1 History: the spread of English

1.1 INTRODUCTION: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPLEX

This book is concerned with an important topic in modern Sociolinguistics: the globalisation of English and the linguistic consequences of this process. The rise of English can be studied from a number of perspectives:

- as a topic in Historical Linguistics, highlighting the history of one language within the Germanic family and its continual fission into regional and social dialects;
- as a macro-sociolinguistic topic 'language spread' detailing the ways in which English and other languages associated with colonisation have changed the linguistic ecology of the world;
- as a topic in the field of Language Contact, examining the structural similarities and differences amongst the new varieties of English that are stabilising or have stabilised;
- as a topic in political and ideological studies – 'linguistic imperialism' – that focuses on how relations of dominance are entrenched by, and in, language and how such dominance often comes to be viewed as part of the natural order;
- as a topic in Applied Linguistics concerned with the role of English in modernisation, government and – above all – education; and
- as a topic in cultural and literary studies concerned with the impact of English upon different cultures and literatures, and the constructions of new identities via bilingualism.

Since the 1980s many of these topics have risen to prominence in books and journals. Important early studies drawing attention to this new field were Bailey and Robinson (1973); Bailey and Görlach (1982); Kachru (1982 and 1986); Pride (1982); and Platt, Weber and Ho (1984). These works were concerned with describing the status and functions

of English around the world and their linguistic characteristics. The ideology behind the spread of English is documented in Richard Bailey's (1991) *Images of English*, Robert Phillipson's *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992) and in Alastair Pennycook's *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language* (1994). Two popular books that describe in highly readable terms the growth of English and its many manifestations are David Crystal's (1997) *English as a Global Language* and Tom McArthur's (1998) *The English Languages*. Mention of collections of articles should not exclude the comprehensive volumes edited by Cheshire (1991), Burns and Coffin (2001) and the Manfred Görlach sequence *Englishes* (1991), *More Englishes* (1995), *Even More Englishes* (1998) and *Still More Englishes* (2002). Accessible introductory books with a sociolinguistic orientation include Jenkins (2003) and Melchers and Shaw (2003). Three large handbooks devoted to English throughout the world have large sections devoted to varieties treated in this book: Hickey (2004a), Kortmann *et al.* (2004) and Schneider *et al.* (2004). A handbook devoted entirely to World Englishes in forty-two chapters appeared just as this book went to press (Kachru, Kachru and Nelson 2006). And the growth of interest in English around the world as an academic area of study from the 1980s onwards can be seen in the establishment of three journals that form the mainstay of the field: *English World Wide* (founded in 1979), *World Englishes* (founded in 1985) and the more 'popular' *English Today* (founded in 1984). If the field is well served by books and articles, why the appearance of one more? Our motivation for the present work is that we feel the time is now ripe for a synthesis of the increasing body of research in the area; to identify gaps in the field; and – most importantly – to emphasise perspectives from other branches of Linguistics. Platt, Weber and Ho's (1984) book was the only one, to our knowledge, to attempt a unification of the field by describing the recurrent features of different varieties. This work was slightly premature in that it did not have a range of in-depth empirical studies to draw on and consequently reads as somewhat skimming the surface. In fairness to the authors it could equally be said that they were ahead of their time and that they had put their fingers on a number of significant issues. Our inspiration comes from the works cited above, as well as from the fields of Language Contact (including Creolistics), Language Acquisition, and Phonological and Syntactic Theory. As the chapter titles of this book show, our interest is in the history of the spread of English, the ideology that promulgated that spread, the structure of the manifold Englishes of the world, the contexts in which these varieties emerged, their status, and the educational and social issues that surround them. Our main focus (in Chapters 2 to 4) will fall on

the linguistic forms characteristic of new varieties of English and on ways of describing and understanding them.

