

World English and world Englishes: Trends, tensions, varieties, and standards

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[This article is also accessible on the journal's home page.]

The current condition of the English language worldwide is both straightforward and convoluted. It is straightforward in that English is now widely agreed to be *the* global lingua franca (see Panel 1); it is convoluted in that the term *lingua franca* has traditionally referred to low-level makeshift languages, whereas English is a vast complex whose 'innumerable clearly distinguishable varieties'¹ range from high social and scientific registers through to some of the most maligned basilects on earth. What then does 'lingua franca' mean when used by such commentators with regard to English? Not the pidgin and creole 'Englishes' scattered throughout the world, or the 'fractured' or 'broken' English that other commentators have called (more conventionally) the lingua franca of world business. The answer in these instances has to be *Standard English* – an *haute cuisine* lingua franca if ever there was one. But *whose* Standard English, and what in any case constitutes the standard for a language whose users are counted in hundreds of millions worldwide (however uncertain the total)?²

In 1900, the answer would have been easy: it was the Queen's or King's English³, also known quite simply as 'good English' or 'proper English': the usage of a British minority so socially assured that its accent stills serves, a century later, as an institutionalized pronunciation target for learners in many parts

of the world. By the 1930s, however, that answer (though still sufficient in the British Empire) was being challenged so successfully in the United States that after the Second World War the only possible answer had become, willingly or unwillingly: both British Standard English (BrSE) and American Standard English (AmSE)⁴. A third response had emerged, however, by the closing decade of the 20th century: that these two 'traditional' Standard Englishes co-exist with many other Englishes in the UK, the US, and elsewhere, as part of a 'world English' or within a range of 'world Englishes', and further Standard Englishes have begun to assert themselves more potently than before, in for example Australia (AusSE), Canada (CanSE), and the Philippines (PhilSE).

Such a state of affairs cannot be entirely comfortable for members of what the *EL Gazette*, the *BBC English Magazine*, and *The Guardian Weekly* have called 'the English language industry'⁵, the largest body of language practitioners the world has ever known. This 'industry' comprises all the teachers, administrators, agents, publishers, academics, and others involved in selling a distinctive 'product' on a global scale. Both the EL industry and the EL media are among the many interest groups with far more to gain from the fact or concept of a single (or at most dual) world standard than a growing medley of territorial 'brands', regardless of the patriotic or other positions that individuals within those varied groups might support. The concept of a single supranational standard to which both UK and US norms contribute has existed rather vaguely for some time, and has at least four names: world/World English (WE), World Standard English (WSE), international or International English (IE), and International Standard English (ISE): see Panel 2 for definitions and citations. But this concept tends to prompt more questions than can easily be answered, such as: Does such a monolith exist now, in practical terms? Or if it does not yet exist, are there signs that it is on its way? And is its existence made less or more possible by the *fact* that, say, Australia and Canada are engaged in more fully legitimating their own 'endonormative' standards, which presumably synthesize elements of the two longer-established 'exonormative' UK and US standards with (especially lexical) elements deemed appropriate from their own vernaculars (some of which may in any case already have been exported to the world at large)?

The aim of this paper is to report and comment in

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Panel 1

The world's lingua franca: some citations

1982 Today, like it or curse it, English is the closest thing to a lingua franca around the globe. – Joseph Treen *et al*, 'English, English Everywhere,' *Newsweek*, 15 November.

1992a A policy to encourage the learning of other languages does not detract from our supporting the growth of English as the new 'lingua franca'... It is the currency against which all others are measured – the gold standard of international communication. – Richard Francis, Director General, the British Council, '1992 and All That: The Currency of English,' 4 May (pamphlet).

1992b Indeed, English has become the lingua franca of business and politics from Berlin to Bangkok. – Alfredo J. Estrada, 'Hold Your Tongue: Bilingualism and the Politics of "English Only",' *The Washington Post*, reprinted in the *International Herald Tribune*, 15 October.

1993 [A] number of prominent scholars... have begun to observe a trend... in which English as an international *lingua franca* appears to be shedding its cultural and ideological association with English-speaking nations. – Jeffra Flaitz, 'French attitudes toward the ideology of English as an international language,' *World Englishes* 12:2, 1993, p. 179.

1994 [T]he French are moving ever closer, not towards a European lingua franca which will inevitably be English, but towards banning the use of Anglo-Saxon in every walk of life. – 'Lingua Britannica,' editorial, *The Sunday Times*, London, 10 July

1995a Our infinitely adaptable mother tongue is now the world's lingua franca – and not before time – lead-in, 'The Triumph of English,' the *Times* of London, 25 February.

1995b Why fight to preserve small languages when the lingua franca of the global economy is English? – Michael Ignatieff, 'The State of Belonging,' *TIME Magazine*, 27 February.

1996 In view of the enormous spread of English as a *lingua franca* in this century there must be some very influential EFL titles [that could be included in an end-of-century survey]. – David Vaisey, the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, *Logos: The Journal of the International Book Community*, 7:2.

1997a [T]he use of English as a global lingua franca requires intelligibility and the setting and maintaining of standards. – David Graddol, *The Future of English?*, the British Council.

1997b ... English, the international language, 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. If such an entity did not already exist, the global village would have to invent it. – Tom McArthur, *English Today* 49 (12:1), January.

1997c ... the spread of one language across the globe as the one monopolizing tongue, part lingua franca, part 'master' language, and in part the sole language that gives access to the world. – Michael Toolan, 'Recentering English: New English and Global', *English Today* 52 (13:4), October.

1997d So you can think of English as an adopted international language, and then you will conceive of it as a stabilized and standardized code leased out on a global scale... English the *lingua franca*, the franchise language. – Henry G. Widdowson, 'EIL, ESL, EFL: global issues and local interests,' in *World Englishes* 16:1.

1999 As English takes on the responsibilities of a *lingua franca*, non-native speakers are taking a more active role in the development of the language. – Marko Modiano, 'International English in the global village,' *English Today* 58 (15:2), April.

2000 English has become the only *lingua franca* in the world. – Peter Newmark, 'Translation now: No. 6', *The Linguist*, 39:3, the Institute of Linguists, London.

broad terms on variation and institutionalization among world English(es), particularly in terms of standardness and models for English language teaching and learning (although ELT is so large and diversified an area that a report of this kind can do little more than identify, exemplify, and list some of the key issues). I will, however, seek to assess here the nature of English worldwide, considering what options are available to its users (regardless of background), what some of the key issues are in modelling English for ELT purposes, and what some of the key sociocultural and scholarly trends may be. The discussion has three parts:

1 World media and world English

- A discussion of the nature of the only fully global English-language newspaper currently in existence and how it reports on English, followed by a consideration of the role which this and other widely circulated periodicals have in shaping a print standard for the world's English. The key assumption here is that the print standard is closer to any core of standardness than there may be in present-day languages than either speech or writing.
- The observation that two such print standards already serve as the foundation for the fully-established Standard Englishes of the UK and US, and that these two already operate successfully side by side on a world scale, the US predominating but the UK retaining considerable prestige despite its permeability to US usage. Indeed, they operate so successfully together that it may be possible to say that they form not so much two distinct standards as a *dual standard*. Such a refinement may seem at first sight overly subtle and unnecessary, but I suspect that it is closer to the reality of things.

2 ENL, ESL, EFL

- Outlining a three-fold model of world English that has been influential in linguistic discussions and pedagogical practices for at least a quarter of a century.
- Identifying the locales where English serves as a native language (ENL), as a second language (ESL), and as a foreign language (EFL).
- Arguing that, despite the model's on-going usefulness, the distinctions that it offers have become harder to work with in today's more fluid circumstances, in which such factors operate as: world print and sound media; the Internet and World-Wide Web; large-scale migration; mass travel (most notably by air) for business and pleasure; and a fuller awareness of variety within many communities in which ENL, ESL, and EFL

strands co-occur (as with the UK, the US, Canada, India, and Singapore).

3 National standards and a world standard: EIL and WSE

- Starting with the fact that the two traditional world norms of AmSE and BrSE are being more confidently joined by others which have for several decades been setting up their own apparatus for standardhood (such as dictionaries and manuals of style).
- Considering this incipient family of standards in terms first of the concept *English as an International Language (EIL)* then of the possibility of its co-existence with a more or less 'federative' *World Standard English (WSE)*, at least for print, to which all can contribute and on which all can draw.
- Looking at ways in which the traditional styles and assumptions regarding the teaching of English may evolve to take fuller account of the world as we now find it, particularly with regard to a distinctive range of worldwide speech patterns (including, particularly, rhythm and rhoticity), whose existence makes it hard to conceive of a unified spoken standard for world English and difficult to decide what to teach as a model and how wide a range of material to make available to students for the purposes of listening comprehension.
- Citing several developments in publishing (both paper and electronic) and in corpus-linked language teaching, linguistics, and lexicography, which cater to a world market in English, and suggesting that a synthesizing approach within a paradoxically centrifugal and centripetal world English may well already be under way (even though its present manifestation is a 'federation' of varyingly unequal partners with no constitution, academy, or style council to bless it).

