comprising a range of diverse REQUEST strategies.

Appendix I

A. Indian Letters to the Editor (a selection)

Kashmir solution
Sir, The former Chief Minister of J&K, Farooq Abdullah, has stated that 'the Kashmiris should be allowed to decide their future. India, Pakistan and America cannot work out a solution and impose that on the people of Kashmir' (DH, Oct 11).
The Kashmir crisis cannot be solved without the participation of India and Pakistan. Both countries should come out with a concrete formula to restore the confidence of the people of Kashmir including the separatist groups in the valley. Greater autonomy and allowing the people to participate in the democratic process can lead to a feasible solution to the crisis.
THOMAS MULACKAL, Bangalore
<DECCA:29-10-04-2>

Kashmir issue
Sir, — Gen. Musharraf's proposal of identifying disputed regions, demilitarising them and changing their status should not be dismissed as baseless. India should react positively to the proposal. We should forget our bitter past. Rather than becoming emotional, we should view the issue practically.
Shadaan Alam, Aligarh, U.P.
<HIND:29-10-04-11>

Better Bangalore
Sir, The poor infrastructure in Bangalore has attracted the attention of everyone. Here are some suggestions to the BMP to make Bangalore more inhabitable, not only for old Bangaloreans, but for every one.
Make parking facilities compulsory for all commercial establishments of more than 500 square feet. Do not give licences to them if they cannot provide these facilities. Apartment complexes must be made to accommodate not only the vehicles of those who live there but also those who visit them. Solar heaters, rain water harvesting and water recycling should be made compulsory for all apartments. While giving licences for apartment complexes, the BMP should consider the following: Can the drainage system, water supply system, power lines and the roads take the additional load on them? If they cannot, the BMP must not give licences to such apartment complexes.
N V ASWATHANARAYANA, Bangalore
<DECCA:29-10-04-4>

A1 city
Sir, It is indeed great news that Bangalore has been declared as an A1 city. Kudos to Union Finance Minister P Chidambaram for taking such a good step. However, it is mentioned in the Deccan Herald that Bangalore has been delegated as an A1 city with respect to CCA only. It is well known that the monthly rents in Bangalore are exorbitant. Even for a small and decent one-bedroom house the minimum rent is around Rs 2000 and the advance is 20

times the monthly rent. Moreover, it is very well known that Bangalore is one of the fastest growing cities not only in India but in the whole world. Thus it is necessary that it should be declared as an A1 city in respect of HRA also.
S VYNATHEYA, Bangalore
<DECCA:01-11-04-2>

Traffic solution
Sir, Much has been said about the traffic problems and of the bad condition of roads in Bangalore city. Today if Bangalore faces traffic-related problems, it is due to the over-population of private vehicles and not because of narrow roads. People must be encouraged to travel using the mass transport system.
Due to the large number of IT companies and those of other industries situated in and around Bangalore, there are more job opportunities here as compared to other cities. Educated people, especially youths from different states, as soon as they complete their education, travel to Bangalore and stay in the city. This phenomenon not only adds to traffic problems but also increases the city's population. Private companies could try to re-locate to Mangalore, Mysore or even Hubli. This would not only ease Bangalore's problem, but would also lead to the development of these areas as well.
ASHWIN SHENOY N, Bantwal (DK)
<DECCA:20-11-04-2>

Govt indecisive on oil prices
Sir, The Petroleum Minister's warning that the oil PSUs are in for a loss of Rs 20,000 crore in the current fiscal year shows the helplessness of the UPA government to increase the prices at least for petrol and diesel. Due to pressure from their left allies, the increase scheduled for October 31 has been postponed further. If the communist leaders are interested in the welfare of the people at large they would not stop the increase of the petroleum products' prices, as the increase would affect only those people and business enterprises that can afford these products.
If the economy is allowed to bear the loss through the resulting inflation, the general public has to pay by way of an increase in the prices of essential commodities. Communist leaders must realise that their attempt to control the prices this way is not going to help them get a majority in the next elections: it will only create a negative image for them. Another reality is that one day or the other this Government will be forced to increase the prices at which time there will be a steep increase.
K R ANANDAGOPALAN, Bangalore
<DECCA:08-11-04-1>

