

17 Varieties of World Englishes

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1 Introduction

The concepts of language variety and variation lie at the heart of the world Englishes enterprise, not least because many researchers in this field have identified their interests as the study of “varieties of English,” “localized varieties of English,” “non-native varieties of English,” “second-language varieties of English,” and “new varieties of English.” The issue of linguistic variety is also central to both traditional dialectology and contemporary linguistics, where it is often subsumed into the study of language variation and change.

The notion of world Englishes, in its turn, may be seen as having both a wider and narrower application. The wider application of the concept subsumes very many different approaches to the study of English worldwide (including varieties-based studies) ranging from the Celtic Englishes of Britain, through diverse varieties in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa to English in Europe and Asia, and also involves the study of discourse and genre in those contexts where English is regarded as a second or foreign language. The narrower application of the term, however, refers to schools of thought closely associated with the Kachruvian approach, many of which are discussed in the other chapters to this volume. Elsewhere (see Chapter 15), I note that research on world Englishes in the wider sense includes at least a dozen distinct approaches, including those of English studies, corpus linguistics, the sociology of language, features-based and dialectological studies, pidgin and creole research, Kachruvian linguistics, lexicographical approaches, popularizer accounts, critical linguistics, and futurological approaches.

In this context, the use of the term “Englishes” consciously emphasizes the autonomy and plurality of English languages worldwide, whereas the phrase “varieties of English” suggests the heteronomy of such varieties to the common core of “English.” The “double-voicedness” of such nomenclature (English vs. Englishes) resonates with the much-cited Bakhtinian distinction between “centrifugal” and “centripetal” forces in language change. Leaving

such tensions aside to begin with, I start by discussing the notion of "variety" within the context of world Englishes, and then attempt to unravel discussions of the wider theoretical context in the later sections of the chapter.

2 Language Varieties and Varieties of English

At first glance, the concept of "varieties" in this context seems useful and unproblematic, as "variety" in the singular is typically defined as a neutral label applicable to many different types of language use, as may be seen in a number of definitions of the term:

A term used in SOCIOLINGUISTICS and STYLISTICS to refer to any SYSTEM of LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION whose use is governed by SITUATIONAL VARIABLES. In some cases, the situational DISTINCTIVENESS of the LANGUAGE may be easily stated, as in many regional and occupational varieties (e.g., London English, religious English); in other cases, as in studies of social class, the varieties are more difficult to define, involving the intersection of several variables (e.g., sex, age, occupation). Several classifications of language varieties have been proposed, involving such terms as DIALECT, REGISTER, MEDIUM and FIELD. (Crystal, 1997: 408)

A neutral term used to refer to any kind of language – a *dialect*, *accent*, *sociolect*, *style* or *register* – that a linguist happens to want to discuss as a separate entity for some particular purpose. Such a variety can be very general, such as "American English," or very specific, such as "the lower working-class dialect of the Lower East Side of New York City." (Trudgill, 2003: 139–40)

We can use "variety" to mean a language, a dialect, an idiolect or an accent; it is a term which encompasses all of these. The term "variety" is an academic term used for any kind of language production, whether we are viewing it as being determined by region, by gender, by social class, by age or by our own inimitable individual characteristics. (Bauer, 2003: 4)

Randolph Quirk in *The Use of English* (1962), was one of the first in the contemporary period to discuss "varieties" of English with reference to the description of English "standards" worldwide. In this early work, Quirk made a plea for linguistic tolerance, arguing that:

English is not the prerogative or "possession" of the English... Acknowledging this must – as a corollary – involve our questioning the propriety of claiming that the English of one area is more "correct" than the English of another. Certainly, we must realise that there is no single "correct" English, and no single *standard* of correctness. (Quirk, 1962: 17–18)¹

Similar arguments were put forward in the same era by Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens (1964), who discussed varieties of English in a range of decolonizing contexts. During the colonial era, they noted, "it seemed totally

obvious and immutable that the form of English used by professional people in England was the only conceivable model for use in education overseas" (1964: 292). But they argued that by the 1960s an important shift had occurred and that:

English is no longer the possession of the British, or even the British and the Americans, but... exists in an increasingly large number of different varieties... But the most important development of all is seen in the emergence of varieties that are identified with and are specific to particular countries from among the former British colonies. In West Africa, in the West Indies, and in Pakistan and India... it is no longer accepted by the majority that the English of England, with RP as its accent, are the only possible models of English to be set before the young. (pp. 293–4)

They then went on to discuss the criteria for judging the use of a particular variety as a teaching model, suggesting that there are two major considerations: first, that it is used by a reasonably large number of educated people; and, second, that it is mutually intelligible with other varieties used by educated speakers from other societies. Here they note that "to speak like an Englishman" is by no means the only or obvious target for the foreign learner" (p. 296). Halliday subsequently adopted a varieties framework in a number of his later writings, including Halliday and Hasan (1989) which explores the dichotomy between "dialectal varieties" (dialects) and "diatypic varieties" (registers). Strevens also maintained a strong interest in varieties of English worldwide, arguing for a recognition of "the 'Englishes' which constitute the English language" (Strevens, 1980: 90).

Another important strand that contributed to the studies of "varieties" came out of domestic sociolinguistics. In 1979, Hughes and Trudgill published a volume entitled *English Accents and Dialects* that described varieties of English in the United Kingdom. This was then followed by Trudgill and Hannah's *International English*, which focused on varieties of "standard English" worldwide. In the first edition (1982), these included Australian, New Zealand, South African, Welsh, North American, Scottish, Irish, West Indian, West African, and Indian English. The third edition (1994) added an expanded section on creoles, as well as descriptions of Singapore and Philippine English. The sections dealing with "Inner-Circle" varieties predominate, with some one hundred pages in the latest edition allocated to "native-speaker" varieties, and thirty devoted to creoles and second-language varieties. Cheshire's (1991) *English around the World* extended this features-based approach to include variationist perspectives of the Labovian approach.

