

# WORLD ENGLISHES IN ASIAN CONTEXTS

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# 1

## *World Englishes today*

World is crazier and more of it than we think  
Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion  
A tangerine and spit the pips and feel  
The drunkenness of things being various.

Louis MacNiece, 'Snow', from *Selected Poems* (1990: 23)

### Introduction

The latter half of the twentieth century saw an amazing phenomenon — the emergence and acceptance of a single language as an effective means of communication across the globe. English by now is the most widely taught, learnt and spoken language in the world. It is used by over 300 million people as a first language in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA, and by over 700 million people as a second or additional language in the countries of Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, and of the island nations of the world (Crystal, 1985a; B. Kachru, 1999).

### The world-wide diffusion of English

The spread of English has been viewed in terms of two diasporas (see B. Kachru, 1992d; also see Chapter 2). The first arose as a consequence of the migration of English-speaking people from Great Britain to Australia, North America, and New Zealand. The second resulted primarily from the diffusion of English among speakers of diverse groups of peoples and languages across the world as a result of colonialism and other political and economic factors; only a small number of English speakers carried their language, as colonial officials, missionaries and businessmen. The two diasporas have distinct historical, sociocultural, ideological, linguistic, and pedagogical contexts. These

different contexts of diffusion have given rise to various phenomena that need careful study.

The field of English studies, whether in the first or the second diaspora, is fraught with debates and controversies. Questions ranging from ‘What is English?’ and ‘Whose language is it?’ to ‘Which English should we learn and teach?’ rage, and not only specialists but everyone active in areas such as politics, academia and media, has an opinion. Although most discussions tend to present issues in terms of binary categories such as *standard* vs. *non-standard*, *native* vs. *non-native*, British vs. American, and so on, the patterns that the global spread of English presents are much more complex than such an either-or view can realistically or usefully handle.

English has more centres than just America and Britain by now, and as linguists and language learners and teachers, it is important that we study the nature of this ‘various’ language. One useful way of conceptualizing this pluricentricity is to look at the English-using world in terms of three concentric circles, as B. Kachru (1985: 12–3) suggests. The Inner Circle comprises the ‘mother country’ — England and the British Isles — and the areas where the speakers from Britain took the language with them as they migrated — Australia, New Zealand and North America. The Outer Circle comprises the countries where the language was transplanted by a few colonial administrators, businessmen, educators, and missionaries, and is now nurtured by the vast majority of indigenous multilingual users. They use English as an additional language for their own purposes, which include many national and international domains. The Expanding Circle represents the countries (e.g., People’s Republic of China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, countries of Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America) where the language is still spreading, mainly for serving the need for an international medium in business and commerce, diplomacy, finance, and other such spheres (see Chapter 2). English in this circle, however, is also finding increased use in internal domains of academia, media and professions such as medicine, engineering, etc. (see Chapters 4 and 12).

## Language, dialect and variety

When we say English has become a global language, we are using the word ‘language’ to cover a great deal of territory. The term ‘language’ represents an idealization. Individuals do not speak a ‘language’, they speak a ‘variety’ of a language, or a ‘dialect’. We identify the national varieties by terms such as American English, Australian English and British English. Within each nation, we identify varieties by regions. In the UK, we speak of Scots, Northern, Central and Southern dialects. In the US, Wolfram describes eighteen dialect areas of the Atlantic seaboard, including a distinct dialect spoken in New York City (1981: 44 *ff.*).

Dialect variation is generally understood to be based on geography. However, there are other factors that lead to variation, too. For example, there are differences in the speech of different classes, ethnic groups, age groups, and genders, and there are differences between educated and uneducated speech. In the US, there are dialects such as African-American Vernacular English (Labov, 1998; see Chapter 15). In the UK, the dialect known as Cockney has a class basis: Trudgill (1990: 46) calls it 'the Traditional Dialect of working class London'. In South Asia, there are dialect differences based on castes and religions, so that one speaks of a Brahmin dialect and a non-Brahmin dialect of, say, Tamil, and of Hindu versus Muslim Bengali or Kashmiri (B. Kachru, 1969; Shapiro and Schiffman, 1983: 150–76; Ferguson and Dil, 1994). There are dialects that are identified with both religion and caste; for instance, within Hindu and Christian Konkani there are Brahmin Hindu vs. non-Brahmin Hindu Konkani, and Brahmin Christian vs. non-Brahmin Christian Konkani (Miranda, 1978).