Petrol price hike
Sir, — The hike will have an adverse impact on self-financing educational institutions serving rural students. School vans and buses go to various villages to pick up students and drop them after school. In some of the villages, public transport facility is almost non-existent. The hike leaves the school authorities with no alternative but to raise the fares. Parents from poor rural areas find it difficult to pay the existing fare. If the fare is increased further, many children

may drop out of school. The Government could think of supplying diesel to at least the educational institutions approved by it at subsidised rates.
R. Kanagaraj, Pollachi, T.N.
<HIND:09-11-04-3>

Oil price hike
Sir, — Since the first oil price shock of the 1970s, though there has been universal awareness on oil price volatility due to supply side shocks, successive governments have done little other than tinkering with the administered prices of petroleum products. Such an approach is characterised more by political expediency rather than by wisdom. The Government should think of technological innovation in fuel efficiency enhancement, automobile performance improvement, surface transport infrastructure development, etc. A national oil reserve, which can be tapped during peaks of global oil supply shortage and supplemented during lean periods of international oil price, should be developed.
P.V.E. Warrier, Thiruvananthapuram
<HIND:11-11-04-12>

Renaming Road
Sir, This is with reference to the report that some pro-Kannada organisations are planning to rename Brigade Road (DH, Nov 9). I just do not understand why these organisations are doing all these kinds of tricks to get publicity. If they really want to promote Kannada, then they could instead distribute Kannada books or provide free Kannada libraries, instead of giving to streets that already have good names, the names of people who have not even contributed anything to Bangalore.
I, as a Bangalorean and one who pays his taxes regularly, protest against these moves of renaming streets that represent our lifestyle. This is a city which has got a name in the IT world, thanks to the great minds of Mr Ramakrishna Hegde and Mr S M Krishna. And we do not want to spoil its name with these kinds of cheap ideas. I think others will also agree with me.
PHANIRAJ, Bangalore
<DECCA:10-11-04-4>

Local road names
Sir, This has reference to the letter of Phaniraj (DH, Nov 10) and his feelings against the renaming of Brigade Road in Kannada by some Kannada organisations. The renaming of roads/circles does not imply that there will be any drastic changes in the lifestyle of tax-payers like him and the rest of us. It requires a broader mindset to adjust to the new local names given to the roads.
If he says he is a Bangalorean, then why is he so fond of the name ‘Brigade Road’ given by the British Raj?
Awake Phaniraj, the British Raj is a foregone era. IT people are the ones who first adjust to the local conditions. Do not worry about them. Bangalore’s status will remain as it is even if some IT companies withdraw from it.
A V MANJUNATHA, Bangalore
<DECCA:17-11-04-4>

Appendix I

B. British Letters to the Editor (a selection)

Lessons of a rail disaster
This past weekend more people were killed on our roads than died in the rail accident. Last year, the worst for a long time, 18 people died on level crossings; 3,500 died on the roads. Rail is a very safe form of transport. We need to keep a sense of proportion.
Improving health and safety should be about priorities and rational assessment - not emotion and the happenstance that rail crashes make "good" television and children knocked down outside schools do not.
Lawrence Waterman , Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
<GUARD:09-11-04-2>

If the technology exists to control traffic lights with sensors placed under the road surface, why cannot similar systems be used at level crossings?
Richard Aplin, Leicester
<GUARD:09-11-04-4>

