

## A socially realistic view of world Englishes: Reflections on gendered discourse

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**ABSTRACT:** The work of Braj Kachru and Yamuna Kachru has inspired generations of scholars to take a socially realistic view of the global spread of English. It is the work of Yamuna Kachru, however, who argues that taking an integrative sociocultural approach to the study of world Englishes to examine linguistic interaction expresses not only the bilingual's creativity but also provides valuable methodological and theoretical insights into the discursive structure in world Englishes. Adopting the sociocultural linguistic approach, this paper examines how speakers construct gender in Indian English discourse. Using examples from naturally occurring spoken conversations, this paper shows that the interplay between language and identity is rooted in the cultural beliefs and values of speakers. The socially realistic approach contextualizes the culture of language to explain language variation in the Outer Circle.

### INTRODUCTION

The 1960s marked a growing interest in the socially realistic use of the English language in multilingual, multicultural global contexts. Engaging in research outside the traditional sociolinguistic models and approaching language in the context of the functions it performs was Braj Kachru, the visionary, who ventured beyond the canon of the monomodel, mononorm approach (B. Kachru 1982; 1986 [1990]; 2005) to propose a 'pragmatically and functionally realistic model' that includes multilingual English users and addresses the global spread of English. When introduced in 1965, Kachru's term 'Indianization of English' offered a fresh look at the dynamics of language variation that generated a whole complex web of writings, controversies, and research concerning language in society, language in action, and language and identity outside the scope of other influential pioneering sociolinguistic perspectives at the time: Labov's (1972) sociolinguistic variation; Hymes' (1962) ethnography of communication; Ferguson's (1959) diglossia.

It was not until the 1980s when Braj Kachru published *The other tongue* (1982 [1992]), *The Indianization of English* (1983), and *The alchemy of English* (1986 [1990]) and introduced such concepts and notions as *non-native varieties*, *bilingual's creativity*, *contact literatures*, and *multicanonicity* to reflect the pluricentric nature of English (B. Kachru 1987); 'nativization' and 'Englishization' captured the attention of and drew criticism from linguists, language teachers, literary pundits, and emerging scholars, and the term 'world Englishes' accrued linguistic capital and gained currency throughout the world. The concept of the three circles of world Englishes (B. Kachru 1986 [1990]) triggered a revolution, first critically examining the culturally and linguistically pluralistic contexts of South Asia and Asian Englishes then addressing the institutionalized status of other English

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varieties in the Outer and Expanding Circles. The move was on to turn discussions on the form and function of English in linguistically and culturally diverse pluralistic contexts toward descriptions of the multi-identities of the English user, and toward the acceptance of the multiple norms of language behavior in social contexts (B. Kachru 1996). Braj Kachru took on the linguistic establishment defending the new English varieties and their legitimacy, their systematicity and their non-native norms. Underscoring the WE-ness among its users, he argued that ‘pluralism’ and ‘inclusivity’ were central to the description of world Englishes and that this multiplicity ‘must be reflected in the theoretical and applied approaches’ to understanding language (B. Kachru (1982)[1992]: 11).

It was Braj Kachru and Yamuna Kachru’s continued dedication and lifelong undertaking along with their company of followers that inspired an explosion of studies and research on South Asian English and world Englishes, a tribute to Braj and Yamuna Kachru’s influence on scholars around the academic world today. To quote Davis (2013: 377), they ‘created a space for new ways of thinking about English as a world language’ especially for understanding how English is nativized to the uses and needs of speakers in contexts across the globe as well as for considering the social and cultural parameters relevant to the settings in which participants find themselves. Drawing on the strength and power of the concentric circles model, the work of Yamuna Kachru and her colleagues Larry Smith (2008b) and Cecil Nelson (2006f) addressed issues related to discursal competence (Smith 1983; 1987), cross-cultural communication (Smith 1981; 1987), verbal interaction (Kachru and Nelson 2006f), intelligibility (Nelson 1984; 2001; 2008; Smith and Nelson 2006), and literary creativity (D’souza 2001; Valentine 2001a) to socially explain language variation in the multilingual, multicultural contexts of English around the world.

Today the sociolinguistic reality within the world Englishes paradigm displays a wide spectrum of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursal and literary creativities: various multicultural identities are associated with English; multiple social identities are viewed as a meaningful construction; and language, power, and ideology are fundamental in understanding the changing roles and functions of English and its users around the world. Entering the new frontiers of language, the reinvented socially realistic model of language variation takes into consideration both local and global, the bilingual’s creativity, and the social and cultural dimensions that capture the underlying essence of WE-ness.

### THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE

The sociocultural and sociolinguistic nature of the bilingual’s creativity spawned cross-cultural and cross-linguistic research on code-mixing and code-switching, discourse strategies, stylistic innovation and speech acts (Bhatt 2001). It is the work of Yamuna Kachru who convincingly argues for ‘the cultural context of language,’ that a study of verbal interaction across cultures must address the relationship between language and ‘grammar of culture,’ as D’souza (1988) suggests, whether it be cultural aspects of socialization, religious and other belief systems, *face* consideration, or specialized features of language usage and use in speaking or writing. Because the cultural appropriateness that regulates linguistic behavior is derived from the grammar of culture, the norms of use of English operate differently around the world. And so the form and function of a given institutionalized variety of English must be studied in relation to ‘the context of situation which is appropriate to the variety, its uses and users’ (B. Kachru 1983: 10).

