

## English in a world-wide context

Various labels have been used to characterize the different types of English in the world today and their relationships to one another. Most lists contain:

### English as a Native Language (ENL)

is often the only language learned (ENL), sometimes the first language learned. Such an L1 (or a person's first language) is usually their native language or mother tongue.

**Examples:** English in Britain or the United States (ENL); the child of Mexican immigrants growing up in Los Angeles whose parents speak English with him or her (rather than, for example, Spanish). Often, however, it may be more useful to talk about a person's *primary language*.

### A primary language

is a person's dominant language, which is usually, but not necessarily their *L1*.

**Examples:** a native speaker of Igbo living in the Yoruba region of Nigeria who may seldom use his or her L1 but finds English (or Nigerian Pidgin English) more useful. Or: English used by a Eurocrat from Greece (who has moved in with a fellow Eurocrat from Lithuania) in Brussels.

The language most widely and frequently used ("widely" refers to the domains or areas of use, e.g. family, government, military or police, administration, school, religion, the market, work; "frequently" refers to relative amount of communication carried out in a given language) is a person's primary language. But a primary language is also one used with a high degree of proficiency, where "Real proficiency is when you are able to take possession of the language and turn it to your advantage" (Widdowson 1994: qtd. in Jenkins 2009: 188).

**Example:** English used by a Eurocrat from Greece (who has moved in with a fellow Eurocrat from Lithuania) in the EU in Brussels (= Primary Language).

### English as a Second Language (ESL)

one of two (or more) languages used in a single country for official purposes. A second language need not be learned to a high degree of fluency and versatility nor need it be used with high frequency, and it may be learned in school and by routine exposure to it in some contexts of use. ESL is English used by people whose native language is not English in a country in which English has official status.

**Examples:** an ethnic Chinese Singaporean government official whose home language is Hokkien, but whose usual working language is English may be said to represent a case of ESL. Or: English spoken by a Quebecois in Montreal.

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### English as a pidgin

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a pidgin is not a native language, but a language that serves as a *lingua franca*. It is often severely reduced in its linguistic repertoire, i.e. it has little or no redundancy; and it has a restricted number of social functions (domains, registers).

**Example:** Pidgin English used by a young man who has recently moved from the countryside in Northern Nigeria to Lagos.

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### English as a creole

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a creole is a native language, and it serves as a community language. It has a full linguistic repertoire and an expanded number of social functions (domains, registers) as compared to a pidgin.

**Examples:** Creole English (Tok Pisin) spoken by children growing up in a polyglot community in Port Moresby; the everyday language in Kingston, Jamaica.

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### English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

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is English that is non-native in countries in which English does not have any official status. **Example:** English in China or in Germany. It is not possible to make any claims about whether EFL is any more or less like ENL than ESL is. EFL may be learned under conditions of formal instruction, e.g. at school, or by being exposed to the language while spending time in a country where it is spoken. EFL has a full linguistic repertoire and may potentially be used in as full a range of *registers*, *styles*, and *domains* as any L1. In general, ENL competence is the norm for EFL-learners even though their degree of attainment may fall short of this.

**Examples:** English as learned in German schools; or: the English spoken by an undocumented Chicana working as a nanny in a Manhattan home. It may be used as a *lingua franca*; in such cases the linguistic repertoire may be restricted and its functions reduced.

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### English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

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is a term that emphasizes the functional nature of *EFL*. When a Brazilian engineer talks to a German businessperson in English, the important factor is not that English is a foreign language, but that it permits communication. Indeed, ELF may be ENL, ESL, or EFL. As such, it is widespread; it is a contact language; and it is frequently learned for utilitarian (e.g. business) rather than integrative reasons (e.g. becoming a part of the associated culture).

**Examples:** The English spoken in an international youth camp in Norway by participants from England, Spain, France, Germany, and Poland; or: the English used in trade negotiations between a Chinese businessman and an Argentine ranch owner.