For attitudinal reasons, the term 'dialect' is not the preferred way of referring to national Englishes, such as American English and British English. Instead, linguists and lay people alike use the term 'variety'. No matter which term we use, some people may still contest the superiority or inferiority of one variety or another. For instance, as recently as 1995, Britain's Prince Charles observed that the American version of the language was 'very corrupting', and that the English version was the 'proper' one. He told the British Council that 'we must act now to ensure that English and that, to my way of thinking, means English English, maintains its position as the world language well into the next century' (*Chicago Tribune*, 24 March 1995, Section 1, p. 4).

## Accent

The feature commonly used as a criterion in talking about variation is 'accent'. Accent refers, in addition to the pronunciation of sounds, to stress and intonation, or to the rhythm of speech. Just like variety, accent also leads to controversies about which one is superior, desirable, and so on. As the British phonetician David Abercrombie observes (1951: 15): 'The accent bar is a little like a colour-bar — to many people, on the right side of the bar, it appears eminently reasonable. It is very difficult to believe, if you talk RP yourself, that it is not intrinsically superior to other accents.' Actually, the RP accent, though intimately associated with standard British English, has always been a minority accent. According to McArthur (1992: 851), it is 'unlikely ever to have been spoken by more than 3–4% of the British population'. This is true of other standard or 'upper-class' accents, too.

When people talk about variation in language, they do not really make a distinction between 'dialect' and 'accent'; there is a consistent pairing of dialect

and accent in people's minds. As Strevens (1983: 89) observes, '[s]ince dialect + accent pairs co-exist in this way, it is not surprising that most non-specialists, and even many teachers of English, habitually confuse the terms *dialect* and *accent*, and observe no distinction between them.' The confusion, to some extent, is understandable: the pairing of dialect and accent, however, breaks down in the case of standard languages; e.g., the presidents of the United States in the last two decades have all had different accents, but they may all rightly be considered speakers of Standard American English. The same is true of the BBC news anchors and reporters who have regional accents, often identifiable as Irish or Scottish, but they are all considered speakers of standard or educated British English as opposed to, say, American English.

## Varieties of world Englishes

The varieties of English that are commonly accepted and are considered 'legitimate' for educational purposes all over the world are American and British English. The other varieties, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand English, are still trying to achieve legitimacy (Bell and Kuiper, 1999; Collins and Blair, 1989; Turner, 1997; Hundt, 1998). The national varieties used in countries of Asia and Africa where English has official and societal status raise even more debate and disagreement. Table 1.1 gives some idea of the range of countries across the world where English has official status and is used for intra-national purposes (B. Kachru and Nelson, 1996: 75).

## Diffusion and variation

The global spread of English and its unprecedented success as a language used in many domains all over the world have created both elation and consternation among language experts. For some there is a great deal of satisfaction that people, at last, have a viable medium for international communication in place of the tower of Babel. There is, however, an equal measure of concern at the perceived variation among Englishes and the apprehension that ultimately this will lead to the decay and disintegration of the English language. Of course, what is at stake here is not *English* per se, but *Standard English*, however we may choose to define it. The last statement is valid in view of the fact that there already is a great deal of variation in what is known as English, as has already been pointed out; there are regional variations in, e.g., American and British Englishes, and there are variations related to age, gender, etc.

Table 1.1 Functional domains of English across the Three Circles

| <i>Functions</i>            | <i>Inner Circle</i> | <i>Outer Circle</i> | <i>Expanding Circle</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Access code                 | +                   | +                   | +                       |
| Advertising                 | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |
| Corporate trade             | +                   | +                   | +                       |
| Development                 | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |
| Government                  | +                   | +/-                 | -                       |
| Linguistic impact           | +                   | +/-                 | +                       |
| Literary creativity         | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |
| Literary renaissance        | +                   | +                   | +                       |
| News broadcasting           | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |
| Newspapers                  | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |
| Scientific higher education | +                   | +                   | +/-                     |
| Scientific research         | +                   | +                   | +/-                     |
| Social interaction          | +                   | +/-                 | +/-                     |

[NB: The above table shows the presence and co-existence of World Englishes with other languages in various functions in bilingual or multilingual contexts. The depth of presence in each function varies from region to region and country to country. The '+' indicates an exclusive use of English in the domain, the '+/-' indicates co-existence of other local languages along with English, and the '-' signals the absence of English in the domain.]