Yamuna Kachru's prolific work on discourse competence across world Englishes critically examines the ways in which multilinguals from the different circles of English speak and write English to express meaning using a shared linguistic medium that may differ in the sociocultural conventions of language use and usage – a result of the cultural values and norms of the communities (Kachru 2001). Such research focuses on the nature of interactional competence in terms of the discourse structures and strategies required in the English language for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communicative purposes (Kachru 1985b, 1987a, 1991b, 1993d, 1995b, 1995d; Smith 1987; Valentine 1988, 1992, 2001b, 2001c). It argues that the cultural conventions of language use are expressed both at the micro and macro levels: in the utterances of the participants, and in the patterns of interactional management that the participants practice, both in written and spoken texts (Kachru 2006c).

Yamuna Kachru's work and her colleagues' have centered on the conventions of speaking and of writing in world Englishes contexts from a sociocultural linguistic perspective and discuss how English is used differently in interpersonal interaction throughout the three circles with reference to Hymes' (1962) ethnography of communication, Grice's (1975) cooperative principle, Gumperz's (1982a, 1982b) interactional sociolinguistics, Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) speech act theory, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, and Sacks et al.'s (1974) work on conversational analysis; her work explores situations where multiple communicative competences come in contact. The merits of Yamuna Kachru's research lie in her in-depth analysis of speech acts, politeness, conversational analysis, and cross-cultural rhetoric across gender, religious, and ethnic groups operating within the context of social and cultural interactions (Kachru 2003a, 2008d). Her work generated further research on religious discourse (Pandharipande 2008), English in Indian bilingualism (Sridhar 1989, 1991), language and ethnic inequality in Malaysia (Lowenberg 1991), and gender variation in Hindi and Indian English discourse (Valentine 1988 and thereafter). As a result, her comparative work in spoken and written discourse has led to further study of discursual conventions and discourse competences across cultures and languages. Participants follow cultural conventions at the broad level of discourse to signal topic, thematic information, organizational structure, and coherence (Kachru 1992a; Valentine 1995b), and at the conversational level of transitional and discourse markers to indicate turn-taking, listener involvement, and floor control (Valentine 1992), as well as at the utterance level to perform speech acts such as requests, greetings, apologies, and leave taking (Kachru 1991b, 1992b, 1998b; Sridhar 1991; Pandharipande 1992; Valentine 1992, 1995a, 1996).

### DISCOURSE AND CREATIVITY

According to Schiffrin et al. (2001), for a meaningful discursual analytical approach to creativity, discourse is defined as language and the practices associated with the social constructions of knowledge. Discourse analysis describes a range of perspectives on the nature of language as it occurs in particular contexts: the sociolinguistic analysis of natural language (Stubbs 1983), the inclusion of context in the production and interpretation of discourse (Gumperz 1982a, 1982b), the social context of linguistic interactions (Hymes 1962), or the way language is used to take specific actions (Austin 1962). What is creative, according to Jones (2010: 472, 473) then, is 'the strategic way language is *used*, and the new way of dealing with a situation or a new set of social relationships [ . . . ] When

discourse is used creatively [...] the relationships of power among the participants may shift [...] and cultural conventions give rise to new kinds of social identities and new ways of seeing the world.' Whatever the approach, scholars acknowledge the complexities of identity as a social, cultural and essentially an interactional phenomenon.

Central to discourse analysis are the issues regarding the relationship between the contextualization of discourse and the construction of identity at the social and personal levels in language use. The concept of identity is seen as how the individual relates to the social group as a member of a family, religion, caste, and community, and how the individual, a composite of social identities (age, gender, and class), relates to others in verbal interactions and then, how the social construction of identity is produced in communicative events. Variation in spoken discourse is described in terms of the ways language operates in a speech community where its members share norms of community association, patterns of communication, cultural conventions, sociocultural competence and evaluative norms.

What is not so clear is the way that speakers' social identities are communicated, and how the relationship between group and personal identities is initiated, established and maintained. Traditional sociolinguistic approaches have been criticized for looking at the interaction between the social dimensions of gender, ethnicity, and class as given parameters if not fundamental parameters that are evident and inevitable facts (Bing and Bergvall 1996). These dimensions have been viewed as static, absolute, and working in isolation outside other social identities, relationships and social networks. In recent research on social identity, however, focus has shifted (Bergvall et al. 1996). Rather than viewing gender and other identities as something fixed, gender is viewed as fluid, creating and recreating itself along with the other identities as the situation changes and the relationships are negotiated in the social activities of the speech community. Such a perspective contextualizes gender and helps to describe the multiple cultural and linguistic systems of the indigenized varieties of English (Valentine 2006, 2008).