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### Models

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**McArthur** (1998: 97) provides a list of varieties that is incomplete. His varieties are all on a par, thus suggesting that they have a similar status, regardless of whether ENL, ESL, pidgin, creole, or EFL. He also groups regions together in a wheel-like pattern as if they shared a standard, e.g. Australia, New Zealand, and

the South Pacific. Furthermore, all the varieties are linked to a central hub, which he calls “World Standard English,” as if there were such a thing.

**Kachru** (1992: 356) gives numbers that are extremely misleading, e.g. not everyone in India knows or uses English, yet the total population is given as if everyone were a speaker of English. In addition, his lists are incomplete, e.g. South Africa doesn’t show up anywhere.

**Modiano** (1999a: 25) differs in providing a model based on proficiency rather than country. Yet this model is trivial: all it says is that (1) some people don’t know English; (2) others are learning it; (3) yet others speak it as a native language or a foreign language; and (4) some speak it as an international language. Nothing is said about regional or national distribution.

**Graddol** (2006: 110) also uses a model that ignores regional-national varieties and takes only proficiency as a criterion, moving from high (central) to low (peripheral) proficiency.

**Modiano** (1999b: 10) suggests a further model that simply lists (1) major ENL varieties; (2) EFL “varieties”; and (3) “other varieties.” The various varieties are treated as if unitary, and the levels of proficiency are not put into a reasonable relationship to the varieties (1–3) listed.

Graddol, D. (2006) “The Decline of the Native Speaker,” *AILA Review* 13.

Jenkins, J. (2009) *World Englishes. A Resource Book for Students*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Kachru, B.B. (1992) “Models for Non-native Englishes,” in: B.B. Kachru (ed.) *The Other Tongue: English across Cultures*. 2nd edition. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

McArthur, T. (1998) *The English Languages*. Cambridge: CUP.

Modiano, M. (1999a) “Omtermatopmaö Enmgöosj om the Global Village,” *English Today* 15.2, 22–34.

Modiano (1999b) “Standard English(es) and Educational Practices for the World’s Lingua Franca,” *English Today* 15.4, 3–13.

Widdowson, H. (1994) “The Ownership of English,” In: *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 377–346.

## Linguistic imperialism

The kind of English that was transferred overseas by British and Irish settlers was based on the two traditions within GenE. Early movement to North America was influenced by the better educated Separatists and Puritans in New England and by the genteel classes that were to become the planters of Virginia and the Carolinas. New waves of migrants from London and the Home Counties, the north of England, from Scotland, and from Ulster were largely speakers of Non-Standard GenE. With the transportation to the penal colonies of Australia, there was a similar division: the officers who administered the settlements were closer to StE while the transported prisoners were the carriers of the non-standard. In South Africa there was an initial influx of military officers, administrators, schoolmasters, and parsons and in 1820 of middle-class British. Consequently, there is little regional influence from Britain “other than the lower-middle or lower-class speech of the Home Counties” (Lanham 1996: 20). In New Zealand the settlers came from both the United Kingdom and Australia.

In those countries such as Nigeria and the Philippines, where British or American colonial control was established, but where relatively few European or American native speakers of English settled, the usual language of administration was English. Inasmuch as it was taught in the schools, it was StE. However, there was also a parallel emergence of English pidgins and creoles in many of these countries. In the post-colonial period independence did not bring about abrupt change.<sup>1</sup> English continued to be used, but what was once imposed by imperial domination has in the neo-colonial period mutated to self-imposition.

<sup>1</sup> Much the same sort of heritage can be traced in the former French, Spanish, (Dutch?), and Portuguese colonies.

In most of these countries English is a Second Language, but it is, in the meantime, the native or primary language in such countries as those of the Anglophone Caribbean and in Singapore.

The reasons given for retaining or fully adopting English include at least the following points:

- English is a world language/library language/language of wider communication.
- English is neutral vis-à-vis competing indigenous languages, hence promoting national unity.
- English is a fully developed language while the indigenous languages would demand too many resources to be suitably modernized.