We currently live with the most complex, massive, and rapidly-evolving linguistic situation the world has ever known, in which users of English as a global medium have to contend with three prime issues:

- (1) Tension among the various linguistic loyalties of the EL nations alongside the need for some kind of standard international variety of the language, one of whose most practical manifestations at the present time is the register used in international airports and by air crews undertaking international flights.
- (2) On the one side, considerable certainty about what users of English will be able to read and understand and how they should write in order to be understood worldwide; on the other, less

English as a world language: some definitions

Global English. A term that emerged in the 1990s for English as the world's pre-eminent language, following the increased use of the words *global*, *globalize*, *globalization*, etc., and on the analogy of such phrases as *global village*, *global markets*, and *global warming*: 'The future of global English' (title, closing chapter, David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, 1997); 'Technology... lies at the heart of the globalisation process, affecting the worlds of education, work and culture; it has helped to ensure that global English has become firmly entrenched as the lingua franca within such activities' ('English and the Internet', *GEN: Global English Newsletter 1*, British Council, November 1997). One commentator, the British linguist Michael Toolan, has taken the usage a stage further by using *Global* alone for 'the public international English used by globetrotting professionals': 'In the case of Global, its non-English majority of users are increasingly claiming ownership of it' ('Recentring English', *English Today* 52 (13:4), October 1997).

Global language. A late-20c term for a language used everywhere on earth: 'It has become *the* language of the planet, the first truly global language' (Robert McCrum *et al.*, *The Story of English*, 1986); '*What is a global language?* – A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country' (David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, 1997); 'The future of English as a global language... may depend, in large measure, on how the language is taken up and used by young adults in Asian countries' (David Graddol, *The Future of English?*, 1997); 'English is shockingly emerging as the only truly global language' (Michael Toolan, 'Recentring English', in *English Today* 52 (13.4), October 1997).

International English. The English language, usually but not necessarily in its standard form, either when used, taught, and studied as a LINGUA FRANCA throughout the world, or when taken as a whole and used in contrast with *American English*, *British English*, *South African English*, etc.: '[I]t is difficult to predict the shape of international English in the twenty-first century. But it seems likely that more rather than less standardization will result... We may, in due course, all need to be in control of two standard Englishes – the one which gives us our national and local identity, and the other which puts us in touch with the rest of the human race. In effect, we may all need to become bilingual in our own language' (David Crystal, *The English language*, 1988); 'All these dimensions of local (intranational) and national English need to be codified and linked up with what we know about international English, if we are to communicate effectively overseas' (Pam Peters, 'A Word on Words: Intranational and International English', *Australian Language Matters*, 3:4, Oct–Dec 1995); 'International English in the global village' (title of an article by Marko Modiano, *English Today* 58 (15.2), April 1999).

International language, sometimes **international auxiliary language.** A language, natural or artificial, used for general communication among the nations of the world: 'English, being an international language, has a unique place in the modern world' (letter, *The Sunday Statesman*, Delhi, reprinted in *Asiaweek*, 14 June 1985); 'In the four centuries since the time of Shakespeare, English has changed from a relatively unimportant European language with perhaps four million speakers into an international language used in every continent by approximately eight hundred million people' (Loreto Todd & Ian Hancock, *International English Usage*, 1986); 'The success of English in its function as an international auxiliary language has often been regarded as a measure of its adequacy for the job' (Manfred Görlach, 'Varietas delectat', in Nixon & Honey, *An Historic Tongue*, 1988).

International Standard English. Occasional short form **ISE**. Sometimes pluralized. The standard English language used internationally: 'We may hope that the new national standards will take their place as constituents of an International Standard English, preserving the essential unity of English as an international language' (Sidney Greenbaum, *The Oxford English Grammar*, 1996); 'Make a list of vocabulary differences [and] grammatical differences between two international Standard Englishes with which you are familiar' (Jeff Wilkinson, *Introducing Standard English*, 1995). The term has two linked senses: (1) The sum-total of all standard English usage worldwide, but with particular reference to the norms of AmE, BrE, and increasingly AusE and other varieties with such works of reference as grammars, dictionaries, and style guides serving to delimit national usage, especially in such areas as the media (ed)ucation, law, government, and business; (2) Standard usage that draws on, and may blend with, such sources, but has a transnational identity of its own, especially in print worldwide and in the usage of such organizations as the United Nations.

World English. (1) English as a world language in all its variety: 'World English' (title, article by Tom McArthur, *Opinion*, Bombay, 28 Feb (1967); 'We may definitely recognize Australian English and New Zealand English as making their own special contribution to world English' (Robert D. Eagleson, in Bailey & Görlach (eds.), *English as a World Language*, 1982); 'The traditional spelling system generally ignores both the

changes in pronunciation over time and the variations in pronunciation through space; despite its notorious vagaries, it is a unifying force in world English' (Quirk *et al.*, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, 1985); 'Although the history of world English can be traced back 400 years, the current growth spurt in the language has a history of less than 40 years' (David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (1995). (2) British English conceived as the standard usage beyond the United States: 'Microsoft Encarta 97: World English edition', where the style is standard BrE (*Good Book Guide*, London, December 1996). (3) An actual, perceived, or hoped-for standard form of English worldwide, in effect synonymous with INTERNATIONAL STANDARD ENGLISH: 'This paper outlines the conceptualization and methodology behind the lexicographical project on World English in an Asian context' (Susan Butler, 'World English in an Asian context: The *Macquarie Dictionary* project', *World Englishes* 15:3, 1996). Compare the next entry.

World Standard English. Short form *WSE*. Standard English as used worldwide; the standard aspect of WORLD ENGLISH: 'If we read the newspapers or listen to the newscasters around the English-speaking world, we will quickly develop the impression that there is a World Standard English (WSE), acting as a strong unifying force among the vast range of variation which exists' (David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, 1995). 'Even if the new Englishes did become increasingly different, as years went by, the consequences for world English would not necessarily be fatal... A new form of English – let us think of it as "World Standard Spoken English" (WSSE) – would almost certainly arise. Indeed, the foundation for such a development is already being laid around us' (David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, 1997).

World Englishes. (1) Varieties of English (standard, dialect, national, regional, creole, hybrid, 'broken', etc.) throughout the world: 'More than any other commentators in the volume, Kachru strongly emphasises the significance of literary and other creativity in world Englishes' (Kingsley Bolton, 'World Englishes: The way we were', review of *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 5, 1994, in *World Englishes* 18:3, 1999). (2) Full title *World Englishes: Journal of English as an International and Intranational Language* (short form *WE*). A journal published by Pergamon Press, Oxford, renaming and restructuring in 1985 *World Language English*, an international journal about the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language, founded in 1981 and edited till 1984 in the UK by William R. Lee. The re-created publication is edited in the US by Braj B. Kachru at the U. of Illinois and Larry E. Smith at the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, and documents and discusses varieties of English (usually called 'Englishes', such as *American English*, *British English*, *Indian English*, and *Japanese English*). The editorial stance is that English belongs to all who use it, however they use it, lending a special communitarian value to the abbreviation *WE* for the title.

World language. A language used widely in the world, as discussed in Richard W. Bailey & Manfred Görlach (eds.), *English as a World Language*, 1982. The term refers to a language used in many parts of the world (such as Spanish and Portuguese), in specific large regions (such as Latin, Arabic, Hindi, and Russian), and widely because of a special role (such as French for diplomatic purposes, especially in the 18–19c, and Sanskrit as the language of Hindu learning and scripture). Many factors, singly or together, contribute to the rise of such languages, as for example empire-building, the spread of a religion, cultural significance, and shifting populations.

assurance about how they should speak in order to be understood worldwide and greater concern about what they can expect to hear and understand worldwide.

- (3) A wish or need among more self-confident second-language or foreign users of English to know where they stand within the framework of a massive worldwide English language complex. Do they have a full voice in this lingua franca? Can they talk – and talk back – as equals? Will native users respect their investment in this language? And do the educational systems in their countries teach English primarily for intra- or inter-national use, or cater for both?