This paper explores how gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion, and other identities can be signaled in the conversation of speakers in the Outer Circle of world Englishes. Adopting the sociocultural linguistic approach to the study of conversation, this discussion focuses on identity as a social and cultural phenomenon produced in linguistic interaction (Bucholtz and Hall 2005). It explores how the identities of Indian bilingual speakers are relationally constructed through conversation, how these speakers build identities such as gender, age, and ethnicity by performing particular kinds of acts produced in discursive interactions. Not only do speakers construct their own social identities, but also the actors co-construct the social identities in a joint activity as suggested by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992).

### GENDERED DISCOURSE PRACTICES

To illustrate the emergent identity of gender, I present three naturally occurring English and Hindi conversational interactions between Indian women; their discussions revolve around topics related to women's issues and situations. The first example is an exchange in Hindi on the topic of 'radical feminism' between two female graduate students studying at a US university; the second, an interaction in English on the topics of 'dowry and marriage' between an aunt 'chaachii' and her younger niece in the home of the aunt in Allahabad; and the third, an English exchange on the topic of the 'modernized woman' of India between two 19-year old female students and a 60-year old teacher held in a classroom at

a woman's college in New Delhi. Displaying their shared gender, religious, age, class and ethnic identities, these speakers negotiate femaleness and other aspects of their identity through the language they use, the stories they tell, and other interactional practices that they engage in. Not only do the speakers construct their own individual gender identities consistent with the norms of their culture, but they also help assign social gender to each other through the joint exchanges. As each conversation unfolds, there is clear gender marking throughout the interactional work that the speakers do, and their identities are produced through the use of specific linguistic elements and the expression of specific social categories.

For example, to linguistically construct their feminine identities these bilingual speakers use such interactional conventions of labeling, high involvement, intensification, repetition and rephrasals, code-mixing, the joint building of the argument, and direct agreement and delayed disagreement as face-saving measures. High conversational involvement is indicated by interactive synchrony among the speakers, overlaps and latching, and outright agreement. The conventions of conversation reduce conflict and maintain a rhythm and ritual equilibrium. Taking a sociocultural linguistic interactional approach to conversation shows that associations between language and emerging identity are rooted in cultural beliefs and values about the speakers' sociolinguistic conventions and the production of verbal interaction. As a result gender identity emerges as the conversation progresses.

#### EXAMPLE (1): RADICAL FEMINISM

Hypercritical of the western notion of 'feminism,' throughout the interaction in example (1) below, two 25-year old female Hindi speakers S and N distance themselves from what they call 'bilkul absolute radical feminism' and jointly align themselves with the 'Indian movement,' one that is more consistent with their cultural conventions of compromise, collectivity, harmonious relationships, and positive face. The bilingual speakers actively co-construct themselves as members of a common community, as individuals of a particular gender and age, and as persons of a particular role in these conversational interactions.

(1)

1. S: yahā̃ pe matkab vo aaj *tumhē maaluum hai* ki vo R.D. yaa vo kuch **presentation** kar rahii hai [mm] shaam ko kuch **Indian movement [Indian]** pe, *jaantii ho? Tum jaanevaalii ho udhar?*  
'Do you know that R.D. is giving a presentation here today in the evening on the Indian movement, do you know? Are you going there?'
2. N: *pataa nahin*. Shaayad na jaaun.  
'I don't know. Maybe not.'
3. S: [*māi bhii shaayad na jaaun*] kyōki *mujhe uskaa point of view maaluum hai* [mm] uh mujhe . . . *māi usko jaantii hun* ki [mm] vo kyaa kahegii [mm] kyōki ek baar pahale bhii māi uskii sun cukii hun.  
'I too may not go because I know her point of view. I know what she will say because I have heard her once before.'
4. N: *māi bhii ek baar pahale sun cukii hun* [hā̃] *jab tum sab saath the na*. (both laugh) *vaise māi pataa nahin, mujhe lagaa ki zyaadaa extreme feminism [hm] ho rahii thii wahā̃* [hā̃] **It doesn't agree with what I feel like.**