One of the immediate media responses to Saturday's train crash was to propose costly civil engineering solutions, including tunnels and bridges under or over the track. Strange that in the information age we are still Victorian at heart. Surely low resolution cameras sited at high-risk locations along the track could cheaply be used to relay images to the train driver via a simple hand-held device. Indeed, many of the passengers' mobile phones would have been capable of the task.
Dr Ben Lane, Department of technology, Open University
<GUARD:09-11-04-6>

More choice for children
As more mothers work and the long-hours culture continues in the UK, the balancing of the responsibilities of work and family life has become a major issue for today's parents. It is vital that parents have a real choice about work and bringing up their children. Parents are desperate for good-quality, affordable childcare and we are encouraged by the government's guarantee of affordable, school-based childcare, not just during term time, but year round.
However, we also feel passionately that all families are individual and have different needs. Decisions made by parents must be valued and supported, whether it means they stay at home, work part-time and flexibly or full-time.
Jan Fry, Parentline Plus
<GUARD:13-11-04-2>

Consumers can save jobs
The loss of jobs at Lloyds TSB is another cruel blow for UK workers (Lloyds TSB transfers 1,000 more jobs to India, November 10). Lloyds have shown compassion by making sure the redundancies voluntary. But the British economy can little afford to lose these well-paid jobs. Here are another 1,000

posts that will not be open to school leavers in the future. The loss of wealth to the UK in the long term is immeasurable.
The answer is for consumers to vote with their wallets. Don't give your hard-earned cash to companies that treat their employees badly. There are many firms in the financial services sector, such as Legal and General, which refuse to export the work abroad. Reward them with your business. Only then will bosses start to act in accordance with the consciences of the consumers they claim to champion.
Tim Arnold, The Corporate Social Responsibility Foundation
<GUARD:15-11-04-12>

Language problem
Sir: I am writing to express my concern at the results of the "Language Trends 2004" survey from the Centre for Information on Language Teaching (report, 5 November).
Despite protests to the contrary by the DfES, the fact that languages are no longer compulsory in over two-thirds of English state schools will have devastating consequences for business competitiveness. The British have always lagged behind their European counterparts on language skills, a situation which is only exacerbated by the continued failure of state schools to offer comprehensive language courses to their students.
How can Britain really expect to compete on the European stage with a workforce that is unable to offer international language skills? It is highly dangerous and misleading to assume that the world speaks English, and it cannot be right that the future of language education in two-thirds of our population be left solely to private language schools or publishers like Berlitz, much as we would enjoy the extra business that might accrue!
JEREMY WESTWOOD, Managing Director, Berlitz Publishing, London SE1
<INDEP:18-11-04-8>

Climate change war
Sir: Friends of the Earth has not yet declared war on Tony Blair over climate change ("Greens declare war on Blair for 'failures' over climate change", 19 November). Your article rightly highlights several appalling decisions made by the Government during the last year, for example on emissions trading for industry, road transport and aviation. Friends of the Earth has been critical on all of these. But we have not given up hope.
The Government will soon launch a consultation on its climate change programme. If the Prime Minister really means business he must use this opportunity to deliver policies which will result in year-on-year reductions in greenhouse gases. He must also reiterate in his next manifesto the promise to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2010.
Gordon Brown also has an important role to play. The Chancellor must put the battle against climate change at the heart of next month's pre-Budget statement, and make it easier and cheaper for people to reduce their climate-changing emissions.
If the Government delivers on these, then Mr Blair's claim of world leadership on climate change will have some credibility. If it fails, he will very clearly be exposed as a hypocrite.
TONY JUNIPER, Executive Director Friends of the Earth, London N1
<INDEP:23-11-04-11>

Doctors must carry the responsibility for ending a life

Sir: I was very moved and troubled by Christine Aziz's article about difficulties making a decision whether to take her dying brother off a life machine in intensive care (23 November). Medical ethics guidance makes clear that a relative should never be asked to make such a decision on behalf of another unconscious adult: ultimately the senior doctor looking after the patient has this responsibility, though he has a duty to explore the views of all involved parties and to take them into account. Legally this is the position too.