1 World media and world English

The *International Herald Tribune* calls itself 'the world's daily newspaper', a description that grows more appropriate with each new edition in yet another world city. The *Trib* is an old campaigner. It began life in 1887 as an expatriate American broadsheet that was available only in Europe, based (then as now) in Paris. By 1992, it was being printed in and sold from eleven locations worldwide: seven in Europe (Frankfurt, The Hague, London, Marseilles, Paris, Rome, and Zurich); one in the Americas (New York); and three in Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore, and Tokyo). Its print style and presentational conventions

have always been American, it draws on such 'home' sources as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, and it makes use of standard wire services such as Agence France Presse, Bloomberg News, Associated Press, and Reuters.

Despite its ties to US newspapers, the *Trib's* supranational quality is notable in its news coverage, much of it arranged in such sections as *International*, *The Americas*, *Europe*, and *Asia/Pacific*, and its feature articles. If an article is its own, the formula 'X contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune' is likely to appear at the end, and it is likely to deal with geopolitics, organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, international sport, travel news, education worldwide, and culture, language, and literature.

The EU-based, US-oriented *Trib* is currently the closest we come to an autonomous global newspaper, just how close being a matter of personal judgement among its readers. Since US editorial usage is well known worldwide, and a single type-setting and sub-editing standard is the aim of any newspaper, it is unsurprising that the *IHT* continues to apply the rules with which it grew up. In doing so, it offers language scholars, teachers, and other interested persons ample evidence that a strictly US print standard works well internationally.

However, when the *IHT* is taken together with, most notably, *Time Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsweek*, and *Business Week* (US) on the one hand, and *The Economist* and *The Guardian Weekly* (UK) on the other, it becomes part of a long-standing dual print service at the international level, a point that EL teachers necessarily keep in mind for those students who will need global news sources, especially for business and professional purposes. In such cases, familiarity with either AmSE or BrSE written and print conventions is not enough: a discriminating awareness of both is needed. Also useful here is at least a modest capacity to modify one's own writing style in one direction or the other if needed, and there are many published guides to help with such matters. Concomitantly, the predominance of AmSE conventions in the spelling- and usage-checkers of word-processing packages, as well as on the Internet at large and among World Wide Web sites, works massively in favour of the international use of US norms – while also unintentionally alerting worldwide users to US blind spots regarding what is acceptable English elsewhere.

The print standard is the first thing many people think of when issues of 'Standard English' are discussed, although they may not think of it as a matter of print, but rather as simply the rules of writing. Traditional print with its system of editorial and critical checks and balances is seldom in the forefront of people's minds, although word-processing now requires more people to engage directly with the

conventions and options of print than ever before. The vastly increased use of personal computers in the last fifteen years or so has enormously extended active literacy, from handwriting and typing into what is in effect self-publishing. The expression 'desk-top publishing' (DTP) may have faded over the last ten years, but the reality of it – especially with the development of email and websites – is greater than ever. All such developments incline many e-writers to use the standardizing resources of their machines to strengthen the effect of their English, and these resources, once again, are weighted in favour of US norms and usages.

It may seem reasonable to suppose that the vast and increasing quantity of prose – to use an almost quaint word in the year 2000 – being produced on the Internet and the World Wide Web will be central to the development of any single world print standard, but at the moment there seems to me to be no evidence of this: the range of texts is so enormously varied and many of the texts are so transient that it is hard to apply such a word as 'standard' to the artifacts of this half-ordered, half-anarchic area. If there is any standard range within this mass, it is largely in the Web products of the selfsame publishers of books and newsprint as in the past. For the next decade, at least, they seem likely to continue to hold the ring.

Print has traditionally been public and long-lasting, emerging from writing, typing, or keyboarding through editing and proof-reading into an end-form one of whose primary features is that it will be read and assessed by strangers. Writing by hand has always for most people been a private or limited activity, either self-edited or left blithely unexamined on completion: a feature in which it resembles speech, which is (unless taped) mercifully transitory. When writing is converted into print, however, everything changes, with any actual or perceived textual flaw serving as evidence against a writer and/or a publication for a long time to come. This state of affairs has historically and socially been the cradle and mainstay of standardness, to a far greater extent than writing and speaking, even including the broadcast voice – and, again, it is not nearly so powerful a presence on the Internet and the Web as on traditional paper.

The print standard of a language (if it has one) is in many ways its easiest aspect to deal with. Major newspapers and publishers have house styles, usually detailed in style manuals. In various EL nations, a range of such manuals has over the years become available to the general public, and some have been institutionalized within national print heritages (works of literature, dictionaries, and other prestige instruments) that serve as touchstones for writers and publishers alike. Indeed, the emergence of such artifacts is a prime criterion for deciding whether a language or language variety has developed or is developing a standard, and it is hard to contest the

right of any country to produce such tools of its own. Some people may have argued for years that Australia has its own Standard English, while others have denied it, but when Australia has dictionaries and style guides of its own the standardness of its brand of English (and I use the word 'brand' advisedly) becomes easier to assert and defend⁶.

In addition, individual critics of style and usage have emerged over the years, writing either in newspaper columns or in books which may themselves become iconic institutions, most notably the works initiated by the Fowler brothers and Oxford University Press in the first decade of the 20th century, whose example has been followed in the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia. Since print is stable and public, its perceived instances of 'incorrect', 'careless', or 'slovenly' usage can be exhibited more easily and pilloried more enjoyably through selective quotation than anything oral, handwritten, or typed; indeed, it becomes a social game that is more than a game – may indeed be a self-sustaining and even *necessary* feature of print culture, extending the work of copy-editors and proof-readers (*pace* those ultra-descriptivists who dislike both prescription and proscription, and therefore have a seriously low opinion of usage guides).

The issue of whether AmSE and/or BrSE conventions should have precedence elsewhere in the world has often been decided by tradition or policy in particular territories, a state of affairs that shows every sign of continuing both on paper and in electronic terms. In Europe, long-established UK practices and norms tend to be increasingly laced with Americanisms, producing at times a 'mid-Atlantic' effect that surges, settles, then surges again⁷. But it is noteworthy, as touched on above with regard to computer language checkers, that internal US print and writing are massively immune to UK and other influence. Curiously enough, however, some US publishers evidently consider that beyond North America BrSE influence is stronger than theirs, to the extent that they have in recent times called versions of their products for sale beyond the US 'World editions', and apply BrSE norms to them⁸.

That said, the influence of AmSE usage is clearly fundamental to printed world English. At the same time, however, there is no indication that BrSE print usage will decline on the world scene, in newspapers or books. Any international print standard for English in at least the earlier decades of the 21st century will clearly be dual, as before, and indeed no more monolithic than centuries-old internal UK practice has been: there never has been a tidy standard for print (or anything else). In terms of news publications worldwide, a 2:1 US-UK ratio seems about right, which means a tilt towards uniformity, since US printers tend to be more orthographically orthodox than their UK peers. However, a majority preference for uniformity does not mean greater

homogeneity: UK and US orthographers all pursue their own kinds of orthodoxy.

We may also note here the knock-on effect of the print standard on scripted radio and teleprompted TV news services. Such performances are not speech as such, but acts of reading aloud, part of what the British phonetician David Abercrombie has called 'spoken prose'⁹: in other words, they are print products at one remove, comparably standardized and with conventionalized delivery styles. They are also largely independent of the accent in which they may be delivered, although there is a history in EL broadcasting worldwide of choosing accent styles for newscasting that are associated with perceived élites, a tradition that has however in the last twenty years grown less rigid.

But to return to the *Trib*, whose owners and managers have long been aware of the value of a unique world-class newspaper to teachers and learners of English. From time to time they have dipped a toe in the ELT/TESOL business, as for example with their 1993 package *In the News*¹⁰. The *Trib* also on occasion publishes articles about the study, learning, and teaching of English at an international level, especially on pages devoted to educational themes, where such articles may partner ads for institutions that offer an 'international education', the composite providing solid examples of the massive on-going commodification of English worldwide¹¹.

The closing decade of the 20th century marked a major change in the worldwide perception of English. For over thirty years it had been broadly accepted as the world's primary language, but with the end of the Cold War and the impetus of economic globalization, the emergence of an unrivalled *world English* became an open topic, as noted in three mid-90s feature articles in the *International Herald Tribune*:

1 'Dear English Speakers: Please Drop the Dialects':
3 November 1995

By Mikie Kiyoi, a Japanese executive in the Paris-based International Energy Agency: a polite but sharp-edged article special to the *IHT* focusing on the issue of worldwide intelligibility, in which she notes: 'We non-natives are desperately learning English... Dear Anglo-Americans, please show us you are also taking pains to make yourselves understood in an international setting'.