- I too have heard her once before, when you were all together remember? (laugh) and you know, I don't know I felt that there was too much extreme feminism going on there. It doesn't agree with what I feel like.'
5. S: wahāā **tum ne dekhaa thaa, māi jo thii, sab se mild thii māi?**  
'Did you see that I was milder than all the rest?'
  6. N: **hāā. mujhe bhii wahii lagaa.**  
'Yes. I felt that way too.'
  7. S: [**mere baat**] . . . vo phir vo . . . kyōki māi vo . . . **bilkul radical feminism mē believe nahin kartii.**  
'Because I that, I do not believe in absolute radical feminism.'
  8. N: **māi bhii.**  
'Me too.'
  9. S: **māi nahin soctii** ki auratō ko aadimiyō ke **against** honaa caahiye.  
'I don't think that women should oppose men.'
  10. N: **hāā. It's very strange.**
  11. S: [**hāā**] **It's very strange.**
  12. N: inkii jo **feminism [hāā]**, agar kuch karnaa hai, to bas [**mm**] duniyaa ke aage laRo.  
'The feminism that they believe in – if you want to do something then fight against the world.'
  13. S: **hāā.** laRo . . . **right** aur ye nahin soctii hāi ki, auratē ki yahāā baiThe . . . ki yahāā baiThe ye nahin soctii hāi ki aise nahin badalaa jaa saktaa [**bilkul**] ki hamē hamaare hamaarii jo **tradition** mē [**mm**] hamaaare jo hindustaanii **tradition** mē hameshaa aisii rahaa hai, ki **compromise** karnaa [**hm**] – **compromise** matlab – **compromise** ko do taraf se dekhaa [**mm**] jaa saktaa hai. [**mm**] ek taraf se dekhaa jaa saktaa hai ki, hāā, **you give in.** *um vaise us tariike se nahin [mm] lekin compromise karnaa um ek tarah se acchaa hai, hamaare liye [mm] aur hamaare saare system mē education system mē ham wahii koshish karte hāi ki [bilkul] compromise karnaa – compromise matlab ki jo chiizē hāi [mm] ki unko completely tum reject to kar nahin sakte [mm] agar tum unko completely reject karne ki koshish karo [mm] to tum tumhaare vo jo bhii tum karne kii koshish karo [mm] to tum you know, us mē yashasvii nahin hoge.*  
'Yes, fight. And they don't think that, the women that sit, that they don't sit and think that things can change [**absolutely**] that in our tradition [**mm**] in our Indian tradition it was always like this, that we must compromise. [**hm**] Compromise means, compromise can be looked at [**mm**] from two sides. [**mm**] From one side, yes, you give in. I don't see it like this [**mm**] but compromise can be good for us. [**mm**] and in our entire system, in our entire education system, we try [**absolutely**] to do compromise. Compromise means [**mm**] that you cannot reject everything [**mm**] if you try to reject everything completely [**mm**] then you, have to try [**mm**] you know, it will not be successful.'
  14. N: **acchaa, phir pataa hai kya huaa?** Us din mujhe lag rahaa thaa ki vo jo kuch bol rahe hāi, aise aise **speed** dene ke liye bol rahe hai, agar vo [**hāā**] khud aise karnaa paRe unko to **mujhe nahin lagtaa [mm]** ki vo karēga.  
'Okay, then you know what happened? That day I was thinking that what they were saying, we must do things with speed they were saying, if they had to do it themselves, I don't think it would have been possible to do so.'
  15. S: **hāā, hāā. nahin, nahin, vo nahin karēge.**  
'Yes, yes. No, no, they wouldn't do it.'

16. N: duusre logō [mm] ko kahane ke liye bahut aasaan hai, par khud karnaa [right] kaafii mushkil hai.  
'It's very easy to tell others, but it is quite difficult to do it yourself.'
17. S: **right, right.** nahin vo mujhe bahut logō ne, tum iske baare mẽ baat [hãã] kar rahii thii **na** [mm] jisne **dowry** ke baare mẽ bolaa thaa aur **rape** . . .  
'Right, right . . . No you were talking about this **weren't you** about this person who spoke about dowry and rape . . .'
18. N: *hãã*, **dowry** ke baare mẽ aur *hãã*, **rape** ke baare mẽ. M.  
'Yes, about dowry, and yes about rape. M.'
19. S: *hãã*. M., M.S. [mm] vo to vo to pakke **communist** hai.  
'Yes M., M.S. She is a typical communist.'
20. N: **Communist** ke baare mẽ mujhe lagaa ki vo **zyaadaa extreme** cale gaii [mm] ki **it lost all touch of reality.**  
'About communists I felt that they went to the other extreme that it lost all touch of reality.'
21. S: **That's what I'm saying. But you know what I mean when I say communist.** Vo **academic communist** hãi [mm] ki **it is all very nice, you know, when** jab tum samajh jaaoo.  
'That's what I am saying. But, you know what I mean when I say communist. They are academic communists. It is all very nice, you know, when you understand.'
22. N: **bahut intellectual hãi**  
'They are very intellectual.'
23. S: **bahut intellectual hãi.** It's very **intellectually gratifying** . . . [*hãã*] *agar tum vo concept samajh jaaoo.*  
'It's very intellectual. It's very intellectually gratifying [ . . . ] if you understand the concept.'
24. N: aur mujhe vo bhii pasand [mm] nahin aayii ki vo sab ke saamne vo . . . baiThke aur apne pããw uupar rakhke saamne sigareT piine lago. mujhe vo ajiib [*hãã*] lag rahaa thaa.  
'And I also don't like that they sit in front of everybody with their legs up and start smoking cigarettes. I find it strange.'