## Standards

Overarching all the discussion of variation within, say, the UK and US are the concepts of Standard British English and General American English, which are codified in grammatical descriptions, dictionaries, and manuals of usage. According to those who voice concern with respect to the developments of Outer- and Expanding-Circle Englishes, it is the 'standard' language which is in danger of being diluted by these new varieties.

The concerns of standards and codification become clearer and more fruitfully discussed in the context of emergence of indigenized Englishes outside the Inner Circle. The debate between those who see a deterioration in standards and therefore reject notions of indigenized Englishes, and those who argue that indigenized Englishes demonstrate the acculturation of English to varied contexts and celebrate the creative potential of its users, has been going on for over two decades now. The questions raised are not only relevant to world Englishes but also to sociolinguistics in general as well as to the more immediate concerns of learners, parents and teachers — those of educational policy and planning.

The history of how the notion of 'standard' language arose and became established is both interesting and instructive, and is discussed elsewhere (see

Chapter 7). The issues of standards and the codification of indigenized varieties in the Outer and Expanding Circles are of more immediate relevance here.

## External models in the Outer and Expanding Circles

A number of scholars have been aware of the fact that the notion of standard in language has more to do with ideological than with linguistic factors. For example, Marckwardt (1942: 309) wrote that ‘the acceptance as a standard of one type of speech over another is based not upon linguistic considerations but rather upon political, cultural, and economic factors’. He went on to suggest that London English may be a satisfactory standard for most Southern English speakers, but ‘there is no excuse for its adoption in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, or San Francisco, when these cities in themselves constitute powerful centers which affect in many ways the behavior of culture of the inhabitants within their sphere of influence’.

Similar arguments are applicable to justify an Indian, a Nigerian, or a Singaporean model for the respective countries. However, there are well-known scholars who are in favour of maintaining an external norm — American or British — for the Outer and Expanding Circles on the basis of arguments such as the following.

First, a uniform standard world-wide is essential for maintaining ‘world English’ or ‘international English’ or ‘global English’ as a viable means of communication (*a lingua franca*). Acceptance of multiple norms would lead to fragmentation of the language and leave us again without a common language for interaction across cultures. The leadership of Outer- and Expanding-Circle countries (e.g., presidents and prime ministers) is not in favour of internal norms, anyway, which they view as non-standard.

Second, there are already varieties that have been codified after extensive and intensive research. There is an abundance of instructional and reference materials in American and British English. Other Englishes, such as Indian or Singaporean, have yet to be codified. In any case, educated spoken varieties across these regions are not so different from American or British varieties, or from one another, and even less differentiated are the written varieties. People in the Outer and Expanding Circles use English for restricted purposes, for which the models of English currently available are quite adequate. Therefore, there is no need to look for new, internal norms in India, the Philippines, or Singapore.

Third, the relationship between language and culture is organic, and all this talk of nativization and acculturation does not change the fact that English necessarily reflects British and/or American culture. The creativity of the Inner-Circle user or native speaker remains unmatched in the Outer- and



Expanding-Circle varieties, as they are not used in all the domains of human activity. Literary creativity in the Outer and Expanding Circles has value in sociological and anthropological terms (the works represent the exotica), but African, Indian, Philippine, Singaporean and other literatures are on the periphery of American and British English literatures, which define the literary canon.

Fourth, the case in favour of regional norms, such as South Asian, African, South-East Asian, etc., reflects 'liberation linguistics' ideologies and is motivated by considerations of power.

## Internal models in the Outer and Expanding Circles

Contrary to these views in favour of external models, the supporters of internal models in the Outer Circle present the following arguments.

First, the development of American English and now the progressive movement towards claims of independent status for Australian, Canadian and New Zealand Englishes demonstrate that acculturation of language to new contexts is unavoidable. To quote Mencken (1936: 3), '[t]he first American colonists had perforce to invent Americanisms, if only to describe the unfamiliar landscape and weather, flora and fauna confronting them.' Given this intuitively reasonable view, it is easy to see that there is even stronger justification for 'inventing' Indianisms, Nigerianisms, Philippinisms, Singaporeanisms, etc., considering how socioculturally different India, Nigeria, The Philippines and Singapore are from North America and Britain. The claim that English is used for a narrow range of purposes in the ESL contexts has also directly been questioned, for example, by Kennedy in his comments (Quirk and Widdowson, 1985: 7): 'whenever there has been careful research on the use of English in an ESL context, an organic complexity has been revealed in the functional range, use and purpose ... . Surely it is what the users of the language do, not what a small elite would like them to do which counts in the end.'