3 The Three Circles of Kachru

One particular construct in the Kachruvian paradigm that has been both influential and controversial has been the modeling of English worldwide in terms

of the "Three Circles of English" (the "Inner," "Outer," and "Expanding" Circles). The Three Circles model was first published in a 1985 book chapter that came out of a conference held to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the British Council (Kachru, 1985). In this paper, Kachru was concerned to elucidate the sociolinguistics of English "in its international context" with particular reference to postcolonial societies. Here, the model was presented as a "digression" to preface the discussion of issues related to standardization, codification, and linguistic creativity.

The Circles model was intended to represent (1) the *types of spread* of English worldwide, (2) the *patterns of acquisition*, and (3) the *functional domains* in which English is used internationally. The *Inner Circle* of the model referred to those societies where English is the "primary language," i.e., the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The *Outer Circle* was conceived as representing postcolonial Anglophonic contexts, a numerically large and diverse speech community, including such African and Asian societies as Nigeria, Zambia, India, and Singapore. Despite such diversity, the Outer-Circle communities share a number of characteristics, so that typically English is only one of the community languages in what are clearly multilingual societies; and English in such societies usually achieves some degree of official recognition as an official, co-official, legal, or educational language. At the functional level, English is utilized in "un-English cultural contexts," and is used in a very wide range of domains both as an intranational and an international language, and as a language of literary creativity and expression:

In other words, English has an extended functional *range* in a variety of social, educational, administrative, and literary domains. It also has acquired great *depth* in terms of users at different levels of society. As a result, there is significant variation within such institutionalized varieties. (Kachru, 1985: 13; see also Kachru, 2005: 211–20)

The *Expanding Circle* is defined as comprising those areas where English is an "international language" and traditionally regarded as societies learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Nations in the Expanding Circle at this time thus include China, Greece, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and the USSR (i.e., the former Soviet Union).

Kachru then went on to note that English was spreading rapidly in non-Western countries, as an "additional language" and "alternative language" in multilingual societies, in response to the demands of modernization and technology, as well as by other sociopolitical and sociolinguistic dynamics. In addition, whereas Inner-Circle societies largely shared common cultural assumptions and similar political systems, the cultural contexts of the other two Circles included such diverse ideologies as Hinduism, Islam, Marxism, and Communism, giving English the potential for "a unique cultural pluralism, and a linguistic heterogeneity and diversity which are unrecorded to this extent in human history" (p. 14).

In a number of other writings, Kachru has expanded on the notions of the "range" and "depth" of English in the Outer and Expanding Circles, establishing a dichotomy between "genetic nativeness" versus "functional nativeness" (Kachru, 1998). Here *range* refers to the functional repertoire of the language in such domains as government, law, business, family, friends, etc.; *depth*, on the other hand, refers to the uses of English available to people at different levels of society, ranging from the elites of business and the professions to lower-level workers, shopkeepers, taxi drivers, etc. Such issues of depth also influence the lectal range of speakers, from basilectal varieties through to the acrolect. A second distinction is that between the *norm-providing* mechanisms of the Inner Circle (including grammars, textbooks, etc.) and the *norm-dependent* (or "norm-accepting") responses of the Expanding-Circle societies, such as China, Japan, etc. The situation in Outer-Circle societies is typically more complex, with a range of possible responses, including efforts to establish local norms. A number of Outer-Circle societies are thus "norm-developing," as in India and the Philippines.

Kachru's conception of the Three Circles has only been one part of his theorization of this field, but it has proved immensely influential. Nevertheless, despite its obvious robustness and utility, some critics have attempted to critique this model on the grounds that it favors standard and "national" varieties, ignores "grey areas," and simplifies discussion of linguistic diversity (Jenkins, 2003: 17–18). Others have argued in favor of the recognition of supranational varieties, including Modiano (1999, and this volume) who has proposed the model of English as an International Language (EIL), which features "centripetal" Circles and bases its description on proficient use of the language rather than the geographical provenance of speakers. A number of these critiques seem misdirected, however, given that Kachru himself anticipated a number of such points 20 years ago, when at the outset he noted that:

The Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle cannot be viewed as clearly demarcated from each other; they have several shared characteristics, and the status of English in the language policies of such countries changes from time to time. What is an ESL region at one time may become an EFL region at another time or vice versa. (Kachru, 1985: 13–14)

More importantly, such critiques tend to miss the fact that the Circles concept is essentially intended as a historical model that conceptualizes the chronology of the diasporic origins of world Englishes. These diasporas were basically of two types: the first diaspora occurred with transportation of English to settler colonies in Australia, North America, and New Zealand; and the second occurred in British (and occasionally American) administrative colonies in around the globe, and especially in Africa and Asia. These two diasporas created very distinct colonial histories, not least because of the very different demographics of race involved (if, for example, we compare the USA with India). Nevertheless, a number of issues traverse the two diasporic

experiences, including questions relating to codification, standardization, and educational norms (Y. Kachru and Nelson, 2006).

It might also be noted that the exponential spread of English since 1985 has continued over the last two decades in ways not entirely anticipated at that earlier date. Today, a list of the major ten English-knowing societies in the world would include not only India but also China (both with estimated populations of English speakers at around 200–300 million). Other Asian societies such as the Philippines (around 52 million speakers) and Japan (around 40 million) are also more visible than in the past; although the spread of English in such societies through education also raises many issues concerning acquisition and “knowing-ness” that are redefining traditional notions of acquisition and proficiency.

4 The Inner-Circle Diaspora

Historically, the transportation of the two external diasporas of English mentioned above were preceded by the spread of English throughout the British Isles to Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, which each have their own particular histories of language contact. In the case of Wales, the political dominance of England was established by two Acts of Union in 1536 and 1542, when Welsh laws and customs were abolished and the English language gained pre-eminence in law and administration. English was also spread by the establishment of English-speaking townships, and the promotion of English in education. In the late eighteenth century, most of the country was monolingual Welsh, but widespread industrialization and urbanization in the nineteenth century hastened the spread of English. By 1921, 63 percent of Welsh people were monolingual in English, and by 1981 that had risen to around 80 percent of the population (Thomas, 1994: 103). Today, despite its somewhat low academic prestige in Wales (and the ongoing revival of the Welsh language), Welsh English as a distinct variety of the language is being studied by a number of linguists (Coupland and Thomas, 1990; Penhallurick, 1993).