2 'No Getting Around It: English Is Global Tongue':
16 November 1995

By the Marqués de Tamarón, director of the Madrid-based Instituto de Cuestiones Internacionales y Política Exterior (Institute of International Affairs and Foreign Policy): a sympathetic follow-up to Kiyoi, notable for its generosity of spirit. He observes: '[W]e need a world language, a sort of

lingua franca... Even speakers of major languages such as Spanish, French and Chinese have an interest in learning English for practical reasons'.

3 'Don't Fret Over English, It's Taking the Prize': 24 April 1997

By Richard Reeves, UPS, Los Angeles, notable for both an easy triumphalism ('the British Empire is a memory, but the English Empire is still expanding') and its warning to mainstream Americans not to be complacent (behaving 'with the arrogance of winners' who have failed to master other languages). The article was written not with a world readership in mind but to counter the unwise insularity of a campaign to make English the official language of the US at the federal level.

In these articles, Reeves is the gratified but concerned native speaker, and De Tamarón is the urbane and tactful representative of a language culture that, because of its own international strength, is relatively undisturbed by English. Kiyoi, however, speaks on behalf of the disenfranchised non-natives, the very people for whom a *lingua franca* should cater well. Her comment may be considered in relation to a more recent observation by Yukio Tsuda, Professor of International Communication at Nagoya University, Japan:

English is no doubt a *lingua franca*, a global language of today, but the hegemony of English is also very threatening to those who are not speakers of English... Because English sells well, English is now one of the most important products of the English-speaking countries. So, English is not merely a medium, but a proprietary commodity to be marketed across the world... Having to use English can result in a kind of existential crisis as well as a loss of human dignity. I, for one, as a non-English speaking person, have experienced these crises in English-speaking environments... A democratic linguistic order is a vision which aims for democracy among all languages, rather than democracy plus English.

– In 'Envisioning a Democratic Linguistic Order,' the *TESOL Reporter*, 33:1, Brigham Young University, Hawaii, April 2000.

Whatever else it may be, the spread and probable consolidation of world English is not an innocent issue, detached from human pain or commercial gain. I will return to the implications of Kiyoi's article and Tsuda's comment later.

2 ENL, ESL, EFL

In the late 20th century, EL scholars tended to interpret EL worldwide expansion in terms of a three-part geopolitical model formulated in three distinct ways: in the UK by Barbara Strang (*History of English*, 1970¹²); by the three UK scholars Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, and Geoffrey Leech, and the Swedish scholar Jan Svartvik (*A Grammar of Contemporary English*, 1972¹³); by the Indo-US scholar Braj B. Kachru (in various publications since the

early 1980s¹⁴). It is a demographic and sociopolitical model, whose divisions are as follows:

(1) *The ENL territories* the home localities of the Quirk group's users of English as a Native Language, of Strang's A-speakers, and of the members of Kachru's Inner Circle. The more prominent ENL territories are: Australia, Canada, England (UK), the Irish Republic, Liberia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland (UK), Scotland (UK), South Africa, Wales (UK), and the United States: see Panel 3.

(2) *The ESL territories* the home localities of the Quirk group's users of English as a Second Language, of Strang's B-speakers, and of the members of Kachru's Outer Circle, where English comes after at least one other language, and has been present for at least a century. The more prominent ESL territories are: Bangladesh, Botswana, Cameroon, Cyprus, Fiji, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Panama, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe: see Panel 3.

(3) *The EFL territories* the home localities of the Quirk group's users of English as a Foreign Language, of Strang's C-speakers, and of the members of Kachru's Expanding Circle, where English has traditionally been 'foreign'. It may either have been significantly present for decades, supported by massive public educational programmes (as in Sweden and Japan) or be a relatively recent arrival (as with Mozambique and Uzbekistan). The list of EFL territories in effect covers the rest of the world.

This three-part model corresponds broadly to geopolitical and social reality, although significant anomalies emerge on closer examination¹⁵. The model is neither old nor outdated, being the outcome of reflections in the 1960s, when the British Empire was winding down, but in 2000 it seems to belong to a tidier world. As its creators knew well, such a model was a simplification at that time, but, in the thirty years since it became public, there have been many changes in the world. The following list of ten developments is representative but not exhaustive:

1 Multilingualism

A greater and more willing acknowledgement of the multilingualism that exists in the ENL territories, often in the past presented as if they were in effect language monoliths. In such territories one can find intricate language mosaics, including hybridization, as for example in the US, New Zealand, South Africa, and Wales, and in such 'world cities' as London, New York, Sydney, and Montreal. These territories are now exploring the extent to which both indigenous and in-migrating languages and varieties of English can be sustained within a nexus of multiculturalism about which however many people are dubious or suspicious.

Panel 3

A chronology of the ENL and ESL territories

The 'New Englishes' are often so called because English-language scholarship took serious note of them only from c.1980. In most cases they date back 100–200 years. The layout below, with its five numbered periods, shows when English was first used in each territory or when each was formed or settled. Some subterritories, such as US states or Canadian provinces, are included because of special significance at particular times.

Prior to the 17th century

c.AD450 the beginnings of the southern part of Britain that in due course became England; c.600 the beginnings of the northern part of Britain that later became Scotland; 1171 the Anglo-Normans first move into Ireland; 1282 the Anglo-Normans first move into Wales; 1504 the English establish St John's, Newfoundland, formalized in 1583 as their first North American colony; 1536 and 1542 the two-stage incorporation of Wales into England; 1560–1620 the Anglo-Scottish plantations in Ireland.

17th century

1607 Jamestown, Virginia; 1612 Bermuda, Surat (first trading station in India); 1620 Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts; 1627 Barbados; 1640 Madras; 1647 the Bahamas; 1655 Jamaica; 1659 Saint Helena; 1670 Hudson's Bay; 1674 Bombay, from Portugal; 1690 Calcutta.

18th century

1759 Quebec; 1774 the East India Company territories united and run from Calcutta; 1776 the Declaration of Independence of the American colonies; 1786 Botany Bay penal colony set up, Australia; 1791 Upper and Lower Canada (now Ontario and Quebec); 1792 New Zealand.

19th century

1802 Ceylon, Trinidad; 1803 the Louisiana Purchase; 1806 and 1814 Cape Colony, South Africa; 1808 Sierra Leone; 1814 Malta, Mauritius, Saint Lucia, Tobago; 1816 Gambia; 1819 Singapore, US purchase of Florida from Spain; 1821 US settlers in Mexican territory of Texas (1836: independence; 1845 US state); 1826 Singapore, Malacca, and Penang; 1829 Australia at large; 1831 British Guiana (now Guyana); 1842 Hong Kong (1997 returned to China); 1846 Natal, South Africa; 1848 California (ceded by Mexico to the US); 1850 the Bay Islands (1858: ceded by the UK to Honduras); 1861 Lagos (now Nigeria); 1862 British Honduras (now Belize); 1867 British North America officially named Canada, Alaska purchased from Russia by the US; 1869 Basutoland (now Lesotho); 1874 Fiji, the Gold Coast (now Ghana); 1878 Cyprus; 1884 South East New Guinea (now Papua); 1885 Bechuanaland (now Botswana); 1886 Burma; 1887 the Maldives; 1888–94 Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar; 1895 the Malay States; 1898 US annexes Hawaii, Spain cedes Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the US; 1899 Sudan becomes a condominium of Britain and Egypt.

20th century

1910 South Africa; 1914 Britain and France invade German colony of Kamerun (1919 formally ceded, now Cameroon); 1919 Germans cede Tanganyika and New Guinea; 1920 Germans cede German West Africa, administered for the UN by South Africa as South West Africa (now Namibia); 1947 British India partitioned into India and Pakistan; 1950–70 The period in which the British Empire was effectively liquidated and a range of post-colonial nations emerged, such as Ghana (1960) and Malaysia (1963); 1971 Bangladesh secedes from Pakistan.

2 ENL variety

A fuller awareness of variety among the indigenous Englishes of the ENL territories, including notably an acknowledgement of rapid change, as with the emergence and spread in south-eastern England of 'Estuary English'¹⁶, the vague, misleading, but now established name for a spoken variety often perceived as occupying the sociolinguistic middle ground between Cockney and RP.

3 The 'native' controversy

Increasing uncertainty about such terms as 'native' and 'native speaker' in relation to Standard English,

especially where the usage of dialect and creole speakers in avowedly ENL territories is contrasted with the fluent 'native-like' command of the standard in such EFL territories as the Netherlands and Denmark, where English often seems like a second first language.