Second, languages do not owe their existence to codification, they exist because they are used by people. Just as Americanisms were noted and commented upon long before grammars and dictionaries of the American language were compiled, features of African, South Asian, Southeast Asian and other Englishes have increasingly been catalogued by careful researchers. Dictionaries of many of the varieties are already available or are being compiled (see Chapter 17) and partial grammatical descriptions are also accessible in existing reference resources (see Chapters 3 and 16). The International Corpus of English or ICE (Nelson, 2004), comprising data from varieties of English from fifteen countries (Australia, Canada, East Africa, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore,

South Africa, Sri Lanka, USA), will lead to research on these varieties. Meanwhile, the users of these varieties are making use of the resource in ways they find serve their purposes best. At the time Nelson (2004) went to press, the following corpora were available for academic research: Great Britain, East Africa (Kenya and Tanzania), India, New Zealand, Philippines, and Singapore, and rapid progress was being made by the compilers of corpora from Hong Kong, Ireland, Jamaica, Malaysia, and South Africa. (The following Web site contains detailed information about the availability of these corpora: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/index.htm>.)

Third, as users of English keep enlarging its range and depth in the Outer and Expanding Circles and the language becomes acculturated and transforms itself into localized varieties (see Chapter 2), the question of the organic relationship between *American* or *British* culture and English becomes moot. Both linguists researching the varieties and authors writing in African, Indian, Philippine and Singaporean Englishes have pointed to the need for moulding the language to their respective experiences (see Chapter 10; Dhillon 1994; B. Kachru, 2002). The strength of the English language has been its ability to represent effectively the contextual experiences of those who use it (see Chapter 8). This is true of all languages of wider communication, but even more so in the case of English.

Fourth, it is worth repeating the point that, ultimately, the issue of standard has more to do with power and ideology than with language; as Crystal observes (in Quirk and Widdowson, 1985: 9), ‘... all discussion of standards ceases very quickly to be a linguistic discussion, and becomes instead an issue of social identity.’ The assertion of status of Indian, the Philippine or Nigerian English is an assertion of sociolinguistic reality and a claim of identity. The evidence for the reality and the justification for the claim of identity are in the unique characteristics that English has acquired and the uses that it is being put to around the world.

Fifth, as for the increasing differentiation among varieties and issues of intelligibility, as Crystal puts it (1997: 136–7), ‘A likely scenario is that our current ability to use more than one dialect would simply extend to meet the fresh demands of the international scene ... Most people are already “multidialectal” to a greater or lesser extent.’

Teaching methods and materials, selection of teachers, including the desirability of importing ‘native speakers’ as instructors or assistants, and types of tests are all intimately dependent upon the resolution of the controversies discussed above. If an education ministry, school committee, or school administration believes in the primacy of an Inner-Circle English, the decisions that those bodies make will be quite different from those in a system that is oriented towards regional or local norms (see Chapter 9 for discussion of these issues). While debates rage and policies are formulated or changed, the use of English in different contexts is transforming the English language in various ways.

## Ideological perspectives

There is another side to the spread of English, which is not purely linguistic or sociolinguistic, and which brings in troubling questions of power and ideology. Both Inner- and other-Circle scholars and researchers have been grappling with the impact of English on other languages and cultures.

As a language with transnational presences in various configurations of institutionalization, ranges of functions, and depths of penetration in societies, English lends obvious advantages to its users. On the other hand, it is not surprising that such access to a global language comes with costs of various sorts. English is the paradigm modern language of political and economic power. As such, some observers assert that the power of English is the factor responsible for disenfranchisement of a vast majority of populations in the third world, and a major cause of the 'deaths' of hundreds of minority languages.

Phillipson (1992: 17 *ff.*) asserts that '[t]he advance of English, whether in Britain, North America, South Africa, Australia or New Zealand has invariably been at the expense of other languages', and claims that 'the monolingualism of the Anglo-American establishment blinds its representatives to the realities of multilingualism in the contemporary world and gives them a ... false perspective'.

He divides the communities of the English-using world into two collectives: the *core* and *periphery*. The core, according to his characterization and listing of countries, matches the Inner Circle of B. Kachru (1985). The periphery is subdivided into two categories: those countries that 'require English as an international link language', such as Japan and Korea, and those that use English for 'a range of intranational purposes', such as India and Singapore. The latter sub-category comprises former colonial countries where English is a desirable medium, and access to it is actively sought by many people. Citing B. Kachru (1986a), Phillipson observes: 'those in possession of English benefit from an alchemy which transmutes [language] into material and social ... advantage. Not surprisingly, attitudes to the language tend to be very favourable.'