The history of Scottish English is inextricably linked to that of “Scots,” whose history as an autonomous Germanic language dates from 1100. While its contemporary usage is restricted to a minority of the rural population, Scots is still seen as forming “the substratum of general English in Scotland” (Aitken, 1992: 899). Scots achieved its greatest prominence in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, but after the Act of Union in 1603, a decline in its prestige and use followed. Throughout the nineteenth century English rapidly gained ground through the expansion of education. Scots gradually lost the status of an autonomous language, and its position as a regional standard was eventually supplanted by that of “Scottish Standard English,” “a compromise between London standard English and Scots” (McClure, 1994: 79).

The earliest record of the use of English in Ireland dates from 1250, but English only began to spread significantly after the establishment of Ulster

plantation in 1607, which introduced Scots English onto the island. By the early nineteenth century, language shift in Ireland toward English was well underway, a process that has continued to the present with only 3 percent of the population in 1983 claiming a “native-speaker” ability in Irish Gaelic (Kallen, 1994). McArthur currently identifies a range of Irish varieties, including *Hiberno-English*, *Irish English*, and *Ulster English* (2002: 117; see Chapters 2 and 3 in this volume).

The first major variety of English to establish itself outside the British Isles was American English. The earliest American colonies included Jamestown, Virginia (1607) and Plymouth, Massachusetts (1620). Over the following 150 years, 13 colonies emerged along the eastern seaboard, where the majority of settlers were English speakers from various parts of Britain and Ulster. After the United States achieved independence, Noah Webster (1754–1843) gave voice to a brand of linguistic patriotism in his treatise, *Dissertations on the English Language* in 1789, which was followed by his dictionary in 1828. By the nineteenth century, debates on the autonomy of American English had begun. In this era, substantial discussion focused on the merits of “Americanisms” versus standard British usage, while other topics included questions of dialectology, language standardization, immigration, and linguistic borrowings from such sources as Dutch, German, Italian, Yiddish (Davis, 2003). Shortly after World War I, H. L. Mencken published *The American Language* ([1919] 1921), which marked an important stage in the codification of the US variety of English. The study of Canadian English as a distinct system occurred somewhat later (Clarke, 1993).

The other major diasporic varieties of the Inner Circle include Australian English, New Zealand English, and South African English. The first Australian settlers were largely convicts who began to arrive from 1788. By 1840, around 130,000 prisoners had been transported to prisons in Australia from Britain. Most of these early settlers came from London, the Midlands, and Ireland. From the 1840s, they were supplemented by large numbers of “free settlers” who came as farmers and miners. Until 1947, the vast majority of the population were white and of British origin. Today, around 75 percent of Australians are “Anglo-Celtic,” 19 percent “other European,” and 5 percent Asian, with the aboriginal population accounting for only 1 percent of the total (McArthur, 1992). The British settlement of New Zealand began in 1792 with fishing stations. At first, such settlements were administered from New South Wales. New Zealand became an independent colony in 1840, and after that date many farming settlers established themselves in the country. British settlements in South Africa date from around 1820 in Port Elizabeth. Today, English is the first language of around 10 percent of the population, which includes white people, South Asians, and colored or mixed-race populations (McArthur, 2002: 287–8).

According to Trudgill (2004), the core linguistic characteristics of such Inner-Circle colonial varieties arose out of processes of dialect contact, dialect mixture, and new-dialect formation:

The Southern Hemisphere Englishes, like colonial varieties of the English language just mentioned, are new and distinctive varieties of the English language which arose as a result of dialect contact, dialect mixture and new-dialect formation. The most important ingredients in the mixture that was to lead the development of these new forms of English were the dialects and accents of the language brought with them by native speakers of English. In Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and the Falklands, the contact was almost entirely between varieties of English from the British Isles. (Trudgill, 2004: 13)

In the case of Australian English, his argument is that the origins of this variety can be found in the dialects of London, and those of such counties as Essex, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, etc., to the northeast of the capital. It is likely that Australian English was formed in the speech of those born between 1790 and 1840, and emerged as a "fully-fledged" variety in the speech of children by around 1854. Trudgill estimates that in New Zealand approximately 50 percent of early immigrants were from England, 27 percent from Scotland, and 23 percent from Ireland, that a distinct variety of New Zealand English first developed in the period after 1840, and that by 1905 one finds the first adolescent speakers of New Zealand English. Early South African immigrants came from London, Ireland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Scotland. Similarly, South African English was formed by those born between 1820 and 1870, emerging as a "focused variety" by 1885 (2004: 23–4).

5 The Outer-Circle Diaspora

Chronologically, the Englishes and English-based creoles of the Caribbean date from the mid-seventeenth century, in for example Barbados (1627), Jamaica (1655), and Belize (1683; see Chapter 13 in this volume). At around the same time, a British presence also began to be felt in Asia, when British trading posts were established in India from the seventeenth century onwards. Somewhat later, British Malaya developed as a federation of protectorates, from 1786–1896; Singapore became established as a trading port from 1819; and Hong Kong became a crown colony from 1842 onwards. Elsewhere in Asia, the Philippines became a colony of the USA, when Spanish power was overthrown in 1898. Anglophone British colonies in East and West Africa were mainly established somewhat later, from the nineteenth century onwards. These included Gambia (1843), Nigeria (1861), Uganda (1893), Kenya (1920), and present-day Tanzania (1890), Malawi (1907), and Zimbabwe (1923).²

