

*When "errors" become innovations in the grammar of multilingual adults*

The aim of this presentation is to examine morphosyntactic variation in World Englishes, i.e. localized varieties of English which have emerged in diverse multicultural and multilingual contexts. Drawing on spoken data from the *International Corpus of English* < <http://ice-corpora.net/ice/index.htm>>, it will look specifically at adnominal relative clauses in a selection of varieties, namely Hong-Kong, India and Singapore. It will offer an analysis of a set of structures which diverge from the norm (e.g. deletion of stranded prepositions, as in “It’s kind of vaguely related to this piece that I was been talking” <ICE-HK:S1A-019#268:1:A>). These have been usually catalogued either as performance or planning errors or as linguistic innovative features, and the difficulty in distinguishing both has been a subject of debate (Bamgbose 1998: 1-2; Van Rooy 2011: 192), to which I hope to contribute with my analysis. Finally, the paper will elucidate the potential factors determining the innovations, by examining possible transfer from the relevant L1s, influence of the standard variety of the target language and effects of the development of the contact varieties themselves.

References:

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- Van Rooy, B. 2011. A principled distinction between error and conventionalized innovation in African Englishes. In J. Mukherjee & M. Hundt (eds.), *Exploring Second-Language Varieties of English and Learner English. Bridging a Paradigm Gap*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 189-207.