However, English replaces and 'displaces' other languages in both core and periphery countries. Displacement occurs when 'English takes over in specific domains', such as education or government (Phillipson, 1992: 27). This evaluative view of the nature of the spread of English is further examined in Chapter 22.

Pennycook (1994: 73) explores the sources of what he refers to as 'discourse of English as an International Language (EIL)', and also the nature of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics as disciplines. 'Discourse' in his use (see his f.n. 1 on p. 104) seems to be about knowledge as power, and about who controls any body of knowledge, thus not only accruing power to themselves,

but also controlling who will be admitted to the club or acknowledged as having a share in power.

Pennycook's thesis is that the power and prestige of EIL came about largely because of what he terms 'a will to description' (1994: 73). That is, the English-speaking colonizers were also in part linguistic codifiers, and gatekeepers with respect to people who wished to share in the economic and other benefits of becoming English users. With reference to how English was regulated by its colonial 'owners', Pennycook makes the following observations about 'the extent to which linguistics is a very particular European cultural form':

From the cultural politics of linguistics has emerged a view of language as a homogeneous unity, as objectively describable, as an isolated structural entity; meaning is taken either to reside in a world/word correspondence that is best articulated in English or within the system itself (and typically in the brain of the native speaker); monolingualism is taken to be the norm; and speech is always given priority over writing. (Pennycook, 1994: 109)

The second arm of regulating language was the importance attached to language standardization, because of 'the belief that language reveals the mind and that to speak the common or "vulgar" language demonstrated that one belonged to the vulgar classes and thus that one was morally and intellectually inferior' (p. 112). Standardization in the colonial period thus served to make it easy to tell who was who in social hierarchies. Pennycook further comments that:

[t]he view of the spread of English as natural, neutral and beneficial is made possible by the dominance of positivism and structuralism in linguistics and applied linguistics, since these paradigms have allowed for the concentration only on a notion of abstract system at the expense of social, cultural or political understandings of language. (Pennycook, 1994: 141)

Phillipson and Pennycook represent views of English and of English teaching and learning which have raised important questions that contribute to the entire debate on the benefits and drawbacks of the spread of English.

## Literatures in world Englishes

The ideological stance on a 'legitimate standard' extends from forms of language to canonicity of literatures. Approaches to literatures in English have for a long time recognized at least American and British streams of productivity. This, of course, was not always the case, but it is certainly true today. In the same way, English literatures produced in Africa and Asia 'have both a national identity and a linguistic distinctiveness' (B. Kachru, 1986b:

161). Just as American writers diverged from previous literary styles and genres to express new settings and relationships, Outer-Circle authors such as Rao and Achebe exploit linguistic, social and cultural features which allow them to express realities, themes and settings 'to delineate contexts which generally do not form part of what may be labeled the traditions of English literature'. Deviations from familiar genres and norms of the Inner Circle have been disturbing to some observers; but for others, it seems reasonable that English take on new forms and functions as it is transplanted into multilingual settings (Ashcroft et al., 1989; Talib, 2002).

Having made the choice to write in English to start with, multilingual authors have to pay attention to the forms and functions they assign to their English usage. As Thumboo observes:

But language must serve, not overwhelm, if the Commonwealth writer is to succeed. Mastering it involves holding down and breaching a body of habitual English associations to secure that condition of verbal freedom cardinal to energetic, resourceful writing. In a sense the language is remade, where necessary, by adjusting the interior landscape of words in order to explore and meditate (*sic*) the permutations of another culture and environment. (Thumboo, 1976: ix)

Monolingual authors make the same sorts of choices, of course, e.g., in considering the usage of characters' dialogue on the basis of geography or education; but the decisions of the multilingual author are more complex, as they involve more potential variables, including those of multiple literary traditions. For example, Southeast Asia has cultural and literary traditions inherited from Sanskrit, Malay, Chinese, Javanese, Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, to name just a few, which manifest themselves in English literary creations of the region. As Thumboo points out (1976: xvi), it is not possible to erase the traces of these traditions: 'cultures, especially those with a long history, have a hard core, conservative and self-protecting and not likely to yield.' This is especially true of the local languages, Chinese and Sanskrit in the context of, say, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

## Multilingual English users

All language use is at its heart 'creative'; this insight, now a commonplace observation, was a part of the paradigm shift in formal linguistics in the 1960s: most utterances are novel utterances, and hearers are able to decipher such novel messages at a first hearing most of the time. Multilingual language users have more options of codes, strategies, and nuances since they control more than one linguistic system.