Historically, the Outer-Circle diaspora of English has raised a range of issues rather distinct from those of the Inner-Circle societies such as North America and the Southern Hemisphere Englishes of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In the not-so-distant colonial past, such settler colonies were tied to the mother country through close and explicit notions of racial, linguistic, and cultural kinship. As early as 1880, the President of the Statistical

Society of Great Britain was hailing the triumph of the "English speaking race" in North America and elsewhere:

Of all Western peoples ours is already the most numerous; and when we contemplate the further spread of the English language over North America and Australia, and the habits of order, instincts of self-government, and love of liberty which are the inborn characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race... we may feel confidence in the future. (Caird, 1880: 571)

In similar vein, at what was arguably close to the height of empire, Charles Wentworth Dilke (1843–1911) published the eighth edition of *Greater Britain* (1885), a personalized account of travels through America, Australia, New Zealand, and a number of Britain's Asian colonies. In Dilke's writing, notions of racial competition and kinship overlap with linguistic commentary, and he draws a basic distinction between the successfully "extirpating" Anglo-Saxon populations of the settler colonies, and those elsewhere in the empire. In his vision of "Greater Britain," the British and Americans are brothers, because (despite the superficial "Latinization" of the English in the USA), "the true moral of America is the vigour of the English race," as "the English in America are absorbing the Germans and the Celts, destroying the Red Indians and checking the advance of the Chinese" (Dilke, 1885: 217). In spite of the immigration of the Germans and Irish and others, Dilke also sees English virtues and the English language at the core of American achievement:

America is becoming, not English merely, but world-embracing in the variety of its type; and, as the English element has given the language and the history to that land, America offers the English race the moral dictatorship of the globe, by ruling mankind through Saxon institutions and the English tongue. Through America England is speaking to the world. (Dilke, 1885: 224)

Elsewhere, Dilke goes on to mention the "thriving" Australian colonies, where "[a] literature is springing up," and a "national character is being grafted upon the good English stock" (p. 381). Although he expresses doubts about "the shape of the Australian mind," Dilke gives his approval to the "burly, bearded, strapping fellows" of New Zealand, who are "physically the perfection of the English race" (p. 289).

The non-settler colonies of Asia and Africa presented a very different set of circumstances. In India, for example, Dilke saw a civilization in decline, blighted by the caste system, poverty, and slavery. In reforming India, he advocated the teaching of English to the general population, arguing that the reform of the "servile condition of the native women" as well as the legal system necessitated such action, and that ultimately the spread of English was necessary for eventual self-rule, asserting that:

So long as the natives remain ignorant of the English tongue, they remain ignorant of all the civilization of our time – ignorant alike of political and physical

science, of philosophy and true learning ... English, as the tongue of the ruling race, has the vast advantage that its acquisition by the Hindoos will soon place the government of India in native hands, and thus, gradually relieving us of an almost intolerable burthen will civilize and set free the people of Hindostan. (Dilke, 1885: 224)

But for many imperial theorists, the spread of empire (or English) to non-Anglo-Saxon populations had obvious dangers, not least in the case of India. For example, Edward A. Freeman (1892), then Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, made it clear that his notion of the "English-speaking people" was essentially racially determined, and that not all subjects of "the Queen's dominions" qualified for membership:

The English-speaking people and the Queen's dominions are very far from being the same thing. The majority of the Queen's subjects are not English-speaking, and I fancy that the majority of the English-speaking people are not the Queen's subjects. A Confederation of the Queen's dominions, especially if it be called "Imperial," cannot shut out the "Empire" of India; and if that be let in, the European, white, Christian – however we choose to distinguish them – part of Her Majesty's subjects will be a small minority in the confederation. (Freeman, 1892: 46–7)

According to Freeman, then, a true federation of the English-speaking people "must leave out India" and "must take in the United States," although he seems to concede that it would also include "the Negroes" who "are certainly not English, but they are English-speaking" (1892: 46–7).

Brutt-Griffler, in her impressively researched (2002) study of British colonial language planning, argues tellingly that the development of policies for much of the time was a piecemeal and ad hoc affair, guided less by the desire to promote English through linguistic imperialism and more by the desire to run an empire "on the cheap" (Brutt-Griffler, 2002: 86). English-medium instruction was generally favored in Africa and Asia only to the extent that it fostered a locally recruited civil service, or, in some instances, locally trained clerks for commerce. The funding of mass education systems through English, on the American model in the Philippines, was never considered viable or desirable. In fact, Brutt-Griffler argues, the first attempt at establishing a unified policy did not take place until the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies met in 1923. The committee's commitment to vernacular education at this time was in essence "a policy of limiting the spread of English to what was minimally necessary to running a colonial empire" (2002: 105).

In many British colonies, too much education and too much English was seen as destabilizing and dangerous, and in many instances the colonial authorities actively sought to restrict access to English-medium schooling, so that the demand for English typically outstripped provision. In the later stages of empire, ideas of "liberty," "social justice," and "socialism" acquired through

Western education also served to gain support for the anti-colonial movement in India and elsewhere (McCully, 1935), leading Brutt-Griffler to claim that:

Language thereby played a role in the anticolonial struggle that British colonial officials had never envisioned. It became integrally connected to resistance. English in both Asia and Africa began to develop into the common language of the anticolonial struggle, in effect turning the guns of colonial rule against it ... More than individual acts of resistance, in total this anticolonial language policy constituted a concerted drive for the societal acquisition of English. (Brutt-Griffler, 2002: 65)

It seems obvious then that there were basic and substantial differences between the two diasporas of English discussed above. The first external diaspora began in the early seventeenth century, and extended until the mid-nineteenth century, with the development of settler colonies in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. This involved the "demographic" spread of English (Quirk, 1988), accompanied by the migration of substantial numbers of colonialists from Britain to such societies. In these new climes, the settlers established themselves as dominant populations (at times through genocide), and English as the "mother tongue" of the majority of the population. A somewhat different pattern developed in the administrative and commercial colonies of the Outer Circle in Asia and Africa, where indigenous languages survived, and bilingual English-using populations came into being. As Brutt-Griffler notes, "[t]he English language spread to Africa and Asia by political and economic means, not demographic ... English never became the language of industry and of the major agricultural districts; instead, it was the language primarily of the colonial administration" (Brutt-Griffler, 2002: 117). While this may have been true in many instances, it was, however, also the case that there were other settings (aside from formal education) for the spread of English, including, in the cases of pidgin and creole varieties, face-to-face interaction with sailors, traders, and plantation owners (Mufwene, 1994).