### *High involvement*

The success of the interaction in example (1) is based on a high level of involvement expressed by the use of verbal endorsements, back channels, synchrony, repetitions, intensifications, and restatements. In turn 1, as soon as speaker S raises the topic of 'Indian movement,' she engages speaker N using the Hindi 2nd person form 'you': *tumhe maalum hai* 'do you know?' S actively works at involving N in the conversation by first asking N whether she knows about an upcoming lecture on the women's movement in India: *jaanti ho?* 'you know?' then, uses other addressee-oriented forms to maintain contact: *tum ne kaha* 'you said,' *tumhe maalum hai* 'you know,' third person plural *ham* 'we,' and *tum jaanevaalii ho udhar* 'are you going there?' According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, the explicit use of pronominalization not only allows the speakers to voice their own opinions, but also takes the addressee's face into account to include the listener in the talk and to construct gender.

Yamuna Kachru's (1987a) work on pronominalization illustrates that the use of zero anaphora in Indic languages, or the absence of the pronoun element, is used to achieve cohesion in speech as well as in writing, but often zero anaphora leads to ambiguity in conversation. In order to take into consideration face and precision, the 2nd person Hindi pronoun *tum* 'you' and 3rd person pronoun *ham* 'we' are explicitly used in speaking and writing. This face-saving measure extends to the use of tags *na*, *acchaa*, *yeah*, and *right* not necessarily to evoke a response from the listener but also to maintain interactional contact and positive face. To illustrate, speaker N dutifully plays her part as active listener by back channeling with ritualized linguistic support throughout: *mm*, *hãã*, *acchaa*, *right*, *bilkul* ('absolutely'), *mãi bhii* ('I, too') and other markers of high involvement. In turn 13 alone, Speaker S elicits 11 such listenership cues from N.

### *Repetition and labeling*

Repetition of linguistic forms and ideas is central to the construction, negotiation and maintenance of gender. In turns 2–4, N states that she may not attend the evening's lecture; S replies that she too may not go; in response to S's reply, N heightens her agreement with 'I too have heard [the speaker] once before.' In turns 7–8, S maintains that she does not believe in 'bilkul radical feminism'; N responds that she likewise does not 'believe in absolute radical feminism.' In response to the topic of women opposing men in turns 10–11, N declares: 'yes, it's very strange.' S repeats: 'Yes, it's very strange.' In turns 11–12, N believes that 'if you want to do something then fight against the world,' to which S replies: 'Yes fight.' It is clear that these two speakers are signaling a shared social identity that reflects the normative Indian gender structures, even openly labeling 'others' who do not believe as S and N do as 'feminist,' 'communist,' 'intellectual,' 'academic,' and 'extreme,' repurposed terms viewed as offensive by the speakers.

According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), the tactic of labeling is the most obvious and direct means by which shared identities can be constructed through talk. In interaction 1, by using explicit labeling elements and structures both speakers distance themselves from the women's movement associated with the West—an effective strategy to convey Indian cultural beliefs through conversation. The ideological force associated with activism, non-femininity, and Western radicalism situates these speakers as advocates of the 'Hindustani tradition.' By making negative evaluations of the 'others,' speakers S and N are implicitly and explicitly elevating themselves, and insulting those who do not conform to the Indian social norms. In turn 5, speaker N even draws attention to her mild view: 'Did you see that I was milder than all the rest?' Frequent references to the inappropriate behavior of 'others' solidifies the relationship between S and N and reduces the social distance between them.

### *Code-mixing*

Drawing on the bilingual's linguistic repertoire, the two Hindi speakers use the strategy of code-mixing and code-switching, using English words, phrases and strings of speech to reveal their attitude toward 'feminism,' the topic introduced by speaker N in turn 4. As a communicative act, code choice has significance in the interactional setting. According to Tay (1989) the degree of speaker involvement or distance from a message can explain the switches between English and other languages. Code-mixing is a part of the bilingual's competence and creativity to convey the degree of distance or closeness the speaker intends.

Speakers make choices that reflect politeness, face-saving, and distance (Kachru 1991b). In the exchange between speakers S and N, then, the choice of English code switching in lines 4, 7, 9, 13 ([feminism] ‘doesn’t agree with what I feel like’; ‘it lost all touch of reality’) is used not only for linguistic efficiency, but also to convey the ‘Inner’ Circle meaning: the construction of gender and the degree of distance the two speakers intend toward the concept of *feminism*. Speakers S and N switch to English terms and expressions whenever they want to distance themselves from western feminism: ‘Indian movement,’ ‘extreme feminism,’ ‘against,’ ‘very strange,’ ‘feminism,’ ‘tradition,’ ‘compromise,’ ‘you give in,’ ‘education system,’ ‘completely reject,’ ‘speed,’ ‘rape,’ ‘dowry,’ ‘communist,’ ‘academic,’ and ‘intellectually gratifying.’ The speakers’ code switching signals information about what direction they want the conversation to take and communicates their points of view and feelings, in this case, toward feminism – a source of shared sociocultural information. Both speakers agree that they associate the notion of *feminism* with the women’s movement in the United States and not with the ‘Hindustani tradition’ of India. As the above studies show, code-switching and mixing is a matter of communicative choice on the part of the bilingual participants. In this case, the speakers share certain assumptions about womanhood, and by code-mixing, they express their gender identity as being distinct from other normative behavior. Since both speakers share the same view and disapprove of the actions of feminists, the speakers advance the topic by building across turns, restating ideas, agreeing with each other, and co-constructing a gender identity.

