

## INTRODUCTION

The grammar of conditional constructions in English is perhaps one of the most complex areas. Even the most comprehensive and authoritative grammars have left a number of loose ends. It is also perhaps an area that has attracted the attention of philosophers and logicians. And yet it has not been adequately treated. Grammars of English for foreign students treat this topic apparently in a neat way, but foreign learners are always left with doubt about the structure and function of conditional sentences. Most often they are confused. This has been my personal experience as a teacher of English. This is one reason why I was attracted to the topic.

I could not have made any headway if I had chosen this topic in the grammar of standard English for research. As a student of M.Phil., I had the opportunity of being in first hand touch with the research on Indian English which was being pursued in the Department of English. Around the same time Mrs P.B. Katikar had just completed her Ph.D. dissertation on the meanings of the modals in Indian English in the same Department. She had produced a hypothesis about the behaviour of modal auxiliaries in conditional constructions and indirect speech. This occasioned the choice of the topic.

This study is an investigation of the hypothesis that there is a difference between Indian English and Standard English

in the use of modal auxiliaries and tense forms of verbs used in if-conditional constructions. While Mrs Katikar's study is based on 35 texts of The Kolhapur Corpus of Indian English, mine is based on all the 500 texts in the corpus. Corpus based studies have been found to be much more reliable and comprehensive in recent times. They have always thrown up new and unsuspected information about the grammar of language.

This study is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, we have attempted a short and limited review of relevant literature on Indian English. In the second chapter, we have summarized the views of well-known grammarians like Jespersen and mentioned the handbook rules in respect of conditional constructions. We have also summarized some of the important research contributions on the subject. Although we have taken note of the logician's view, we have not been able to elaborate it in great detail.

In the third chapter, we have described the materials and methods used in this investigation. After taking into consideration the work done so far, we have presented a detailed analysis of our data. The if-conditional constructions which were found to be deviant from standard English have been classified and commented upon. At the end of the chapter some observations based on our findings have been given. In the fourth chapter, we have given the specific findings of the work stressing the

need for treating these findings with caution. We have concluded the chapter by suggesting some specific areas of further research on the topic.

In the appendix we have reproduced the full contexts in which if-conditionals occur deviantly in our data. In the end we have provided a comprehensive bibliography of works consulted in the course of this investigation.

In writing the report of this work, we have mainly followed the MLA Style Sheet. In the body of the report all references to works have been made by mentioning the surname of the author and the year of publication. Page numbers have been mentioned where specific quotations have been used from the works.