Whatever the dynamics of colonial Englishes, it seems clear that the most rapid spread of the language has occurred in the postcolonial era, as a consideration of recent demographics shows. In 1962, Quirk estimated the number of "native" speakers of English at around 250 million, compared with 100 million using English as a "second language"; by 1977, Fishman, Cooper, and Rosenbaum give the figure of 300 million for each group; but by 1995, Crystal is arguing that one could then identify 350 million native speakers, around 225 million second-language users, and around 550 million users of English as a foreign language. The overwhelming reason why English spread rapidly from the 1960s until the end of the century is that so many former Anglophone colonies adopted English for use in expanding educational systems during the postcolonial period. In addition, partly as the result of the economic and political power of the USA in the same period, English has also become the most widely taught foreign language in the school systems of Expanding-Circle regions and countries such as Europe, China, and Japan.

Significantly, it is also in the postcolonial period that recognition begins to be accorded to the "new Englishes" of Africa and Asia, so that discussions of varieties of African, Asian, and Caribbean Englishes develop from the 1960s onward, eventually contributing to the discourse of world Englishes and world literatures in English that emerge in the 1980s (Schneider, 2003). Nevertheless, as late as 1990 Quirk is still arguing against what he termed the "half-baked quackery" of the teaching of "varieties of English." Quirk distinguishes between "non-native varieties" (e.g., Indian English, Nigerian English, East African English, etc.) and "native varieties" (including American English, Australian English, British English, etc., as well as such dialects as New England English, Yorkshire English, etc.). In this context, he argues for a distinction between "non-institutionalized" varieties and those that are "institutionalized," in the sense of being fully defined and described, commenting that "[of] the latter, there are two: *American English* and *British English*; and there are one or two others with standards rather informally established, notably *Australian English*" (Quirk, 1990: 6).

The notion of "variety" here serves to bring us back to a consideration of the application of the term itself, and the ways in which linguists have attempted to deal with the concept of variation itself.

6 Varieties and Language Variation

Despite the widely-held acceptance of the term "variety" in sociolinguistics as a neutral, technical term for language description, in fact the label is somewhat indeterminately applied in practice. Hudson, for example, notes that, from a linguistic perspective, non-technical labels such as "languages," "dialects," or "styles" have little consistency, asserting that this leaves us only with the label of variety to refer to "a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution" (Hudson, 1996: 20–1).

After critically reviewing variety-based approaches to language, and the use of such terms as "dialects," "registers," "pidgins and creoles," Hudson registers "essentially negative conclusions" about the use of the term "variety" in sociolinguistics, noting that (1) the borders between varieties of the same type (e.g., one dialect from another) are often blurred; (2) similar problems exist concerning different types of varieties (e.g., languages vs. dialects). For Hudson, the solution thus is to avoid variety "as an analytical or theoretical concept and to focus instead on the individual linguistic item":

For each item some kind of "social description" is needed, saying roughly who uses it and when: in some cases an item's social description will be unique, whereas in others it may be possible to generalize across a more or less large number of items. The nearest this approach comes to the concept of "variety" is in these sets of items with similar social descriptions, but their characteristics are rather different from those of varieties like languages and dialects. On the other

hand, it is still possible to use terms like "variety" and "language" in an informal way ... without intending them to be taken seriously as theoretical constructs. (Hudson, 1996: 25–6)

Indeed, today it is noticeable that in many branches of variation study (and sociolinguistics in its most "linguistic" orientation), the inherent problems of such terms are often side-stepped. This is typically done through the adoption of methodologies that focus largely on an item-based approach to linguistic variation, whereby phonological and syntactic (and possibly lexical) variations are correlated against such social variables as age, sex, social class, social network, etc. Within modern urban dialectology, this often obviates the need to make generalized and extensive statements about the dialects of particular regions or localities, as the object of study is defined as a particular linguistic item, or set of items, at the levels of phonology and syntax (Chambers, Trudgill, and Schilling-Estes, 2002).

From a historical perspective, Chambers (1995) reviews the notion of language variation within linguistics, with reference to such sources as the Bible, Locke, Herder, and Jespersen. He then seeks to explain variation not only by reference to such socially embedded variables as social class and identity and such "natural" processes as patterns of regularization, but also by an appeal to language acquisition theory. His argument here is that the acquisition of standard languages requires the suppression of bioprogrammatic "primitive tendencies" toward innovation and variation, so that "we should expect features of the 'innate system' or the 'primitive tendencies' to be richly represented in vernaculars everywhere" (p. 247). Finally, he argues that the "underlying cause" of sociolinguistic variation is "the human instinct to establish and maintain social identity" (p. 250), thus, in sum, Chambers' position seems to appeal to both naturalistic and socially-constructed explanations.