4 The 'standard' controversy

A loss of certainty (however well- or ill-founded) regarding what the spoken standard might be towards which teachers should work or to which ENL, ESL, and EFL users should aspire, notably in terms of RP (Received Pronunciation) in the UK

and in GA (General American) in the US, but also in matters of grammar, orthography, punctuation, lexis, idiom, and slang, as well as with regard to both what the world at large should do and what particular nations are currently doing.

5 *The problem of norms*

Related professional doubts regarding what kind of language norms should be set for school children in ENL and ESL territories. For some commentators, the norms have long been with us, are clear, and need only be applied, and it is perverse or pig-headed to pretend otherwise. For others, whatever the past was like, a new world order needs new solutions that include much less authoritarianism and an alleviation of prejudice in gender, race, culture, language, dialect, and accent.

6 *Issues relating to migration and education*

A sense in many ENL territories that, because of higher levels of migration and a wish in many ESL/EFL regions to have one's children educated in English in an ENL locale, the number of ESL/EFL students in ENL educational institutions has greatly increased, which may be seen as a welcome development economically and culturally or a menace to tradition and ethnic distinctness, or both.

7 *National ENL standardizing institutions*

The accelerated development, in for example Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa, of dictionary and other projects that increase the cohesion and autonomy of their own Englishes and reduce dependence on UK and US standards. Such development tends to go hand-in-hand with a sympathetic approach to both endangered indigenous languages and the 'heritage languages' of immigrants in such countries.

8 *National ESL standardizing institutions*

In such territories as the Philippines and Singapore, the conversion of ENL and EFL dictionaries into dictionaries for local use, leading to a strengthening of confidence in the local variety of English. In the countries mentioned, Australian dictionaries are also now being adapted for local use¹⁷, alongside the more predictable US and UK products.

9 *National ESL monitoring and planning procedures*

In such territories as India and Malaysia, language policies which may promote unease at the extent to which English gains against a language whose heritage needs protection or prevents a language from developing adequately. If, in addition, parents insist on EL schooling for their children, there may not be enough time, resources, or personnel both to achieve this and to sustain local languages.

10 *Issues relating to hybridization among languages*

Increasing awareness everywhere that hybridization between English and other languages may lead (or

might already have led) to high levels of change in those languages, through adoptions from English or the formation of mixed languages that may offend and bewilder older people but seem normal and even hip for the young¹⁸.

Such developments suggest that there is a centripetal/centrifugal paradox in world English and that it will continue. An increase in variety and in local prestige seems likely to be matched by powerful pressures towards a world standard, but inherently any such standard will be a 'federation of unequals' that might well be compared to a pecking order (but with the likelihood of greater forbearance and leeway as time goes on). The history of English being what it is (unlike French with its Academy), such an informally federative standard would most probably evolve in the same accumulative and *ad hoc* manner as the UK and US standards have done over the last two centuries. To my own mind, such a standard has been evolving (warts and all) for some time, probably since the 1960s: not so very long after the primacy of American English began to be recognised (or conceded). If there can be two national standards within one English, there can in principle be more than two.

3 National standards and a world standard: EIL and WSE

In her article in the *International Herald Tribune*, the Japanese executive Mikie Kiyoi observes:

I have to live with this unfortunate fate. My native tongue is remote from European languages. Yet I believe I have the right to request that my Anglo-American friends who are involved in international activities not abuse their privilege, even though they do not do so intentionally. First of all, I would like them to know that the English they speak at home is not always an internationally acceptable English. Nowadays, nonnatives learn English through worldwide media such as CNN or BBC World Service. Whether CNN's English is a good model is arguable. My point is that most nonnatives do not learn dialects such as Scottish and Australian... I strongly request that staff members of Anglo-American international organizations not stick to their hometown's brand of English. Native English speakers who are international civil servants cannot fulfill their international responsibilities if they speak as if they were addressing only fellow natives...

I sincerely believe there exists a cosmopolitan English – a *lingua franca*, written or spoken – that is clearly different from what native English speakers use unconsciously in their daily life. There are also good manners that go along with a cosmopolitan English: not monopolizing the floor, giving equal opportunity to usually silent nonnatives and refraining from interrupting nonnatives when they do speak.

These are potent comments. A dialogue on this very matter has been running for at least two decades in the EL industry, but the world at large has hardly noticed it and does not know its terminology, which centres on 'English as an International Language'

(EIL), and how to teach it (TEIL). Indeed, (T)EIL has long been a minor theme at the gatherings of such organizations as the UK-centred IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), the US-centered TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), and the Australian ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) Association. More recently, it has been a major theme for an international scholarly group whose interest is MAVEN (Major Varieties of English), its focus being primarily on the larger native-speaking communities worldwide (although at its conferences there can be papers on any EL community). An interesting aside on the MAVEN group is that the initiative in its formation has come not from an ENL or ESL background but from an EFL country: Sweden.

(T)EIL is close to Kiyoi's more elegantly phrased 'cosmopolitan English'. Its principal proponents have been Larry E. Smith at the East-West Center in Hawaii and the late Peter Strevens, a British applied linguist, both of whom argued in the 1980s that all speakers of English need to be courteous and tactful with one another, culturally and linguistically, and that no one has an edge of ethnicity or heritage when the aim of a transnational encounter is successful communication. In his entry on the subject in *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (1992:1027–8), Smith notes:

The term differs from both *TEFL* and *TESL* in that native speakers are also seen as needing help in cross-national and cross-cultural communication, rather than as representing the norm at which non-natives should aim. It is assumed in TEIL that English belongs to all of its users (whether in its standard or any other form), and that ways of speaking and patterns of discourse are different across nations.

In this approach, it is not assumed that someone who is avowedly fluent in English is *ipso facto* above cross-cultural problems while using it, or that the behaviour of all native speakers is the same (and of the same quality) simply *because* they are native speakers. For Smith, there is always more to communication than actual or supposed fluency, 'because information and argument are structured differently in different nations, and topics of conversation, speech acts, expressions of politeness and respect, irony, understatement and overstatement, and even uses of silence are different in different nations'. Indeed, fluency in EIL terms might well require preparedness and skill in such matters as these.

Certainly, everyone can benefit from knowing more about such matters, so that the kinds of discomfort experienced by Kiyoi, Tsuda, and others from *all* backgrounds might be reduced. EIL serves then to remind us that meaning and socio-cultural harmony need to be negotiated, whatever the language or variety of language being used. As such, it seems likely that it will be a valued dimen-

sion in whatever World Standard Spoken English (David Crystal's term: see Panel 2) is likely to emerge in the near future, or (as he and I both consider to be the case) the kind that is already increasingly available internationally, despite all the vagaries of speech.

Pronunciation models: RP and GA

In the earlier part of this paper, I focused on standardization in terms of print (and to some degree writing), because it is the key area for canonicity. Print can be critically studied with relative ease, and writers, editors, and others have a vested interest in consistency and accuracy. Speech (including accent, rhythm, and speed of delivery) is altogether a more difficult matter, yet it constitutes an area in which some sort of standardness has long been attempted and often been contentious. In the teaching and learning of English, although there must be some kind of programme for speech production and listening comprehension, the questions remain: How standardizable can pronunciation be (including the presentation of pronunciation in books)? And if it cannot in fact be standardized in a population at large, how can one kind of user of English (native or other) learn to understand all the others adequately and in turn be adequately understood by them?

The issues involved are daunting, and have been so at least since the creation of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the 1880s, explicitly for the purpose of teaching English better on the European mainland. As already touched on, in the UK itself at the end of the 19th century the only form of speech with an uncontested right to the label 'Standard English' was the King's/Queen's English: all else failed to measure up both socially and aesthetically in the ears of the judges of the time.

In England in the first decades of the 20th century, the language scholar Henry Cecil Wyld proposed the terms *Received Standard (English)* and *Modified Standard (English)* to cover two kinds of British pronunciation that for him stood in sharp contrast to both rural and urban dialects (by definition non-standard and socially and educationally problematical, if not downright substandard). When defining and contrasting these two terms, however, he did not take a dispassionate phonetic view of them, but something much closer to the prescriptive views of the 18th-century *orthoepists* ('proponents of right speech': professional elocutionists), who dealt in right and wrong ways of speaking. Wyld wrote, for example:

It is proposed to use the term *Received Standard* for that form which all would probably agree in considering the best, that form which has the widest currency and is heard with practically no variation among speakers of the better class all over the country. This type might be called Public School English. It is proposed to call the vulgar English of the Towns, and the English of the Villager who has abandoned his native Regional Dialect

Modified Standard. That is, it is Standard English, modified, altered, differentiated, by various influences, regional and social. Modified Standard differs from class to class, and from locality to locality; it has no uniformity, and no single form of it is heard outside a particular class or a particular area.