The importance of talking to relatives is emphasised; however what should be sought from them is not their individual views of what should happen, but rather any knowledge they have of what the patient would want for himself or herself. In the past the medical profession have sometimes forgotten this, and now the legal and ethical position is too often misunderstood.

It is utterly unreasonable to ask someone to live with the memory of ending the life of someone they love.

Dr BEN MAXWELL, Consultant Anaesthetist, The Great Western Hospital, Swindon

<INDEP:25-11-04-1>

Nuclear fear over Iran

We are deeply concerned at what appears to be a determination by the Bush administration to generate an international crisis over Iran. It is our fear that, having generated an artificial and unnecessary crisis, the US will embark on a doomed military "solution", in which it will seek to involve the British government and armed forces.

In the light of the continuing political and humanitarian crises in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is clear that any extension of western military intervention in the region, whether limited air strikes or a full-scale attack, would be disastrous for the Iranian people, for the populations of the wider region, and for the US and Britain.

The British government should, while it is still possible to influence the course of events, join our European and international allies in opposing any new military adventure in the Middle East.

Dr Stephanie Croni, University College, Northampton
Prof Francis Robinson, Royal Holloway, London
Prof A Reza Sheikholeslami, University of Oxford
And four others

<GUARD:25-11-04-12>

Appendix II

A. Discourse Completion Test: the Indian Target Group

Questionnaire on the Role and Function of English in India

I. Personal Information

Gender:	
Age:	
First language:	
Second language(s):	
English (in years):	
Level of education:	
Occupation:	

II. Self-Evaluation

(a) How would you evaluate your knowledge of English on a scale from 1 (= low skills) to 4 (= native-like skills)? ____

(b) How would you evaluate your knowledge of Hindi on a scale from 1 (= low skills) to 4 (= native-like skills)? ____

(c) Which aspect of the English language in India is most deviant from standard British English (pronunciation/grammar/vocabulary/style/none)?

____

III. Language Preferences according to Text Types

Imagine yourself writing texts belonging to the four types below. Which language do you consider most appropriate and therefore chose?

text types	*preferred language*	*why?*
(a) an academic essay		
(b) a personal letter to a close friend		
(c) an invitation for a family gathering		
(d) a covering letter in a job application		

(cont.)

IV. Language Preferences according to Addressee(s)

Imagine yourself writing a letter to different addressees. Which language do you consider most appropriate for writing a letter to

addressee(s)	*preferred language*	*why?*
(a) your mother?		
(b) your boss?		
(c) a friend from childhood times?		
(d) the clerk at the bank?		

V. Language Use (English) in Particular Situations

Imagine the following situations and write down your assumed verbal reaction. All these situations refer to the use of English only. The main point here lies on how to express your demand for a change of states/events.

situation 1:
Your younger brother does not stop bothering you while you are trying to prepare a report for your boss. How do you tell your brother to stop disturbing you?

____
____

situation 2:
You have ordered some vegetarian samosas in a restaurant. Unfortunately, what you receive are meat samosas. What is your reaction? How would you tell the waiter to bring you the correctly ordered food?

____
____

situation 3:
There has been a report in the newspaper which states that support for the Tsunami victims in south-east India will come to an end in the near future. According to your view, however, lots of things remain to be done. You decide to write a letter to the editor in a newspaper. How do you verbalise your demand to continue work for the victims?

____
____

situation 4:
You are the boss of a clothes shop. One of your assistants keeps on giving discounts to his/her friends. You decide not to fire him/her immediately, but to tell him/her that you will not tolerate this behaviour in the future. How do you tell the assistant to alter his/her behaviour?

____
____

Appendix II

B. Discourse Completion Test: the British Target Group

Questionnaire on the Realization of REQUEST Acts

The project attempts to investigate in what way the language behaviour of Indian and English pupils/students differs when it comes to verbalising a demand/request.
In the following, four different situations have been constructed which require a demand as your supposed reaction. Please write down in direct speech what comes to your mind within the different situations.

situation 1:
Your younger brother does not stop bothering you while you are trying to prepare a report for your boss. How do you tell your brother to stop disturbing you?