Harris (1998) takes a critical view of the term "dialect," noting that the word, which is derived from the Greek *dialektos*, has a complicated history. *Dialektos* was defined by the Stoics "as an expression (*lexis*)" which is stamped on one people "ethnically and Hellenically" or as "an expression peculiar to some particular region" (Harris, 1998: 84). In examining a number of definitions of the term (as in Bloch, 1948; Crystal, 1985, etc.), Harris suggests that these are broadly of three types. First, there is the "continuum" concept, which involves the recognition of linguistic differences from one region to another. Second, there is the "relational dialect" concept, where "a dialect is conceived of as a particular subvariety of a language" and "a dialect is ... defined in relation to what a language is." And third, there is the "aggregate dialect" concept which "envisages a dialect as constituted out of the sum total of the linguistic practice of a certain group of individuals" so that "you start off with individuals, and aggregate their linguistic behaviour into dialects" (pp. 86–7). Within modern linguistics, Harris explains, Saussurean theory accords an important role to dialects and subdialects as a unit of analysis:

Any system of signs, in Saussure's view, had to be the property of a collectivity or community, *not* of an individual. So there had to be some level of social grouping at which the linguistic system existed; and this level must be, if not national, then regional, or even local. That is how and why the dialect concept comes to occupy such a crucial role in Saussurean theory. A dialect, whether it be of a region, or a locality, or a single village, represents, as it were, the basic level at which, in practice, linguistic diversity is reduced to zero. (Harris, 1998: 92)

He then argues that the "dialect myth" found in modern linguistics is based on the supposition that "dialects," however identified, display the high degree of "linguistic homogeneity" necessary to constitute a Saussurean system of signs, a supposition easily falsifiable given the fluid nature of language variation.

In contrast, few if any attempts appear to have been made to locate the adoption of the term "variety" within the discourses of linguistics, although a cursory survey of the literature shows that the term was in use with reference to language by the 1880s. For example, Whitney (1880) uses the term in its modern sense when discussing the diversity of human language, noting that "[t]he varieties of human speech are without number, and their differences endless, both in kind and in degree" (pp. 327–8). Another reference to linguistic varieties at around this time is found in H. A. Strong's (1890) translation of Hermann Paul's *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, which, in one section, discusses the borderlines between "dialectic varieties" (pp. 27–8), and later even proceeds to mention the "centrifugal" and "centripetal" dynamics of language (p. 34).

A much earlier provenance for the use of the term in an academic or scientific sense, however, was the discourse of evolution and natural science. Darwin, in *On the Origin of Species*, discusses the use of the term "species," which he defines as "a set of individuals closely resembling each other," similar in meaning to "the term variety," which "is given to less distinct and more fluctuating forms," adding that "[t]he term variety, again, in comparison with mere individual differences, is also applied arbitrarily, for convenience sake" (Darwin, 1859: 52). However, further examination suggests that Darwin's use of both these terms was influenced by the Linnaean taxonomy for biology. This was established in the *Systema Naturae* (1758) of Carl Linnaeus (1707–78), where *Varietas* (or "variety") was an individual subspecies within the system of biological classification known as "the Linnean hierarchy," which in time also adopted "family" as a unit of analysis (Maggenti, 1989). Around the same time, Linnaeus also set out one of the earliest classifications of geographical subspecies of humans (*Americanus Europaeus*, *Asiaticus*, and *Afer*), while his contemporary, the Count de Buffon published an essay entitled "Varieties of the Human Species" (Marks, 1995).

By the time of Darwin, German comparative linguists such as Franz Bopp, Jacob Grimm, and August Schleicher were seeking to establish genetic kinship relationships between languages, and were maintaining that "[t]he kinship of

the different languages may consequently serve, so to speak, as a paradigmatic illustration of the origin of species, for those fields of inquiry which lack, for the present at least, any similar opportunities of observation" (Schleicher, [1869] 1983: 45). Schleicher's views were later challenged by Schuchardt ("the father of creole studies" – Holm, 1988) who advocated a view of language not "as a natural organism, but as social product" (Schuchardt, 1885: 33–5, cited in Seuren, 1998: 97). Whatever the epistemological problems in understanding the origin of the term "variety" in linguistics, the hypothesis that its provenance can be traced through Darwin to Linnaeus seems entirely plausible, given much other linguistic terminology was derived from the developing natural sciences and associated race theories of the nineteenth century (Bolton, 2000).

7 Varieties by Any Other Name

Languages like pidgins and creoles presented a number of problems for comparative linguists, including the notable challenge that such contact languages posed to the "family tree" model of languages associated with Schleicher. In particular, this raised the problem of placing "mixed languages" in such a scheme (Sebba, 1997). Historically, pidgins and creoles were regularly described as "vile jargon," "grotesque gibberish," "baby talk," and, more pointedly, "bastardized jargons" (Bolton, 2000). While modern linguists dismiss such lay opinions as biased and inaccurate, it is also the case that even the language of linguistics relies heavily on the vocabulary of evolution and race, as witnessed by the continuing use of such terms as *monogenesis*, *polygenesis*, and *hybridization* in contemporary creolistics.

Similar discourses have also permeated discussions of the Englishes of Outer-Circle societies in Africa and Asia. The first-diaspora varieties of America, Australia, and New Zealand have often been regarded (explicitly or implicitly) as branches of a "Greater British" family of English dialects organically and naturalistically related to each other and the wider Germanic family. The "new" Englishes of Asia and Africa have been less comfortably placed at the family table; not least because such varieties are used by speakers of non-Germanic ethnicities in complex multilingual settings and have often had contentious colonial histories. Tellingly, Mufwene (2001) argues that a subtle prejudice still expresses itself in the nomenclature of world Englishes and the use of such terms as "pidgins," "creoles," "non-native," and "indigenized" Englishes. He goes on to assert that, in reality:

the naming practice of new Englishes has to do more with the racial identity of those who speak them than with how these varieties developed and the extent of their structural deviations . . . The legitimate offspring are roughly those varieties spoken typically by descendants of Europeans around the world, whereas the illegitimate ones are those spoken primarily by populations that have not fully descended from Europeans. (Mufwene, 2001: 107–8)

Throughout the twentieth century, the notion that there was only one variety of "Standard English" (or arguably two) was supported by a standard language ideology associated with traditional approaches to the history of English and an undeconstructed view of English studies in the academy as scholarship on a national language and literary tradition.