#### *Agreement and disagreement*

With reference to example 1, speakers S and N use the face saving strategies of agreement and disagreement (Valentine 1995a). As illustrated above, these female speakers use high involvement markers to achieve agreement and construct social identity: **explicit elements of agreement:** ‘yes, yes,’ ‘*hāā*,’ ‘*acchaa*,’ ‘*bilkul*,’ ‘absolutely,’ ‘right,’ ‘*māi bhii*’ (I, too); **repetition:** ‘It’s very strange,’ ‘extreme radical feminism’; **frequent use of intensifiers and other qualifiers:** ‘*zyaadaa* extreme’ (‘more extreme’), ‘*kaafi*’ (‘enough’) ‘*shaayad* na *jaaun*’ (non-committal ‘perhaps I won’t go’), ‘completely reject,’ ‘*bahut* intellectual’ (‘very intellectual’); **discourse fillers:** ‘*māi pataa nahin*’ (‘I don’t know’), ‘you know,’ ‘*matlab*’ (‘it means’); and **building upon the previous speaker’s turn:** from turns 19 onward, the speakers develop the case that ‘feminists’ are ‘typical communists’ and ‘intellectuals.’ Speakers S and N even make utterances that on the surface seem contradictory, especially to an Inner Circle speaker, that is, where both agreement and disagreement are expressed within the same turn. Considering both sides of an issue does not open the conversation to confrontation, but minimizes the risk of disagreement and maximizes the desirable outcome of agreement (Valentine 1995a). Weighing both sides of an issue is a common style of interaction in South Asia (FitzGerald 2003). For example, speaker S in turn 13 starts her turn by outright agreement with N (‘*hāā* LaRo . . . right’), then talks about ‘compromise’ and ‘looking at both sides.’ N acknowledges S’s turn in line 14 with ‘okay’, then advances the argument that feminists want to do things with such ‘speed’ before S replies with apparent ambivalence: ‘*hāā, hāā. nahin, nahin. vo nahin karēge.*’ (Yes, yes. No, no. They wouldn’t do it), a non-face threatening strategy. It is not until line 21, when S confirms agreement: ‘That’s what I’m saying’ to ensure there is no chance for disagreement. As Brown and Levinson (1987) note, the greater the effort expended in face-maintaining linguistic behavior the greater the politeness.

### EXAMPLE (2): DOWRY AND MARRIAGE

Example (2) is an English interaction between chaachii, the aunt (wife of father's younger brother) (speaker F2), and her niece (speaker F1). Each speaker clearly marks her gender and ascribed filial status throughout the exchange. These local identities are relevant in the speakers' topic choice, development of the discourse, and overall interactional work. Particular to this example, the use of specific sociolinguistic forms and expressions illustrates the emerging feminine identities: involvement markers (kinship forms, intensification, sociocentric fillers, self-referential markers), code choice, repetition and rephrasals, labeling, and face saving measures. Moreover, chaachii's control of the floor, command of the topic and structure of the discourse reinforces the aunt-niece relationship and strengthens the aunt's senior family rank and cultural role. Chaachii positions herself as the primary teller and at the same time assigns her niece the role of listener and interactional supporter by using the strategies of high involvement and topical repetition, the digressive building of the argument, storytelling, and authoritative speech.

(2)

1. F1: Chaachii, dowry ke baare me bataaiye. ('Auntie, please talk about dowry') What do you think about it?
2. F2: Dowry hãã, dowry uh if we don't use the word dowry and simply feel that parents when they want their young children to set up a life on their own, if initially they start with just giving them some basic gifts uh basic things you see which they will need to begin a household if it if it remains to that fine. [**fine..huh**] Any compulsion of or further than that or any um kind of prestige attached to it would be something very wrong. What I feel is if um like a mother if she wants her daughter to set up a life with uh another gentleman and they are now beginning from a scratch so if she provides if she is not forced and she's well off if she provides a few basic things that the girl might need to set up a household, well if it is up to that fine. That is what I think about dowry. [**yeah**] I would not like to use the word dowry in the sense um that it is now the way it is being used and the way it is ah people are rather uh forcing themselves or maybe to impress people of society or others: that's not what I feel, but I do would not rule it out completely. I would, I mean, this need not be quoted, but just you see what we tell you, like a couple starts life anew, and if that couple is given a few basic utensils, or few basic clothes, warm woolens, a bed or a little piece of furniture they can add to it, they can earn and add to it. Started with the mother or maybe the boy's father or parents. If it is up to that, fine.
3. F1: What about the trends now more and more people are going in for those love marriages and so forth [ . . . ] and though we are having a lot of arranged marriages within the country, how would you sort of balance the act and say give preference to any one of them?
4. F2: Look, I have moved about um a lot in the country as well as outside it. And I would not say that all love marriages end [**in a disaster**] in a disaster, but so many end in a disaster, and arranged marriages also somehow or the other sometimes we expect we want to take a lot out of a marriage than to give into it. [**hm**] You see? All we do not realize that we have to give into a marriage to take something out of it so there is where I suppose the problem arises, be it an arranged marriage be it a love marriage. Sometimes when I was speaking to some women in London or even in France, you see, um they

would not women would want to dictate a few things, but in marriage you cannot have everything the way just you want. You have to do a few things so when you go through a love marriage or when you maybe you expect a little more and when you don't get that much, it starts, the problem starts.