To take an example from literature, the following passage from Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* (1963: 10; cited in B. Kachru, 1986b: 165) depicts the character Jayaramachar telling *Harikatha*, traditional religious stories, in which a connection is made between ancient Indian legends and contemporary events leading towards independence:

“Today,” he says, “it will be the story of Siva and Parvati.” And Parvati in penance becomes the country and Siva becomes heaven knows what! “Siva is the three-eyed,” he says, “and Swaraj too is three-eyed: Self-purification, Hindu-Moslem unity, Khaddar.” And then he talks of Damayanthi and Sakunthala and Yasodha and everywhere there is something about our country and something about Swaraj ...

In this passage, names such as *Siva* and *Parvati* contain ‘reference to the multitude of the pantheon of Hindu gods’, while the word *Khaddar*, ‘handspun cloth’, is a contextually meaningful reference to an element of anti-Raj protests — making cloth for clothing by hand in India, rather than buying it from British purveyors. Such texts raise ‘*interpretive* difficulties’ (B. Kachru, 1986b: 165–6) because readers from outside the context do not have straightforward access to the assumptions that make the allusions work effectively as parts of the overall text. Such use of the language extends the cultural load of English words to Asian and African myths, folklore, and traditions. It universalizes English, and to that extent ‘de-Englishizes’ it.

Multilingual people’s grammars are best thought of in terms of ‘verbal repertoires’; they use ‘a formally and functionally determined range of languages ... as part of their competence for linguistic interaction’. One of the salient devices available to such users is ‘the faculty and ease of mixing and switching [of codes], and the adoption of stylistic and discoursal strategies from the total [available] repertoire’ (B. Kachru, 1986b: 164). The passage cited above from Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* illustrates this (for code-mixing and switching, see Chapter 18).

## Issues in English language education

Challenges to English language teaching (ELT) from a world Englishes perspective are many. As soon as one recognizes the pluralistic nature of English across the world today, the possibilities become numerous. The concerns turn on nativization and standardization, concepts explored in this chapter and throughout this work from various perspectives.

Tawake’s Symposium on World Englishes in the Classroom (1995) reveals some of the more specific terms in which these concerns about teaching of world Englishes have been addressed. Brown’s paper in the symposium explores the basic questions of whether ‘to teach or not to teach’ world

Englishes. Bhatt investigates how prescriptivism and creativity interact and conflict in approaching the teaching of world Englishes. Baumgardner uses Pakistani English to present an investigation of ‘acceptability and the norm’ in a non-Inner-Circle English. Nelson addresses concerns raised with regard to intelligibility in teaching English composition to mixed-background students. Tawake brings out the importance of ‘cross-cultural reader response’ in assigning comprehensibility and interpretability to texts. She concludes, ‘If readers from different cultures create vivid, dynamic, but different, imaginative experiences from the same text and reach very different interpretations of the meaning of that text, our approach to teacher training in literature should be guided by that reality’ (1995a: 296).

A study by Smith (1992: 86) provides evidence that ‘many native and nonnative speakers of English would label most educated speakers of nonnative English as users of Standard English’. For those who share this view, the definition of ‘Standard’ is one that conforms to the reality of world Englishes; those who do not share this view face the difficult task of trying to *rationaly* explain away what Strevens (1983: 88) referred to as the ‘evolution’, as opposed to conscious fashioning, of standard English (see Chapter 7).

However, many ‘fallacies’ in facing the realities of ELT in the post-Inner-Circle English-using world still remain (B. Kachru, 1992b: 357). Among these are the mistaken belief that English is a means to interacting with and becoming involved in the cultures of Inner-Circle users, or that Inner-Circle users have any large degree of input in ELT in the Outer and Expanding Circles (1992b: 358). It is not in fact obvious that most global users of English have any desire to speak or write like Americans, Canadians, British or Australians. The challenges to ELT in the future perhaps begin with settling codified models and norms for ‘local’ Englishes.

It is not necessary for everyone in every part of the world to be able to communicate as readily with an American or an Australian as they do with fellow countrymen. But users familiar with several varieties of English can make accommodations with other users they come in contact with, to the greater satisfaction of all participants. This means that ELT professionals have a responsibility not to limit their students’ creativity, but to help to shape it, through increased awareness of others and ever less complacency about ‘my English’.