– from *A Short History of English*, 1914.

At the time when Wyld was preparing this statement, the phonetician Daniel Jones was combining Wyld's views with the symbols of the International Phonetic Association. In 1913, he brought out his *Phonetic Dictionary of the English Language*, the second edition of which appeared in 1917, during the First World War, when it was re-named *An English Pronouncing Dictionary*. The *EPD* has been since then, in many editions, one of the most influential ELT books ever published: a phonetician's and teacher's bible for what English words should sound like. The *EPD* institution was associated with the Department of Phonetics and Linguistics of University College London, where Jones worked, and where its revision was in more recent times in the care first of A. C. Gimson, then Susan Ramsaran. It has now been entrusted to Peter Roach and James Hartman. The original *EPD*, which listed a large selection of 'difficult' words and names in roman letters followed by their equivalents in IPA transcription, had Wyld's 'Public School English' (PSE) as its model. Jones adapted this term to 'Public School Pronunciation' (PSP) in 1913, then to 'Received Pronunciation' (RP) in the 1926 edition, a term which had a long reign until Roach and Hartman changed it in 1997 to 'BBC English'. By and large, however, the name change has been more radical than any sound change (and in any case RP has been known and glossed for decades as 'BBC English').

By the mid-20th century, however, a version of the educated English of the US had gained a more or less comparable prestige in the world, and its spoken model General American (GA) or Network Standard has been widely regarded as adequately representing educated US usage, but with a comparable awareness that it does not represent educated speech in large areas of the US (particularly the southern states). It has to be noted, however, that US language scholars generally do not consider that GA corresponds to any kind of real-life usage, and many have reservations about its use. It is at best therefore a convenient and approximative fiction.

The PSE/PSP/RP/BBC model, which began by describing and exhibiting the accent of the dominant minority in imperial Britain, became the touchstone for subsequent representations of speech in all UK-based ELT dictionaries and related publications. In 2000, the Empire has long gone, yet its classic model continues as the target offered to the world's would-be speakers of English, with ever-greater competition from the US. As a result, GA transcriptions now commonly follow RP representations in ESL/EFL dictionaries and other works,

which in effect deal with UK and US speech on a 'bilingual' basis.

It might be argued that having a specific model for the pronunciation of a language (however artificial) is better than having no model at all, that RP has been in use for a long time and retains considerable prestige, that teachers and publishers are used to it, that the accents of younger people educated to university level in south-eastern England still more or less resemble it, that the GA accent approximates well enough to the way many Northern and Western Americans speak, and that phasing such models out would be tiresome and pointless, especially as there is no obvious replacement for them. There is a great deal of good establishmentarian sense in all of these points, yet three factors militate against them, and are likely to gain strength with the passage of time:

- *Local centres of gravity*

Each ENL/ESL English has its own phonology, and may also have its 'educated' subvariety (its acrolectal base for a spoken standard). If such communities promote their own standard varieties, as some of the larger communities have been doing, these will grow stronger as a result of peer pressure and greater use in local radio and TV. Most members of most communities experience little accentual change over time, and the upwardly mobile who *are* inclined to change may prefer to sound more like educated locals than like middle-class inhabitants of south-east England or the northern and western US. In fact, they may not be able to do other than that, except in some instances to sound like caricatures of prestigious people who live elsewhere.

- *Changing emphases*

As they learn more about the history and cultural implications of their own and other Englishes, individuals in ESL/EFL territories with a traditional British bent may no longer wish to be part of the ethos of RP (a factor already true for younger people in south-east England itself). Comparably, they and others may not wish to identify with GA, although currently a US accent (mediated by Hollywood) has a certain cachet. Here, the condition of UK/US pronunciation models is comparable to that of the UK/US print standards: each will go on having an influence, the US taking the greater share, and there will be a range of 'mid-Atlantic' (see note 7) or comparably mixed accents between them.

- *The limitations of RP and GA transcriptions*

Neither the UK/RP model nor its US/GA equivalent (as presented in the *EPD*, ELT learners' dictionaries, and so forth) has ever been a full model of the spoken language of its native users, and no claim can, or should, be made that either model does more than approximate to the speech of the general educated population in either country. While such reference

norms certainly indicate important and useful vowel and consonant contrasts and successfully mark primary and secondary word stress, they provide little guidance on rhythm and sentence stress, a point which Gimson made in the introduction to the 14th Edition of the *EPD* in 1977.

The two models do usefully contrast the rhoticity (*r*-fulness) of GA with the non-rhoticity (*r*-lessness) of RP but they offer no guidance on other accents, particularly with regard to their rhoticity or non-rhoticity. Such help, if available, would not be useful for students' own pronunciation, but it could be valuable in acclimatizing them to the wide and unpredictable range of English users whom they will encounter directly or through radio, television, and movies/films. The following sections on rhythm and rhoticity may indicate what a service of this kind can be like.

Stress-timed and syllable-timed rhythm

The phonetician and language teacher David Abercrombie, a student and then a colleague of Jones's, argued that 'rhythm is a much neglected factor in language teaching, though intelligibility undoubtedly depends on it to a considerable extent' (1967:36; see also Crystal 1994, 1996). Abercrombie argued that getting the rhythm of English right helps people get the vowel system right and therefore the weak forms of words right, because the rhythm causes the weakening (or centralization) of vowels, quite regardless of the accent of a speaker of conventional 'native' English.

The rhythm of a language is one of those fundamentals that is far more easily acquired by children than by adults. Its basis appears to be pulses of air in the lungs, produced by the intercostal respiratory muscles, known variously as the *chest pulse* (for place of origin), the *breath pulse* (for the flow in which it occurs), and the *syllable pulse* (for its outcome). There are two distinct kinds: ordinary chest pulses, at about five per second, and the more powerful but less frequent *stress pulses*. Although the resulting rhythms appear to be fundamental to speech, the pulsation is differently co-ordinated in different languages. Finally, to acknowledge differences in the timing of the two kinds of pulse, phoneticians make a distinction between *syllable timing* and *stress timing*, according to whether the syllable or the metrical foot is taken as the dominant unit of time.

Many languages divide fairly neatly according to these rhythms. Syllable-timed languages such as French and Japanese have an even machine-gun-like rhythm (*rat-a-tat-a-TAT*), while stress-timed languages such as English and Russian have an uneven rhythm like Morse Code (*tee-TUM-tee-tee-TUM-tee-TUM*). Other languages, however, such as Arabic and Hindi, fit neither category well and it may be that no

language fits perfectly and that on occasion rhythm may vary within them. As Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen puts it (1993:13): 'The traditional dichotomy between stress-timing and syllable-timing is increasingly giving way to a view of rhythm as a continuum along which a language or language variety can be placed according to primarily *phonological criteria*'. I share this view.

Without pushing the contrast further than it needs to go, we can say that present-day English divides into traditional stress-timed and non-traditional syllable-timed varieties. The stress-timed varieties include those of the UK, the US, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and native speakers of English in South Africa. Syllable-timed varieties have emerged against backgrounds of local languages with that kind of rhythm. These varieties include sub-Saharan African Englishes, the speech of the Anglophone Caribbean and many African Americans, and ESL territories in South, South-East, and East Asia.

In spoken world English, this dichotomy is as much part of the furniture as the US/UK contrast. Indeed, its institutionalization and eventual legitimization appear to be under way in many ESL territories. Speakers of syllable-timed English will in due course be as normal on the international scene as speakers of stress-timed English, as they are already normal in parts of Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia.

Since syllable-timed speech does not generally produce weak syllables, there is no weak vowel (schwa) in, say, the second and third syllables of the word *character* (as traditionally pronounced). This absence of vowel reduction might be supposed to make syllable-timed speech easier to understand than stress-timed speech, because it offers a close match to the vowel qualities of written/printed words, and for some people this may be so. Often, however, syllable-timing (in which stress is sometimes placed on untraditional syllables) alters centuries-old ENL patterns of stress and may reduce rather than increase intelligibility, at least until one gets used to it. In any case, both traditional Anglophones and learners from many other linguistic backgrounds will need to get used to it or at least know what it is. And to get used to it successfully, they will need to hear it at appropriate points in the unfolding of their regular listening-comprehension activities.