1.2 THE FIELD OF 'WORLD ENGLISHES'

The terms most often used to describe the varieties we are interested in are 'New Englishes' or 'World Englishes'. It has become customary to use the plural form 'Englishes' to stress the diversity to be found in the language today, and to stress that English no longer has one single base of authority, prestige and normativity. There are at least four books bearing the main title *New Englishes*: Pride (1982); Platt, Weber and Ho (1984); Foley (1988) on Singaporean English and Bamgbose, Banjo and Thomas (1997) on West African English. The pluricentrism is also captured in the eye-catching book title *The English Languages* (MacArthur 1998). Yet, as we shall see, neither 'New Englishes' nor 'World Englishes' is an entirely satisfactory term. Kachru (1983a) pointed out that the 'New English' of India was actually older than English in Australia, which is not generally considered 'New' – since it is to a large extent a continuation of the norms of nineteenth-century first-language (henceforth *L1)* working-class British English. The second term 'World English' runs the risk of being over-general, since British English is not generally studied within this paradigm. Yet one might quibble that it is a 'World English' too (from a commonsense notion of the word 'world', anyway). The term is often cited as parallel to the term 'World Music', which covers 'non-Western' musical forms. In all of these terms there is a problem of perspective that is difficult to overcome. It is therefore necessary to find a cover term for *all* varieties of English: the one we will settle for is 'English Language Complex' (henceforth *ELC*), suggested by McArthur (2003a:56). The ELC may be said to comprise all subtypes distinguishable according to some combination of their history, status, form and functions. The following list of subtypes, which takes a largely historical point of departure, will be fleshed out in the rest of this chapter:

(a) *Metropolitan standards*: The term *metropolitan* (literally 'mother city/city-state') is an old one, going back to ancient Greece, denoting the relation between a state and its colonies. For the ELC the term would have once been applicable only to standard English of England. However, it is uncontroversial today, long after US independence and its subsequent espousal of distinctly American English norms, to acknowledge the existence of at least two

metropolitan standard varieties, whose formal models are those provided by the radio and television networks based largely in London and US cities like Washington, Los Angeles and (for CNN) Atlanta.

(b) *Colonial standards*: The colonial history of English has made it an important language in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe). A fairly large number of English speakers formed an influential group of speakers in the early history of these 'Dominion' territories. The varieties spoken there are referred to in historical dialectology as 'extraterritorial' Englishes. It is possible to speak of 'colonial standards' since informal and (to a lesser extent) formal varieties have arisen in these territories that may be considered 'standard'. These standards were, until recently, not fully accepted within the territories, since the metropolitan standards exerted a counter-influence. Today the colonial standards are much more prominent as British influence recedes.

(c) *Regional dialects*: These are the varieties that may be distinguished on the basis of regional variation within metropolis and colony. A rule of thumb is that the older the settlement of English speakers, the firmer the regional differentiation within the language. Thus English dialects of the UK and USA are clearly definable in regional terms; this is less true of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

(d) *Social dialects*: Identifiable varieties within a region along the lines of class and ethnicity may occur. In London there is the difference between Cockney of the working classes, Received pronunciation (RP) of the upper-middle class and the intermediate 'Estuary English' (Rosewarne 1994). In Australia linguists identify Broad, General and Cultivated varieties (Mitchell and Delbridge 1965); the first is the most localized, while showing numerous traces of its origins in British working-class dialects; the third is historically oriented towards RP, while the second mediates between these two poles. Amongst ethnolects (or ethnic dialects) Black English (also known as African American English) is identifiable as a distinct linguistic variety in the USA (though it has some regional variation too).

Groups (a) to (d) are frequently labelled off as a special group, 'mother tongue' or L1 English or English as a Native Language (ENL), or in B. B. Kachru's (1988) terminology, which we discuss later on, *Inner Circle*

varieties. Of equal interest in modern sociolinguistics are the other members of the ELC outlined below:

(e) *Pidgin Englishes*: Pidgins are defined prototypically as rudimentary languages that have no native speakers, though they may subsequently gain in complexity. They arise from trade and other – largely colonial – forms of contact. English-based pidgins like West African pidgin English may be considered to belong to the English family, since they are 'lexified' by English – i.e. English is the source of much of their vocabulary.