## Conclusion

As this brief survey shows, the areas of study of world Englishes and the approaches to those areas are many and complex. From description of the language to evaluation of its impact, formal and functional categories of knowledge are available for analysis or waiting to be brought to light. The concepts and information outlined here will be treated in detail in the following chapters.

Familiarity with variation creates awareness among users of all varieties of English to the extraordinary ranges of possibilities for expression by those who can draw on multicultural and multilingual experience. Such awareness makes demands on monolinguals, as well as on anyone unfamiliar with the variety of English employed by a speaker/writer from an unfamiliar part of the English-using world. Variations in genres, styles, and devices have their effects on English as a whole. It is in this sense that English is becoming an ever more ‘universal’ language, not in the sense that it is one code which can be acquired in one place and then transferred to another as a whole, unadapted structure (B. Kachru, 1986b: 170).

### Suggested activities

Read the following paragraph and discuss the questions that follow (Bolton, Kingsley, 2000, *The sociolinguistics of Hong Kong and the space for Hong Kong English*. *World Englishes* 19(3), 265–85):

In this article, Bolton applies the defining characteristics suggested in Butler (1997) to define a variety of English to determine if Hong Kong English, one of the world Englishes, is a variety, and goes on to say that the discussion of whether the ‘criteria’ are sufficiently persuasive or powerful to make a distinct ‘variety’ evident is less important than ‘the desire to create a new space for discussion and discourse on Hong Kong English. Such a space would encompass not only the global and cosmopolitan, but also the local and ludic [playful], not just one variety of localised English, but a number of different voices’ (p. 281).

- a. How important is it for users and teachers of English and researchers in the field to become aware of *all* variation in their region and across the regions?
- b. A great deal of importance is attached to standard language, and dialects — whether geographical, or based on factors such as ethnicity, gender, age, etc. — are either totally neglected or less valued in ‘high culture’ contexts of academia, government, legal system, etc. What are the consequences of this sociolinguistic practice? What is your reaction to Bolton’s plea for creating ‘space’ for not only the more standard-like variety but also the ‘playful’ varieties in your own region?
- c. Unlike the ‘high culture’ contexts mentioned above, literature and media (popular or the ‘high’ variety) exploit all variation for creative purposes. Discuss the reasons for such use of variation and its significance for the societal view of ‘standard’ language.





## Notes

### CHAPTER 3

1. The excerpt quoted from Longe (1999: 239) at the beginning of this chapter expresses advice to new students printed in a University of Benin (Nigeria) student magazine. The meaning of the items in italics are as follows: *banging* 'failing a test'; *hackeous* 'strict, mean, difficult'; *fashee* 'to regard as unwanted'; *jacker* 'reader'; *aro* 'unhinged (derived from a place name near Ibadan where a mental hospital is located); *BI* 'the mental ward at the University of Benin Hospital'; *burst* 'miss or cut', *jambite* 'a new male student admitted to the university following the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board Examination'.
2. Although there is controversy with regard to the distinction between stress-time vs. syllable-time in phonological literature, the remarks made here about differences between varieties is a valid observation. No matter what the ultimate phonetic explanation may turn out to be for the perception of rhythmic difference, there is a perceivable dissimilarity between the Inner- and other-Circle varieties which is still being described in these terms (see, e.g., Tayao, 2004).
3. The details of sound systems in various Englishes are based on the following sources: B. Kachru (1983) for Indian English; Bao (2001), Brown (1986) and Platt and Weber (1980) for Singapore-Malaysian English; Llamzon (1997) and Bautista and Bolton (2004b) for Philippine English; Rahman (1990) for Pakistani English; and other sources listed in the references.

### CHAPTER 4

1. Koyama (1992) does not indicate whether this is a recorded text of a naturally occurring conversation or a constructed dialogue.
2. The idea that an utterance may constitute an act was first articulated in the field of philosophy by Austin (1962) and subsequently elaborated in a series of works by Searle beginning with Searle (1969). For a linguistic formulation of the notion, see Sadock (1974) and other works that deal with pragmatics, such as G. Green (1989, Chapters 4 and 5).

## CHAPTER 5

1. From Reid, T. R. (1998) Yobbish prat whinges on. *The Yomiuri Shimibun*. Friday, 15 May (reprinted from *The Washington Post*).
2. A cloze passage is used in testing to evaluate the test-taker's grammatical or lexical knowledge. Every nth word or item, or selected items, are deleted from a text; the test-taker is asked to read the passage and fill in the blanks in order to make the text complete in some consistent and coherent way.