This view should not blind us to the disadvantages that also ensue, summed up as follows:

- The use of English implants a code and a content that empowers the North by continuing its domination (exploitation, penetration, fragmentation, and marginalization) of the South; the development of the indigenous languages would combat the hegemony of the North.
- Many indigenous languages are threatened in their very existence; their demise would entail a loss of invaluable and irreplaceable traditions and world views.
- The use of English damages the self-esteem of indigenous communities, who suffer inestimable damage in status and prestige.

Each of these points can be and has been elaborated in a variety of ways, but they all have to do with what is, in the end, “linguistic imperialism” (cf. Phillipson 1992). The words of Gilbert Ansre summarize this “linguistic imperialism” very pointedly, which is

“[t]he phenomenon in which the minds and lives of the speakers of a language are dominated by another language to the point where they believe that they can and should use only that foreign language when it comes to transactions dealing with the more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, the administration of justice, etc. ... Linguistic imperialism has a subtle way of warping the minds, attitudes, and aspirations of even the most noble in a society and of preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full potentialities of the indigenous languages.”

(qtd. in Phillipson 1992: 56)

The positions represented above cannot be fully reconciled with each other. Both “sides” have their merits. The ways in which ESL societies are developing shows that many “solutions” are possible and that none is *a priori* correct.

Lanham, L. (1996) “A History of English in South Africa,” in: V. De Klerk (ed.) *Focus on South Africa*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 19–34.

Phillipson, R. (1992) *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: OUP.

## Local color and regionalism

The general characteristics of the Local Color Movement in the United States in the post-Civil War period (approx. 1870–1900) included an emphasis on regionalism rather than sectionalism. The latter term is a negative one as it stresses separateness and antagonism. In contrast, an important function of regionalism in literature was its attempt to “recapture the glamour of a past era, or to portray the sections of the reunited country

one to the other” (Hart 1965: 487). This movement was, therefore, especially prominent in the decades following the Civil War, but in principle frontier tall tales and the Dutch stories of Washington Irving belong to it as well. Local Color is influenced by both Romanticism and Realism – the exotic in careful detail. Although the Local Color Movement includes novels and poems, the short story is especially typical of it. This literature:

- presented the genius of the regions;
- used homely, likable figures;
- was realistic in its observation of detail;
- presented vignettes of American life;
- made use of local dialect, costumes, landscape.

Much of this literature was second- to third-rate because it is very sentimental and both platitudinous and stereotyped. This includes Harriet Beecher Stowe, a New England regional writer best known for her anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1851; see Text 10.3). The major exception to this sentimentality is Mark Twain’s *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), which is one of the high points of Southern literature. It follows in the tradition of Simon Suggs and Sut Lovingood (see *literature of the Old Southwest*) at least inasmuch as it is very much a picaresque novel. Its numerous stations along the banks of the Mississippi River as Huck and Jim drift slowly southward provide the reader with insights into a variety of social and cultural values, exposing the venality, gullibility, vanity, and hypocrisy of the people presented and touching on the themes of slavery, religious fervor, frontier and small town violence, feuding, drunkenness, or the self-deceit of would-be belles. The narrative is recounted by a young boy, Huck Finn, thus allowing Twain to see the South through his innocent and inexperienced eyes. It also allowed him to use the native dialect of Huck’s (and Twain’s) Missouri home as well as that of the educationally untouched runaway slave Jim (see Text 13.1).

Hart, J.D. (1965) *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*. 4th ed. NY: OUP.