One major achievement of world Englishes in the last 30 years or so has been to challenge the previously inviolate authority of Inner-Circle societies in setting or judging the norms of usage in other English-using societies worldwide. In this context, the Circles model of Kachru has had a significant impact:

Introduced at a time when the duopoly of American and British English was unquestioned and metropolitan attitudes to postcolonial variants often ranged from amused condescension to racist stereotyping... the model broke new ground in raising the awareness of dynamic varieties of English with growing populations of speakers and increasingly vibrant media, literatures and popular cultures... [T]he very act of pluralizing "English" and encouraging serious debate regarding the nature and role of "New Englishes" denoted both imagination and courage. (Bruthiaux, 2003: 160)

At another level, Algeo (1991) has argued that all language varieties are best regarded as "fictions" in the sense that they are "ordered abstractions" from "unsuppressible" linguistic change; and that such idealizations are completely necessary, "[f]ictions all, but useful ones," as "[t]o describe, to explain, and to predict requires that we suppose there are stable things behind our discourse" (Algeo, 1991: 4).

Thus, in the same way that standard language ideologies are socially and politically constructed, one might also argue that the labels of "Nigerian English," "Kenyan English," "Indian English," and "Hong Kong English" are also fictions, but again extremely useful fictions for the ways in which such labels have contributed to the reconceptualization of English studies in recent decades. Such labels are fictional in the sense that the linguistic description of "national" and "regional" varieties of English around the world typically relies on synoptic and simplified descriptions of linguistic features, lexical, phonological, syntactic, etc. The wider context here, however, is that the recognition of "new varieties" of English has not rested on linguistic criteria alone. Butler (1997), for example, suggests that in addition to a distinctive vocabulary and accent, important defining features of new varieties also include a historical tradition, creative writing, and the existence of reference works of various kinds. Kachru (2005) further explores the cultural turn from postcolonial and literary perspectives in a range of settings in Asia and other parts of the world, discussing the multiple ways in which the world Englishes paradigm has enabled the users of English to increasingly appropriate agency over the language and its linguistic and literary uses. In addition, however, it seems evident that the scope of world Englishes does not and should not limit itself to the areal study of varieties of English worldwide, but encompasses a wide range of other issues as well, including contact linguistics, critical

linguistics, discourse analysis, lexicography, literatures in English, pidgin and creole studies, etc. (Bolton, 2005). The indigenization of Englishes in the Outer Circle has also been accompanied by the "Englishization" of languages as a manifestation of linguistic contact, at such levels as vocabulary, grammar, and discourse (Kachru, 2005).

8 The Empire Calls Back

The world Englishes paradigm is not static, and neither are the rapidly-changing realities of language use worldwide. The use of English in Outer- and Expanding-Circle societies continues its rapid spread, while at the same time new patterns of language contact and variety differentiation emerge.

One aspect of this has been the way in which world Englishes have been transported back into Inner-Circle contexts such as Britain and the USA. In the case of the UK, one newspaper report recently claimed that "London is the most linguistically diverse city on earth" (*The Times*, January 22, 2000, p. 8). The same article cited evidence that some 307 languages were spoken by London schoolchildren, and further noted that one third of children came from homes where other languages such as Bengali, Panjabi, Gujarati, Hindi/Urdu, Turkish, Arabic, and creoles were spoken. The racial and social mix that occurs in such schools throughout London and other British cities is now creating new ethnicities and new patterns of language use, including the "crossing" into creoles and immigrant languages by white British children (Rampton, 1999). Similarly, in the USA, following changes in the immigration laws in the 1960s, there has been substantial immigration to America from the Africa, the Middle East, India, China, and the Philippines, as well as from the Caribbean, and Central and South America. As a result, there has been unease about home languages as well as the various Englishes spoken by immigrant and minority groups (Lippi-Green, 1997).

In other parts of the world, the effects of globalization are being felt in a range of ways. In societies such as India, Singapore, and Hong Kong, increasing numbers of young people may grow up with part of their education in their parents' society, and part, for example, high school and university, in the UK or North America. Such young people are invariably multilingual, and move routinely between Western and Asian societies, typically sampling and mixing both worlds and both cultures as they go. The most visible representatives of such groups include the middle- and upper middle-class sons and daughters of "overseas" *desi* Indian or *hua qiao* Chinese families who acquire an elite education in the best European and US schools. Meanwhile, in the largely publicly funded school systems of Europe, young people are acquiring English at an unprecedented rate as an additional language in education, as well as in less formal domains, such as pop music and computer games.

Within literary studies, the new literatures in English have been the focus of serious literary criticism for some time. Recently, Evelyn Ch'ien's (2004) study

of the *Weird English* of such writers as Vladimir Nabokov, Maxine Hong Kingston, Arundhati Roy, Junot Díaz, and Salman Rushdie highlights the ways in which their writing accommodates "multiple loyalties, multiple linguistic commitments, and the multiple anxieties of several histories: the modern and the postmodern self." In this work, Ch'ien notes that the hybridity of such literature finds expression in the "weirding" of the language by these "polycultural" and "polylingual" writers (2004: 249).

Historically, one might argue that one early marker of the "paradigm shift" in world Englishes was when Mencken first presented his rationale for the "American language," and the recognition of an American "variety." In the preface to his classic inquiry, Mencken explained that he had encountered strong resistance, and the consensus of established thought was largely devoted to proving that "no such thing as an American variety of English existed – that the differences I constantly encountered in English and that my English friends encountered in American were chiefly imaginary" (Mencken, [1919] 1921). In Asia, the recognition of new Englishes has been relatively recent, and was largely unanticipated during the colonial period. For example, in 1853, the Revd David O. Allen argued that the prospects for English in India were poor, and that of those then studying the language, "many do not acquire sufficient knowledge for any practical purpose, and only a small part of them learn it thoroughly" (Allen, 1854: 275). Exactly 160 years later, David Crystal is citing statistics to suggest that around 350 million people speak English in India, and that the country is now home to "the largest English-speaking population in the world," whose English is marked by a range of different accents and dialects (Crystal, 2004).

