

TITLE: Informational and Involved Production Features of Asian Englishes: A Corpus-Based Comparison

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English has enjoyed a continuous presence in many Asian countries for more than five hundred years. As English maintains its status as the *lingua franca* of business and globalized communication, much scholarship points to the growing importance and influence of English in this region. A recent book series proclaims with its title that “English is an Asian language” (Bautista, 1997). English emerges ubiquitously in Asia and has been used in numerous ways as speakers establish communicative connections within a very diverse set of cultures. However, there is rarely much discussion of what linguistic features make up Asian Englishes.

Asian varieties of English in India, the Philippines, and Singapore are arguably full-blown, self-sustaining, and here-to-stay Englishes with their own native speakers, grammatical structure, and vocabulary. They are similar (as developing dialects), but distinct from other varieties of English around the world. In this paper, we will discuss the importance and purpose of the International Corpus of English (ICE) as a systematic dataset to explore these three Asian Englishes. We compare Indian, Filipino, and Singaporean spoken and written English texts by examining the distributions of “involved” and “informational production” features of discourse from the model developed by Biber (1995, 2006). Informational Production (e.g., using nouns, prepositions, and attributive adjectives) and Involved Production (e.g., audience involvement tough private verbs, contractions, present tense verbs, and pronouns) are extracted from ICE by using a grammatical tagging program. By comparing and analyzing quantitative distributions, prominent characteristics, similarities and differences across these three varieties emerge. This paper will provide a preliminary description of the patterns of occurrences, what they indicate about Indian, Filipino, and Singaporean Englishes, and how they occur across registers or genres. Cultural implications, the role of first language, and contributions to pedagogy will be discussed.