5. F1: Men have been dictating for so long.
6. F2: No, I think this institution of marriage has been there from the time of life came into existence, that is what I feel [hm] it is something time tested. I do not feel that men have dictated now over, it's women who suffer. They feel that the man who has been dictating. I do not feel that all men dictate. It is the way you take it. You see it is the way a woman takes it. When she loves a person and you then more important, you don't love a person in compartments. You don't accept 'he is a good earner, he earns a lot of money' so you love him. So you love the person. When you marry a person you marry the whole person.

The relationship between chaachii and her niece is one of respect: the niece's level of comfort and respect toward her aunt is illustrated by the niece's use of the kinship term 'chaachii,' a softer voice, minimal talk, and frequent listenership cues. It is clear that the niece accepts the older aunt as the authority on the subjects of dowry, marriage, and Indian family relationships. Throughout the interaction chaachii holds the floor for extended periods (turns 2 and 4 and 6) by emphasizing 'what she feels' and 'what she thinks' is the true purpose of 'dowry': to set up a couple's 'life on their own,' 'from a scratch,' and with the help of 'basic gifts,' 'basic utensils,' and 'basic clothes.' Chaachii holds the floor for a prolonged period of time by repeating ideas, intensifying her talk with 'very,' 'completely,' 'a few,' and 'a little' in turns 2 and 4; addressing her niece with directives: 'you see' and 'look'; and adopting a commanding tone. In turn 4, chaachii begins 'Look, I have moved about a lot. And I would not say [...] but so many [love marriages] end in a disaster [...] You see?' then fortifies her argument by appealing to European women's views. The niece, on the other hand, is the initiator of all the questions, refrains from voicing her own opinion, and holds the floor for a much shorter time. When the niece raises objection to compromise: 'Men have been dictating for so long,' chaachii chides her 'No, I think this institution of marriage has been there from the time of life.'

The style of chaachii's argument is worthy of note. Turns 2, 4, and 6 reflect the norms of paragraph organization and communicative goals for narrative and expository prose in the indigenous South Asian discourse traditions. Yamuna Kachru (1987a: 90) characterizes Hindi and Marathi paragraph structure to be organized in a 'spiral-like and a circular' fashion in expository passages. Paragraphs are not limited to one topic or theme but topics are interwoven throughout. Yamuna Kachru's contrastive work (1983c, 1997a) on argumentation and persuasion across cultures suggests that written discourse follows the same parameters as in spoken discourse across world Englishes.

### EXAMPLE (3): WOMEN IN MODERN INDIA

Example (3), an English interaction between two 19-year old female college students (speakers A and B) and a 60-year old Indian female teacher (speaker C), illustrates two different styles of talk due to the speakers' age, group association, and familial and social status. Speakers A and B are friends and classmates, who interact daily in school, attend the same classes, participate in the same extracurricular activities, and associate at break

times, therefore, drawing on similar life experiences and linguistic resources. Teacher C is positioned as a person of authority; she is A's and B's teacher, whose interaction with this age group is limited to school life. The teacher interacts with these girls strictly as an instructor who teaches and counsels them within the college setting.

The topic revolves around 'modernizing' Indian women to take a more active role outside the home in order to gain independence, confidence, and equality in Indian society. Teacher C argues that Indian women, in contrast to American women, take on all the responsibilities of the house while men take on the responsibilities outside the home. As a result, Indian women are financially dependent on men and their families. In contrast, A and B team up to build an argument that defends the existing traditional role of woman in India, which clashes with the 'modernized person.'

(3)

1. A: It is basically, I feel, being modern means you have a really optimistic look into the things that is, if you want, suppose you are a person who wants to be doctor or something, it's not
2. B: maybe more independent
3. A: more independent [ . . . ] more confident
4. C: I don't mean you should go astray. What I mean is that your usual thinking, your own personality should actually develop then alone India will go somewhere. Otherwise, if the woman does not think for herself: 'what is good for me?' We get crushed down and many times parents are wrong [ . . . ] it's very important. You don't say 'no, I have to think of it.' I don't think you should, you grown up girls should not be what my parents will do like that, no I don't think so . . . no you should [ . . . ] listen what's good for you [ . . . ] You see what happens abroad . . . abroad (story about her children) They always train children to think for themselves and make the decisions.
5. A: But ma'am, children calling things their parents and my mother slapped me and if
6. C: no, no, that is. Let us go for the good points, not the bad points even here the things are like that. Even here you see (simultaneous talk), no even here things happen so many. But it may not be to that extent. I'm not defending American people, I'm really telling you there are many problems [ . . . ] American children are independent, you have to say what I want to do.
7. A: Ma'am that is not possible in our culture and it's
8. C: It is possible my dear I have seen so many years to go through. It will be possible provided girls really come out.
9. A: Ma'am we have a habit of finding midway.