Over the last three decades, work in world Englishes has been able to chart the de-centering and re-centering of English language studies across a variety of fields, including the linguistic, literary, and cultural. At the same time, the double-voicedness of centripetal and centrifugal forces (recalling Bakhtin and Paul) can also be seen in the tension between world Englishes and notions of "international English," "global English," and "world standard English." While the plurality of Englishes highlights the diverse features, functions, and contexts of English worldwide, world "English" in the singular suggests the existence of a transnational standard linked to the power of the USA and UK in particular areas of communication, including computers and international publishing.

McArthur (1997) argues that the notion of a global standard has most reality with reference to print and broadcast media. He thus identifies an "international print standard," an "international media standard," an "international governmental, administrative, and legal standard," an "international commercial and technological standard," and an "international educational standard." Today, no doubt, McArthur would also wish to mention the Microsoft standards that are now programmed into English word-processing software everywhere. He also claims that English "with its print base, is at the end of the 20th century a marked success, serving all humankind as the first high-level global

lingua franca" (McArthur, 1997: 16). An alternative view, however, might conceptualize such standards in terms of shared registers or genres of use rather than invariant standardized "varieties."

Another example of "centripetal" tendencies might be identified in the "linguistic outsourcing" currently taking place in India and the Philippines. Currently, the two most important locations for international call centers are located in India and the Philippines. The United States alone lost 250,000 call-center jobs to Asia in the two years from 2001 to 2003 (CBS News, 2003), and such centers have become a major new source of employment for educated young people in both those Asian societies. In a recent and controversial article by Susan Sonntag (2003) entitled "The world as India," Sonntag, somewhat naively, eulogizes the industry, the "munificent" salaries, and the work of young Indians in this sector:

The young people . . . had first to be trained for months, by instructors and by tapes, to acquire a pleasant middle American (not an educated American) accent, and to learn basic American slang . . . so that if the exchange with the client in the United States becomes prolonged, they will not falter with the small talk, and have the means to continue to pass for Americans. (Sonntag, 2003)

Notwithstanding Trivedi's (2003) scathing critique of Sonntag, the issue of linguistic outsourcing and call centers in India does serve to illustrate the changing map of Englishes worldwide.³ Indeed, one descriptive question raised here is whether we should regard the linguistic behavior of such call-center agents as the adoption of a "native-speaker" or "standard" variety of English. Is this simply an example of "world standard English" asserting its power, or is there an alternative explanation? One possible clue here might be the use of the word "pass" in the quotation from Sonntag where she talks about call-center employees having "the means to continue to pass for Americans." Whatever the linguistic demands or expectations required in such work, the mere (conscious or unwitting) choice of the word *pass* in this context is interesting in itself, resonating as it does with acts of "passing" across the boundaries of gender and race.

The young Asians in call centers in New Delhi or Manila may not have simply acquired a "native-speaker" variety of English in some psycholinguistic sense, but may instead have developed the skill of doing or performing a "native-like variety." The use of such a variety in this context may involve less the use of a particular dialect of language, but more the conscious creation of a linguistic "voice" called forth by context and facilitated by the Asian bilingual's linguistic creativity. Whatever the economic and social realities of such linguistic outsourcing, new contexts such as these will continue to challenge traditional concepts of "dialects" and "varieties." Only 50 years ago, a sociologist like Pieris (1951), based at least for a time in South Asia, was moved to discuss the English-knowing bilingual as a "racial or cultural hybrid, situated on the fringe of two culture as a Marginal Man" (Pieris, 1951: 329). Today,

by contrast, multilingualism and what Ch'ien dubs "polyculturalism" seems to speak to the center rather than the margins of contemporary intellectual experience, wherever one is located.

9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have set out to examine notions of language variety and variation in the context of world Englishes. The early sections of this chapter have discussed the historical diasporas of English, contrasting the histories of such Inner-Circle societies as the USA, Australia, and New Zealand with those of the Outer-Circle postcolonial societies of Africa and Asia. Later sections of the chapter have attempted to unravel the notion of "variety" and "varieties" in the context of language studies. One argument that emerges here is that the likely provenance of "variety" as a technical (or quasi-technical) linguistic term was eighteenth- and nineteenth-century natural science and biology, which, in turn, overlapped with early notions of racial hierarchies. As Mufwene (2001) has pointed out, the naming practices that have been applied to varieties of English have also been affected by the entanglement of racial and linguistic classification. Underlying many of the discussions concerning varieties and variation is a tension between what are seen as the organic qualities of dialects and varieties as the "natural" expression of vital linguistic systems, and the view of languages and language varieties as social and political constructs.

The world Englishes initiative in recognizing and describing the new Englishes of the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia has been partly motivated by a consideration of the local linguistic "facts," and partly by a consideration of the wider cultural and political contexts of language acquisition and use, and the desire to creatively remodel and reconstruct discursive practices. This, in turn, has involved the creative rewriting of discourses toward a recognition of pluralism and multiple possibilities for scholarship. The notion of "varieties" in this context is similarly dynamic, as new contexts, new realities, new discourses, and new varieties continue to emerge. Simultaneously, an awareness of the origins and traditions of the metalanguage, naming practices, and discourses of "varieties of English" has the potential to assist our own conceptualizations and theorizations of this branch of linguistics.

NOTES

1 Quirk's linguistic liberalism is perhaps somewhat ironic here, considering his later stance on such issues (see Quirk, 1990; Kachru, 1991; Davis in this volume).

2 These dates are largely taken from Crystal (1995). Given the complexity of individual colonial histories, they are probably best taken as an approximate guide to events.

3 Trivedi (2003) takes Sonntag to task for her enthusiasm for such call centers, claiming that in this industry "the turnover is rapid, the burn-out is high, and the scars of emotional frustration are deep" and that these "poor young men and women are

indeed the cyber-coolies of our global age, working not on sugar plantations but on flickering screens, and lashed into submission through vigilant and punitive monitoring, each slip in accent or lapse in pretence meaning a cut in wages."

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