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#### The literature of the Old Southwest

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was especially prominent even before the American Civil War (1861–1865), flourishing between roughly 1835 and 1885 and depicting life, people, and language in what once – before the trans-Mississippi addition of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 – was the southwestern part of the United States. The region includes parts of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee as well, later, as trans-Mississippi Texas and Arkansas. Some of the most extreme examples of dialect literature from this section can be found in the work of J.J. Hooper (*Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs*, 1845) and George Washington Harris (*Sut Lovingood. Yarns Spun by a “Nat’ral Born Durn’d Fool*, 1867; see Text 12.13). Harris as well as much of the anonymous literature in the Davy Crockett tradition (see Text 8.13) makes wide use of dialect, but especially of *eye dialect*. This literature can be characterized as:

- provincial;
- generally considered humorous;
- widely popular at the time;
- reflective of frontier life (language, lore, life);
- evidence of the crudity, vulgarity, and violence of frontier life.

This was the time of the rapidly expanding frontier, more or less up to its end (at approximately 1890). The Old Southwest was divided into two settler groups: the planters and their slaves in the area of expanding cotton cultivation and the poor white upland farmers. The literature, or rather, subliterate of the Old Southwest concerns the latter group only.

## Harris's Uncle Remus

in contrast, is part of the plantation tradition and one of the products of the literary reconciliation after the American Civil War, but one, as far as the South was concerned, which came at the cost of Blacks, who were reduced to a stereotype such as Joel Chandler Harris's Uncle Remus: loyal, affectionate, gentle, quaint (stories and dialect; see Text 8.9). In the sense of the *local color movement*, which it was a part of, dialect continued to be used as in the *literature of the Old Southwest*. But in contrast to the writing of the Old Southwest, local color writing tended to be sentimental, overly sweet, to feature picturesque and quaint characters, and seldom to rise above stereotypes.

## Models of change (see Chapter 1)

### Phonology of English as an International Language (EIL)

The pronunciation of ELF is postulated as a kind of common denominator of the pronunciation of English throughout the world simplified by leaving out the most clearly shared, but somehow non-essential difficulties. The principles employed are (1) intelligibility and (2) teachability and learnability. Hence the suggestion has been made to teach EIL or the lingua franca core (LFC) without bothering with unimportant points from the perspective of propagating one of the standard pronunciations. Since many non-native and even quite a few native speakers do not produce /θ/ and /ð/ and yet are readily understood, there is no need to teach these phonemes. Learners can make do with /t, d/, with /s, z/, or with /f, v/. Other features of pronunciation which are easily dispensed with include the distinction between /i:/ and /ɪ/ as in *peach* and *pitch*. Weak forms can be ignored, always saying /sɪ. pi:tʃ/ and not trying to imitate weak /ðɪ pɪtʃ/. Rhythm may be syllable-timed rather than stressed timed.

The justification for this approach is seen in the fact that English is different from other foreign languages: "Most people quite simply do not learn English to speak to native-speakers," but rather to speak to other non-native speakers. This is different from, say, Spanish:

"people learn Spanish ... because they are interested in Hispanic culture for some reason (work or pleasure) and will therefore want a spoken and written model which will further this aim. There is a world of difference between English and, in fact, all other living languages at present."

(Prodromou 1997: 19)

To determine the phonology<sup>2</sup> of English as an International Language (EIL) it is necessary to first describe and analyze pronunciation in lingua franca contexts with regard to mutual intelligibility and acceptability. This then may serve as a basis for determining what the realistic learning and teaching goals are (Jenkins 2000: 2). Jenkins comes to the conclusion that there is no need, as mentioned above, to teach /θ/ and /ð/ since most learners find the sounds difficult to master and many native speakers replace them as well, in London, for example, with /f/ and /v/ and in Ireland with /t/ and /d/ (often as [t̪] and [d̪]) (ibid.: 137f). Furthermore, "difficult" dark, velar [ɫ] does not belong to the phonology of EIL; it can be replaced either by clear, alveolar [l] or by vocalization as [ʊ] (ibid.: 138f). A further principle is to favor pronunciations which are consistent with spelling. Consequently, <r> should be pronounced where spelled, thus making this "variety"

<sup>2</sup> Actually simply "pronunciation": Jenkins' list contains not only phonological, but also phonetic points.

rhotic and, indeed, using a retroflex NAME [ɭ] (ibid.: 139). On the other hand <t> should be uniformly pronounced as /t/, thus ruling out the American, Australian, etc. *T-flapping* and the resulting homophones: *matter* and *madder* (ibid.: 140) – and presumably the glottal stop in those British accents which have it in words like *ma'er* [mæʔə]. Jenkins emphasizes, in addition, that many L2 speakers wish to keep at least some L1 accent so as to mark their identity or nationality (cf. Jenkins 2009: 147f). All this is well meant, but it ignores the fact [pace Jenkins] that most non-native speakers prefer to pursue a standard ENL pronunciation.