## CHAPTER 6

1. The parameter-setting model claims that underlying principles of linguistic structure are universal; exposure to language-specific data simply sets the parameters of applicable rules. For instance, all languages have S(ubjects), O(bjects) and V(erbs); the order in which they appear is set by the parameter of specific languages, SVO for English, SOV for Japanese, etc.
2. These observations address an outline of the major aspects of the 'models' problem in world Englishes with regard to SLA; for detailed discussions and case studies, see B. Kachru (1982b); Sridhar and Sridhar (1992); and Smith (1992). Eminently common-sense perspectives on internationally applicable notions of 'standard' English may be found in B. Kachru (1976) and Strevens (1983).
3. This may be changing in Singapore as more and more young people adopt Singaporean English as their primary language. Even Singapore, though, does not support the creolization hypothesis, as the acrolectal form has coexisted with mesolectal and basilectal forms in the past and continues to do so in the present.

## CHAPTER 7

1. See B. Kachru (1995b) for more on speech community and speech fellowship.
2. The allusion in the term 'Caliban syndrome' is to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* I, ii, in which Prospero chides Caliban for being ungrateful and reminds him that it is to him, Prospero, that Caliban owes his power of speech. Caliban replies, 'You taught me language; and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse; the red plague rid you, / For learning me your language!'

## CHAPTER 8

1. This quote is from Mark Twain's 'Explanatory' note (p. xxxii) facing p. 1 of the text of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884/1985, Penguin Books edition, NY: Viking Penguin).
2. The interview with Kirpal Singh was published in *The Straits Times* of 15 March 1992.

## CHAPTER 9

1. The excerpt from Mikie Kiyoi is from the *International Herald Tribune*, 3 November 1995.

2. This chapter draws upon B. Kachru (1995b) to a great extent, and adds other perspectives to the discussion.

## CHAPTER 10

1. From Keki N. Daruwalla's poem, *The Mistress*, in Makarand Paranjape (ed.) *Indian Poetry in English*, Hyderabad: Macmillan India Limited, 1993.
2. Although Widdowson's chapter is exclusively concerned with the importance of poetry in language teaching, the arguments are equally applicable to other types of literary works.
3. The reference is to the Commonwealth of Nations, organized at the end of the British Empire to bring together the ex-colonies; the foundation of the Commonwealth as an association of truly independent sovereign states was laid in the presence of eight countries of the Commonwealth — Australia, Britain, Canada, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, New Zealand, Pakistan and South Africa — in April 1949 in London.
4. The major Indian languages (e.g., Hindi) do not have separate expressions for greeting and leave-taking; for instance, one may use the expression *namaste* in both situations.
5. See Resources for listings of select writers of contact literatures.
6. There is a long tradition of studying classical languages such as Arabic, Avestan, Classical Chinese, Persian and Vedic and Classical Sanskrit in certain institutions in the West. However, there is no tradition of studying modern languages of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world comparable to the study of modern European languages in Western educational institutions.
7. Hulme's glossary gives *awe* as 'exclamation of dismay, or despair' (p. 446). For references and discussion see B. Kachru (1983a).

## CHAPTER 11

1. The other superposed languages were Sanskrit, Persian, and Portuguese, the latter confined to basically the west coast.
2. In the Indian diaspora in many parts of the world, however, English plays a role in religious ceremonies and rituals associated with Hinduism (see Pandharipande, 2001).

## CHAPTER 16

1. Cited from *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development*, translated by George C. Buck and Frithjof A. Raven (1971). Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
2. The study provides brief background information and justification for the choice of these varieties of English, which are not recapitulated here.
3. Adjective as a category is predominantly stative, as opposed to verb, which is primarily dynamic in English. The use of simple present tense usually indicates static, habitual or generic properties rather than dynamic action or process.

## CHAPTER 19

1. Since the overall sample size was different (50,000 word from Maori speakers and 250,000 words from Pakeha speakers) the total number of occurrences of *eh* for each group was converted to frequency index scores by calculating the rate of occurrence per 10,000 words.
2. The transcription symbols indicate the following meanings: captial letters indicate emphatic stress; square brackets indicate paralinguistic feature (such as laughter) or gloss and : : surrounding it signal its beginning and end; + indicates pause up to one second; //... \and / ... \ signal simultaneous speech; (word) indicates the best guess at an unclear utterance; ? signals question or rising intonation; - indicates incomplete or cut off utterance; and ... signals sections of transcript omitted from the quoted excerpt.

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