Students A and B represent a social group engaging in the shared practices of specialized adolescent terminology and sociolinguistic routines; their speech, then, exhibits linguistic elements of youthfulness: 'basically,' 'like,' someone 'is coming up,' and complementizer **ki** 'that.' Their interactive style is one of high involvement: high incidence of overlaps, simultaneous talk, repetition of phrases and ideas, latched turns, and Indian English slang. The girls share the style of edging closer to each other, leaning forward, touching each other, playing with each other's scarves, excited talk, raised voices and pitch, and increased speed.

Throughout the conversation, speakers A and B align themselves in opposition to speaker C. Their talk exhibits a style of highly cooperative informal talk among young female

friends: overlapping turns, expressions of agreement, repetitions of each other's statements, and the overall joint construction of text. For example, in turn (2), speaker B utters 'maybe more independent,' to which speaker A agrees 'more independent, more confident.' When teacher C challenges the girls' optimistic outlook in turn 4: 'I don't mean you should go astray,' C casts herself in the role of teacher, pointing out that parents may be wrong in thinking for their children and stressing 'it is very important' that as women these girls are not helpless but should take control of their individual lives and think for themselves. By viewing the girls as young and less worldly than she, C continues her directives: 'I don't think you should,' 'no, you should,' 'Listen what's good for you,' and recounts a story about her own children who had the opportunity to live abroad for a short period of time. Speaker C applauds American parents' ways of training children to make decisions for themselves and to act independently: views contradictory to the traditional, Indian woman. Attempting to disagree with speaker C (turn 5), A acknowledges the teacher's respected status by referring to C as 'ma'am,' minimizing the force of the girl's disagreement to come, then starts to recall the time when A rebelled and her mother slapped her. Before A can explain further, C (turn 6) interrupts 'no, no,' and continues her argument, emphasizing the dominant discourse that women in India are not independent and do not think for themselves. A again tries to interject: 'Ma'am that is not possible' (turn 7), but C delivers the final blow (turn 8) putting closure to the topic by pulling rank: age, status, and experience: 'It is possible, my dear, I have seen so many years to go through.' Speaker A concedes, humbling herself to daughter-like status: 'ma'am we have a habit of finding midway.'

Despite the difference in age and status, the cultural conventions of deference, conformity to norms, and filial respect are displayed in this example. Indirectness and face-saving measures are the accepted conversational rules of involvement, and the stratified family structure of India is reflected in the conventionalized English forms.

## CONCLUSION

To take into account the socially realistic nature of English, a richer theory of the cultural context of language is necessary to explore situations when communicative competences come in contact. Taking an integrative approach and incorporating the notions of ethnography of communication, the cooperative principle, interactional sociolinguistics, speech act theory, and conversational analysis more adequately account for the negotiation of meaning taking place between speakers and addressees (Kachru 1991b). Scholarly work on speech acts, rhetorical strategies, conversational organization, politeness, and discursive practices in world Englishes shows that the way speakers use language in different contexts is not the same in pluralistic societies as they are in monolingual, monocultural societies. The integrative approach helps to understand the interplay among gender, ethnic, age, class, and religious identities and linguistic interaction in world Englishes.

As the three conversational interactions above illustrate, identity does not emerge at a single linguistic level but operates beyond the lexical, sentential, and discourse levels to include multiple sociolinguistic and cultural levels. These speakers are engaged in the struggle to define their identity, whether it is in the peer interaction of adolescent girls or adult classmates, the highly charged joint interaction among friends, or the hierarchically structured family patterns of interaction. Taking a sociocultural linguistic interactional approach to conversation shows that associations between language and identity are rooted

in cultural beliefs and values about the speakers' sociolinguistic conventions and the production of verbal interaction. The cultural rootedness brings multiple competences and circles in conflict. As a result, whatever the variable – gender, ethnicity, age, class, religion – the pieces of identity are assembled and the whole social identity emerges as the conversation progresses.

It is not an overstatement to say that Yamuna Kachru's years of research greatly influenced the view of sociocultural linguistics and the direction of world Englishes. She offered a functional interpretation of discourse to express the social and cultural contexts. As Yamuna Kachru and Larry Smith (2009) note, as the number of functions of English around the world is expanding and the longer the exposure to bilingualism in English the more nativized the variety becomes and the more localized the functional ranges. The functional range of each variety is determined by its sociocultural and linguistic contexts. Hence as the indigenized English varieties flourish and continue to penetrate the multiple sociocultural contexts, the language will continue to take on the features of the culture. As English spreads and penetrates all functional domains of culture, and as the English variety becomes more and more localized, the interactional competences associated with gender, ethnicity and other social identities will diverge across Englishes, and the English varieties will be more distinct. Who knows what the future of world Englishes will hold?

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