Jenkins, J. (2000) *The Phonology of English as an International Language*. Oxford: OUP.

Jenkins, J. (2009) *World Englishes. A Resource Book for Students*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Prodromou, L. (1997) “From Corpus to Corpus,” *IATEFL Newsletter*, 137, 3–10.

### Politically correct and inclusive language

Since the 1960s at the latest awareness has grown up that language sometimes excludes whole groups of people, for example women, ethnic minorities, vocational groups, and the GLBT community. It is, of course, not the language that excludes them so much as the way the language is used. In many quarters it has, consequently, become more or less programmatic to reverse such practices by using what is termed “politically correct (PC)” language. In the United States, where PC language is perhaps most evident, the indigenous population is more correctly Native American than Indian and chairmen may be termed chairpersons in order not to exclude chairwomen. PC language has focused more on vocabulary than other aspects of English, and this is understandable, for it is vocabulary that speakers are most aware of and whose choice lies within conscious control. Grammatical points such as the use or not of exclusive *he* to refer to an indefinite antecedent (*Everyone should mind his own business*) are regarded as sexist. The PC remedy might be a totally new third person singular pronoun – suggestions such as *thon*, *e* or *E*, *tey*, *hesh*, *po*, *re*, *xe*, *jhe*, and *per* – or conjoined pronouns, e.g. *he or she* or *s/he*, or the singular use of the third person plural pronoun *they*, as in *Everyone should mind their own business*. New pronouns would require a major planned **change from above** in a closed grammatical class where change in the past (cf. §§3.2.3; 4.2.3, 5.3.1.1, 6.3.4) has come largely from below. The use of conjoined pronouns is frequent in writing. In colloquial speech, third person singular *they* is natural to many who interpret indefinite pronouns such as *everybody*, *whoever*, *none*, etc. as notionally plural, that is, as referring to more than one person. For all the attention, both positive and negative, which this topic has generated, it has had practically no far-reaching effect on the language beyond habits of word choice.

### Chinese-English code-switching

Chinese immigrants to the UK are the third largest such group (after those from the Caribbean and from South Asia). Their linguistic background is diverse, but in some areas such as Tyneside as many as 80% have Cantonese as their heritage language (Wei 1998: 160). As in other immigrant communities (see §§13.4.2 and 13.5.1) a switch to ENL comes by the third generation (ibid.: 162), and inter-generational code-switching (CS) is common, as the following interchange (ibid.: 155) illustrates:

MOTHER: *Nay sik mut-ye a?* (“What do you want to eat?”)

CHILD: JUST APPLES:

MOTHER: JUST JUST APPLES? *Dimgai m sik YOGHURT a?* (“Why not have some yoghurt?”)



Members of the speech community vary from first-generation monolingual Cantonese speakers to more or less balanced bilinguals to younger members who have only minimal knowledge of the heritage language (ibid.: 171ff).

Wei, L. (1998) “Banana Split? Variations in Language Choice and Code-switching Patterns of Two Groups of British-born Chinese in Tyneside,” in: R. Jacobson (ed.) *Codeswitching Worldwide*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 153–175.

## Communication revolution, The

is the latest advance in the media and promises to be at least as revolutionary as the introduction of printing was in its time. Its centerpiece is the Internet with its email, chat rooms, blogs, and the like, but it includes digital communication independent of the net, e.g. twitter and texting. Facebook and cell phones have unloosed the power of the masses and contributed to revolutionary change in societies where the more conventional media were once under the control of the state and state institutions.