Rhoticity and non-rhoticity

The third significant area (after pronunciation models and timing) is the distinction between rhotic and non-rhotic English. In rhotic accents, *r* is pronounced wherever it is orthographically present: for example, in *run, barrel, beard, war, worker*. In non-rhotic accents, *r* is pronounced in only two situations: in syllable-initial position (as in *run*) and intervocalically (as in *barrel*). In such accents it does not occur

postvocally (as in *beard, war, worker*) unless a vowel follows, so that in *the writer's friend* no *r* is pronounced, but it is pronounced in *the writer is my friend*. All accents of English fall on one side or the other of the rhotic divide, which is not neatly distributed worldwide, including within certain countries. In addition, the division has nothing to do with whether a variety is stress-timed or syllable-timed. The divisions worldwide for ENL territories are:

1 Dominantly rhotic

In two broad groups: (1) Using a retroflex *r*: Canada; Ireland; south-western England; western and northern states of the United States (west of the Connecticut River); and, in the Caribbean, the island of Barbados and to some degree Jamaica. (2) Using mainly an alveolar tapped or trilled *r*: Scotland.

2 Dominantly non-rhotic

Australia, the Caribbean (except Barbados and to some degree Jamaica), England (excluding the south-west), New Zealand, Sub-Saharan Africa (including South Africa), New Zealand, Wales, and, in the United States, three areas (the southern states, New York state, and by and large New England east of the Connecticut River). The speech of most African-Americans is non-rhotic.

Rhythm and rhoticity fit together variously. Thus, in one and the same TV news programme in Edinburgh or Hong Kong you might hear someone from London (non-rhotic and stress-timed) talking to someone from Nigeria (non-rhotic and syllable-timed), followed by two people from India (one rhotic and syllable-timed, the other non-rhotic and stress-timed) talking to two other people, one Irish and one a Scot (each rhotic in different ways and both stress-timed). Because that is the reality, students benefit from appropriate exposure to a wide range of listening targets, regardless of what their own pronunciation target may be. Indeed, listening comprehension activities have for some years been moving successfully in this direction.

One might suppose that deciding whether to be rhotic or non-rhotic would be a significant matter for learners of English, but any such decision is normally taken for them by their teachers, institutions, or ultimately their governments, usually without protest. Such decisions may have been influenced by historical association with the UK or US, or for some other reason, such as the available teaching materials. It may – or could, if policies were flexible enough and bore the students' linguistic circumstances in mind – also be affected by the nature of the home language of the student (which in any case will have an influence). Speakers of the Romance languages and Arabic, for example, find rhoticity easier, whereas speakers of

African languages, Chinese, and Japanese find non-rhoticity easier. It is also worth noting that in India, which had a long association with British RP-speaking officials, the local English-speaking population is massively rhotic and syllable-timed. Such facts suggest that in terms of logic at least it might make sense to provide learners with a model that harmonizes most usefully with the phonology of the mother tongue.

Envoi

In the preceding discussion I have several times mentioned dictionaries, grammars, style manuals, and the like that have come into existence to catalogue the language and encourage kinds of conformity. I have also indicated that such publications have for some time been spreading beyond the traditional sources of conformity, the UK and the US. It has been inevitable that further publications will emerge that seek to compare, contrast, and synthesize the contents of those works: that is, to internationalize them, and by so doing to formulate a statement about what is going on nationally and transnationally. Such publications have now indeed begun to appear.

As I have sought to show, we have had for some time a World Standard English with a fair degree of standardization for print and writing that is cent(e)red on a powerful dual print standard, alongside a much less effective and successful dual pronunciation system – and US usage predominates in both. However, the recent development of several international lexicographical and linguistic projects takes everything one stage further, emphasizing a spirit of cooperation that both sustains the existing dual world standard and suggests the emergence of a more comprehensively federative world standard that allows a fair degree of elbow room within its constraints. I have in mind here five particular projects of the late 1990s:

- *The Oxford English Grammar*, Sidney Greenbaum (1996)

A work of reference based on the Survey of English Usage (SEU) and the International Corpus of English (ICE), projects directed and co-ordinated by the late Sidney Greenbaum at the Department of English, University College London. This work evolved out of Greenbaum's role as associate editor responsible for the grammar entries in *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (1992). The OEG's primary aim is to offer 'a comprehensive account of present-day English that is chiefly focused on the standard varieties of American and British English'. Greenbaum notes (p. 12): 'It is reasonable to speak of an international standard written English. It is also reasonable to speak of an international standard spoken English if we limit ourselves to the more formal levels and if we ignore pronunciation differences'. In

2000, his approach was reinforced with the publication of *The Oxford Reference Grammar*, edited from the *OEG* by Edmund Weiner of the *OED*.

- *The Langscape Project* and a planned international English style guide (1998 onward)

Initiated and developed by Pam Peters, Macquarie University, New South Wales, Australia, and supported by Cambridge University Press both there and in the UK and US. Peters formulated a set of style-and-usage-related questionnaires which (among other vehicles) have been presented, distributed, and discussed through *English Today: The international review of the English language*, the quarterly Cambridge journal, over ten issues under the title *The Langscape Project*. The response in *ET* and elsewhere has been strong, and the final report appeared in *ET64* in October 2000. Broken down into categories according to such factors as location, age, and sex, the results display a statistical worldwide cross-section of responses on a range of contested or uncertain aspects of style and usage, such as concord (*the committee is or are?*) and pluralization (*cactuses or cacti?*).

- *The New Oxford Dictionary of English (NODE or 'Noddy', 1998)*

Editor, Judy Pearsall, with (as part of her editorial staff list) 29 'World English' consultants: 16 US; 4 Scottish; 2 each for Canada, Australia, and India; and 1 each for the Caribbean, New Zealand, and South Africa. In line with the development of Oxford dictionaries in and for various parts of the world, *NODE* is intended as a universalized desk dictionary with UK conventions that can nonetheless serve the world. Extensive use was made of the British National Corpus and an unspecified corpus of US English: 'Unless otherwise stated, the words and senses recorded in this dictionary are all part of standard English; that is, they are in normal use in both speech and writing everywhere in the world... The main regional standards are British, US and Canadian, Australian and New Zealand, South African, Indian, and West Indian' (Introduction, under the subhead 'World English', xv–xvi).

- *The Encarta World English Dictionary* ('The Encarta' or *EWED*, 1999)

Originated and published in paper by Bloomsbury (UK version) with St Martins Press (US), and Macmillan (Australia). Editor-in-chief, Kathy Rooney, for whom I served as the initiating adviser on world English. There are both a World English Database Advisory Board and a group of World English and Language Consultants, 30 in all. The territories covered by the advisers and consultants are: the UK at large (including Black English), the US (including African American English), Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Pacific area, Scotland, South Africa,

Singapore, and Wales. Microsoft's prime interest in the *EWED* has been the electronic version, currently part of the Microsoft Reference Suite, which is available on five CD-Roms or one DVD.

- *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (1999)

Edited by Douglas Biber, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad, & Edward Finegan, a corpus-based grammar seeking to give 'equal weight to American and British English'. Uniquely for such a work, the spelling standard is dual, depending on the conventions adopted by the main author(s) of each chapter. The primary editor is American (at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff); the team is international; key meetings took place in the UK, the US, and Switzerland; and work-in-progress was assessed by a committee of UK linguists (chaired by Randolph Quirk). The *LGSWE* evolved from both the 'Quirk *et al*' grammars and the corpus of the Survey of English Usage (founded by Quirk in 1959).

These developments seem to me to reflect once again the paradox of world English: that there are many and there is one (but in two principal parts). Although the many seek greater self-definition and acknowledgement at home and abroad, the one – an evolving World Standard English – remains a reality and a target whose existence is underlined by the emergence of such works as those just mentioned, which are probably the first of many. Indeed, it is hard now and will be harder still in future for any dictionary or grammar of English anywhere in the world to be concerned with its home turf alone.

A federation of standards seems therefore already to be with us, constituting, as it were, an evolving 'super-standard' increasingly comfortable with territorial and linguistic diversity. Such a World/International Standard English is an *ad hoc* balancing-out of the practices of publishers, educational institutions, governmental departments, legal institutions, and the like, much as in the past, but apparently with a fuller awareness of social and cultural sensitivities. In addition, there will be enough pushing and shoving to ensure that nobody becomes too blasé about it. One constructive message to be drawn from its existence might be: 'This is the framework: use it to shape your own kind of consistency and clarity'.