____

____

situation 2:
You are a vegetarian and have ordered some veg food in a snack bar. Unfortunately, the waiter brings you a non-veg meal. How do you tell him/her to bring you the correct food?

____

____

situation 3:
In the newspapers there are heated discussions on safety on British airports. According to your point of view, security needs to be revised and checked. You decide to write a letter to the editor to one of the papers. How do you verbalise your demand for improved conditions on airports?

____

____

situation 4:
You are the owner of a tobacco shop. One of your assistants keeps on giving discounts to his/her friends. You decide not to fire him/her immediately, but to tell him/her that you will not tolerate this behaviour in the future. How do you tell the assistant to alter his/her behaviour?

____

____

Personal details:

Sex: Age:

Appendix III

Statistics on the Distribution of REQUEST Strategies in the Letter Corpora

Individual REQUEST Act Strategies

	MD	P	OS	WS	SF	NS	RQ	PS	A
Indian LC									
observed	27	8	245	20	29	62	83	121	14
expected	21.1	11.2	188.8	25.7	52.6	58.0	74.9	164.8	12.0
relation observed-expected	$\chi^2 = 1.6$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 0.9$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 16.7$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 1.3$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 10.6$ df = 1 $p < .01$	$\chi^2 = 0.3$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 0.9$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 11.6$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 0.3$ df = 1 $p > .05$
British LC									
observed	24	19	211	42	98	78	98	277	15
expected	29.9	15.8	267.2	36.3	74.4	82.0	106.1	233.2	17.0
relation observed-expected	$\chi^2 = 1.2$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 0.6$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 11.8$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 0.8$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 7.5$ df = 1 $p < .01$	$\chi^2 = 0.2$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 0.6$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 8.2$ df = 1 $p < .01$	$\chi^2 = 0.2$ df = 1 $p > .05$
comparison across letter corpora: observed vs. expected	$\chi^2 = 2.8$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 1.5$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 28.5$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 2.1$ df = 1 $p < .05$	$\chi^2 = 18.1$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 0.5$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 1.5$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 19.8$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 0.5$ df = 1 $p > .05$

REQUEST Act Strategy Types

	I	CIS	H
Indian LC			
observed	300	91	218
expected	246.7	110.5	251.7
relation observed-expected	$\chi^2 = 11.7$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 3.4$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 4.5$ df = 1 $p < .05$
British LC			
observed	296	176	390
expected	349.3	156.5	356.3
relation observed-expected	$\chi^2 = 8.1$ df = 1 $p < .01$	$\chi^2 = 2.4$ df = 1 $p > .05$	$\chi^2 = 3.2$ df = 1 $p > .05$
comparison across letter corpora: observed vs. expected	$\chi^2 = 19.8$ df = 1 $p < .001$	$\chi^2 = 5.8$ df = 1 $p < .05$	$\chi^2 = 7.7$ df = 1 $p < .01$

M	Mood Derivables	NS	Necessity Statements
P	Performatives	RQ	Rhetorical Questions
OS	Obligation Statements	PS	Predictive Statements
WS	Want Statements	A	Allusions
SF	Suggestory Formulae		
I	Impositives	CIS	Conventionally Indirect Strategies
H	Hints		

Zur Person

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Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Ich erkläre hiermit, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit ohne unzulässige Hilfe Dritter und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe; die aus fremden Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Gedanken sind als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Die Arbeit wurde bisher weder im Inland noch im Ausland in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form einer Prüfungsbehörde zur Erlangung eines akademischen Grades vorgelegt.
Ein früheres Promotionsgesuch hat nicht stattgefunden.

Magdeburg, 24. Juni 2008 ______________________________