## Soap opera, The

is serial fiction broadcast on radio or on television (including Netflix and the like) often emphasizing the drama of everyday life and personal relations. It has been an extremely popular way of binding listeners/viewers to fictional worlds of romance and tragedy motivated by both voyeurism and escapism. Its seeming realism, its everyday language, and suspenseful action insures that it will have a faithful audience. Yet, one of its strengths, its local rootedness, means that even very successful soap operas from America may find no echo whatsoever in Britain and vice versa. Example: *Desperate Housewives*, while retaining the same story-line and characters, could not merely be dubbed in Spanish, but had to be re-filmed once for the Mexican and once again for the Argentine televisions markets.

## Sit-com, The

is a variant of the *soap opera* that features a relatively set cast of characters but does not rely on an on-going story (or set plot line), but on the humor of awkward situations and light-hearted invective. Dramatic situations are never to be taken too seriously. Culture-specific behavior is intrinsic to much of the comedy involved. British sit-coms may not be easily adaptable to the US market because they are not tailored to the length requirements of American commercial TV, where they have to be shorter in order to leave enough time within the standard thirty minute slots for eight minutes of commercials. They will rely more on slap-stick while British sit-coms may develop character more or have more elaborate plot-lines.

## Shamefaced scholarship

a phenomena still widely found in the academic world, where quoting from the Internet seems to be regarded as less respectable than quoting from print sources. As one example, we may take a look at J. Jenkins' book *World Englishes. A Resource Book for Students* (2nd ed., 2009). The message in Jenkins' book, which is



addressed to students and not to cutting-edge academics, in other words to people who presumably have grown up with the Internet, is, to phrase it somewhat polemically,

*Thou shalt not quote from the Internet.*

The evidence can be found in the fifteen-page bibliography (365 entries), where there are only three references to the Net, two of them conference papers and the other a paper on the British Council website. Could this be an atypical finding? A further look at 23 very scholarly articles that appeared in 2009 produced 1121 references of which 10 – less than 1% – were from the Internet. “Why these ten?” we might ask. It is instructive to see what they were in order to get a clearer picture of when scholars quote from the Internet, viz.:

4 corpora  
2 conference papers  
2 articles  
1 set of statistics  
1 linguistic atlas

Perhaps, we might object, this is part of the tradition of print publishing. A look at one issue of an internet journal from the area of cultural and literary studies (*Forum for Inter-American Research*) revealed one video (no literature) and five articles: three in English; two in Spanish: number one (E) with 58 sources and 0 from the Internet; number two (E) with 38 sources and 1 from the Internet; number three (S) with 5 sources and 0 from the Internet; number four (S) with 62 sources and 15 from Internet; number five (E) with 16 sources and 1 from the Internet (+ two in endnotes).

This suggests the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis I:** The Internet suffers from its association with entertainment.

**Hypothesis II:** It makes little difference who the addressees are. The authors, whose reputation could be damaged, shy away from the Net.

The reasons for this lie in the medium, which has not become firmly enough established to be seen as weighty. Bound volumes that lie (physically) weighty in your hand lend their content the umbra of permanence. URLs can be updated, a clear indication of lack of permanence. Electronic impulses are fleeting in comparison, and speed is unwanted in disciplines which are built up on the basis of pondered thought.

Despite these critical remarks, an examination of the language used in Internet publications shows that it is no different than the language used in the print media. What is different and represents a clear advantage of the Internet over print is its connectivity. The architecture that hypertexts make possible and the much more generous capacity that the Internet allows open enormous possibilities for linking information in a variety of ways. It is even relatively easy to combine conventional (print-type) and less conventional (AV-type) media thus bringing together illustrations, maps, charts, sound files, video clips, conventional prose, etc., which this *History of English* attempts to do.

**Voice-Project (see Chapter 10, *Corpora*)**