Yet a World Standard English is not world English. It is a fuzzy-edged subset drawn from all the Englishes, however prestigious it might be and whatever its relations with the communities and community standards that it pulls together. It will be the norm and level to which millions will aspire for themselves and/or for their children, but I am reminded at this point of the closing words in David Graddol's *The future of English?* (The British Council, 1997):

The indications are that English will enjoy a special position in the multilingual society of the 21st century: it will be the only language to appear in the language mix in every part of the world. This, however, does not call for an unproblematic celebration by native speakers of English. Yesterday it was the world's poor who were multilingual; tomorrow it will also be the global elite. So we must not be hypnotised by the fact that this elite will speak English: the more significant fact may be that, unlike the majority of present-day native English speakers, they will also speak at least one other language – probably more fluently and with greater cultural loyalty.

That, however, also goes for life within Burchfield's 'innumerable clearly distinguishable varieties' of English, many of which are far from standard but are close to the hearts of their speakers. It is, after all, possible to be multilingual *within* world English, and to have loyalties there too. Ah'm no aathegither shair at ye kin gae aa the wey wi me whan Ah mak this pint, but the pint is clear eneuch itsel, is it no?¹⁹

Notes

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¹ Robert W. Burchfield (ed), Introduction, *A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 4, 1986.

² Attempts have been made to quantify the world's users of English. The demographic complexities are immense. Two notable attempts, both made in 1997, are:

- David Crystal (in *English as a Global Language*): 320–380m ENL, 150–300m ESL, 100–1,000m EFL, making a total of 570–1,680m worldwide
- David Graddol (in *The Future of English?*): 375m ENL (second after an undifferentiated figure for users of 'Chinese': 1,113m), 375m ESL, 750m EFL, making a total of 1,500m worldwide.

The first of these indicates our ignorance; the second marks our passion for neat numbers. My own view is that there are *at least* 1bn users of English worldwide in three roughly equal divisions, ENL, ESL, EFL (without any criteria of quality or range applied), and that there *may* be as many as 1.5bn. No precise figures are possible.

³ The terms *King's English* and *Queen's English* continue in use. The Fowlers brothers' *The King's English* (1906) has never been out of print – or revised. In 1994, a highly prescriptive work called *The Queen's English: The Essential Companion to Written English*, by Harry Blamires, was brought out by Bloomsbury (London). In 1999, Bryan A. Garner's *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage* (Oxford University Press: New York), explicitly sought to sustain the Fowlerian tradition within an American frame of reference.

⁴ For the term and concept *Standard English*, see McArthur 1997, 1998, 1999a. Studies of Standard English include: Bauer 1994; Gaskell 1998, 2000; Gill & Pakir 1999; Görlach 1990a; Honey 1997; Loughheed 1985; Modiano 1999b; Strevens 1985; Taylor 1985.

⁵ (1) In the *EL Gazette*, issue 204 editorial, Jan 97: 'Like the rest of the English language industry [publishers] are just having to come into line with commercial reality'; (2) In the *Guardian Weekly/BBC English Magazine*, 28 Jan 96: 'For the English language industry, the recent rapid growth in... computing is a fine thing' (Andrew Scales, 'New horizons at the push of a button'). The term *ELT industry* is also sometimes used.

⁶ For Standard Australian, see Delbridge 1999.

⁷ For 'mid-Atlantic' and EIL, see Modiano 1999a/b.

⁸ Thus, Microsoft markets two versions of its electronic *Encarta Encyclopedia*: an 'American edition' and a 'World edition' (with BrSE

conventions), including Australia and other countries under a UK umbrella without directly saying so, while unintentionally implying that in terms of English the US is apart from the rest of the world.

⁹ The British phonetician David Abercrombie coined the term *spoken prose* in 1959 for the spoken outcome of an actor's lines, the texts of public speakers, presenters' scripts on radio, and television, etc.: 'Most people believe that *spoken prose*... is at least not far removed, when well done, from the conversation of real life... But the truth is that nobody speaks at all like the characters in any novel, play or film' (*Studies in Phonetics and Linguistics*, 1965). Even so, the use of spoken prose has had a considerable influence on educated and formal spoken usage.

¹⁰ *In the News: Mastering Reading and Language Skills with the Newspaper*, Ethel Tiersky & Maxine Chernoff, National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, Illinois USA, 1993): a workbook of 30 *IHT* articles (news, opinion, business, education, arts, science, sports, etc.) and activities (reading, vocabulary, idioms, grammar, presentations, etc.), with cassettes for listening comprehension.

¹¹ A representative selection from a series of *IHT*'sponsored sections' in 1996:

- *Business Education in the United States* (19 March) Features include 'Business Schools Go International' and 'Is a Second Language Necessary?' (answer 'No'); ads include 'In Global Business, A DePaul MBA Makes A World Of Difference' (for a US university) and 'Create Successful Global Strategies' (for a program at UCLA).

- *International Education in the Nordic Countries* (21 March) Features include 'Business Education Goes Global' and 'Helsinki Business School Has International Approach'; ads include the International School in Nacka, Sweden, and CIMI (Copenhagen International Management Institute) offering 'the only English MBA for Executives in Scandinavia'. Articles include statements like 'All lessons are in English' (e.g., for the Copenhagen International School) and 'English has long been the leading foreign language in Finland'.

- *International Education in the Benelux* (22 March) Features include 'International Schools in the Benelux' and 'Catching Dutch Schools on the Web'; ads include 'University Education American-Style In the Heart of Europe' for Vesalius College in Brussels and 'NIMBAS Executive MBA' for a joint course created by the University of Bradford (UK) and The Netherlands Institute for MBA Studies in Utrecht.

¹² Barbara M. H. Strang was Professor of English Language and General Linguistics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in England. The following passage is from *A History of English*, Methuen, 1970, pp. 17–18:

At the present time, English is spoken by perhaps 350 to 400m people who have it as their mother tongue... I shall call them A-speakers, because they are the principal kind we think of in trying to choose a variety of English as a basis for description. The principal communities of A-speakers are those of the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. There are many millions more for whom English may not be quite the mother tongue... who live in communities in which English has a special status (whether or not as an official national language) as a, or the, language for advanced academic work and for participation in the affairs of men at the international, and possibly even the national level. These are the B-speakers, found extensively in Asia (especially India) and Africa (especially the former colonial territories). Then there are those throughout the world for whom English is a foreign language, its study required, often as the first foreign language, as part of their country's educational curriculum, though the language has no official, or even traditional, standing in that country. These are the C-speakers.

¹³ Quirk *et al.* The following passage is from *A Grammar of Contemporary English*, Longman, 1972, p. 3:

English is the world's most widely used language. It is useful to distinguish three primary categories of use: as a *native* language, as a *second* language, and as a *foreign* language. English is spoken as a native language by nearly three hundred million people: in the United States, Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, the Caribbean and South

Africa, without mentioning smaller countries or smaller pockets of native speakers (for example in Rhodesia and Kenya). In several of these countries, English is not the sole language: the Quebec province of Canada is French-speaking, much of South Africa is Afrikaans-speaking, and for many Irish and Welsh people, English is not the native language. But for these Welsh, Irish, Québécois and Afrikaners, English will even so be a *second* language: that is, a language necessary for certain official, social, commercial or educational activities within their own country. This second-language function is more noteworthy, however, in a long list of countries where only a small proportion of the people have English as their native language: India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya and many other Commonwealth countries and former British territories... By *foreign* language we mean a language that is used by someone for communication across frontiers or with people who are not his countrymen: listening to broadcasts, reading books or newspapers, commerce or travel, for example. No language is more widely studied or used as a foreign language than English. The desire to learn it is immense and apparently insatiable...

¹⁴ See 'Teaching World Englishes' (Kachru (ed) (1992). Three overlapping circles or ovals whose use avoids the contrasts 'native/foreign' and 'first/second'. The Inner Circle by and large provides the norms, but norm-formation is neither in principle nor reality restricted to it; one by one at least the major Outer Circle countries will become endonormative rather than exonormative.

¹⁵ For anomalies in the ENL/ESL/EFL model, see McArthur 1998:78–101.

¹⁶ For Estuary English, see Rosewarne 1994a/b.

¹⁷ There is room for both congratulation and irony when elements in Macquarie dictionaries are adapted from AusSE to AmSE to create a dictionary in the Philippines and to BrSE for a dictionary in Singapore.

¹⁸ For a discussion of hybridization (entailing kinds of code-mixing and code-switching) in general and the 'Anglo-hybrids' (mixes between English and other languages) in particular, see McArthur 1998:10ff.

¹⁹ A sentence of traditional Scots, which translates into WSE as: 'I'm not altogether sure that you can go all the way with me when I make this point, but the point is clear enough itself, isn't it?' The European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages, founded within the European Union in 1982, lists Scots as a distinct language (yet it is also manifestly an English language).

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