(f) *Creole Englishes*: Creoles are fully developed speech forms, which show so much restructuring as to bear little resemblance grammatically to their lexifiers. These languages are 'mixed' in the sense that typically their grammars and lexicons come from different sources – see Singler and Kouwenberg (in press) for recent debates over terminology in this field. Although a variety like Jamaican Creole is structurally an independent language, it has overlapping membership with the ELC in terms of its vocabulary and the possibilities of being influenced by English, which is the 'authorised' language of the education system.

(g) *English as a Second Language (ESL):* Typically these are varieties that arose in countries where English was introduced in the colonial era in either face-to-face communication or (more usually) via the education system of a country in which there is, or had once been, a sizeable number of speakers of English. In ESL countries like Kenya, Sri Lanka and Nigeria, English plays a key role in education, government and education.

(h) *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*: This category typically refers to the English used in countries in which its influence has been external, rather than via a body of 'settlers'. For EFL speakers English plays a role for mainly *inter*-national rather than *intra*-national purposes. Whereas ESL countries produce literature in English (and other languages), EFL countries typically do not use English in creative writing. The trend towards globalisation in economics, communication and culture has made EFL prominent in places like China, Europe, Brazil, etc.

(i) *Immigrant Englishes*: In the context of migration to an English-dominant country, varieties of English which originate as EFLs may retain some distinctiveness or may merge with the regional English of their territory, depending on a host of social and economic factors. Thus whilst English in Mexico is of the EFL variety, Chicano English of the USA shows greater affinity with

general US English. However, Chicano English is still a distinct variety amongst many speakers which we classify as an 'immigrant English'. Our main reason for differentiating 'immigrant English' from ESL is in the degree of influence of metropolitan English over the former, since it is readily available in the local environment (we discuss this issue further below).

(j) *Language-shift Englishes*: These are varieties that develop when English replaces the erstwhile primary language(s) of a community. There is, nevertheless, frequently a sense of continuity with the ancestral language(s) and culture(s) in the shifting community. The difference between 'language-shift English' and 'social dialect' is one of degree; the former can, in time, shade into a social dialect. Essentially, a language-shift English has at some crucial stage of its development involved adult and child L1 and second-language (L2) speakers who formed one speech community. A social dialect in contrast is typically conceived of as having only L1 speakers. Thus Hiberno English is probably best classified as a social dialect in most areas of Ireland today; not so long ago it would have counted as a language-shift variety, with L1 and L2 speakers of the dialect closely interacting with each other.

(k) *Jargon Englishes*: Whereas a pidgin is a well-defined (if rudimentary) variety, with norms that are tacitly agreed upon by its speakers, a jargon is characterised by great individual variation and instability (hence also described as a pre-pidgin).[1] E.g. contact between South Sea Islanders and Europeans in the nineteenth century led to the formation of unstable jargons in many parts of the Pacific. One of these developed into a stable, expanded pidgin, Tok Pisin, which is now one of the official languages of Papua New Guinea.

(l) *Hybrid Englishes*: Also called 'bilingual mixed languages', these are versions of English which occur in code-mixing in many urban centres where a local language comes into contact with English. Although sometimes given derogatory names, like Hinglish for the hybrid Hindi-English of north Indian cities, these hybrids may have prestige amongst urban youth and the young at heart in informal styles.

A sketch typology like the one we propose brings as much controversy as clarity. Many issues raised in the characterisation of the ELC are worthy of closer scrutiny and debate. For example:

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[1] The alternative sense of 'jargon' as the excessive use of technical terms does not apply here.

  (i) is it really the case that jargons, pidgins, English Creoles and hybrids belong here?
 (ii) do some of the categories not overlap considerably (e.g. language-shift Englishes with social dialects; immigrant with hybrid Englishes)?
(iii) does the category 'language-shift English' have any phenomeno-logical status?

A consideration of points such as these will sharpen our characterisation of the ELC, and possibly open up new dimensions in the history of English.

In the first place our characterisation suffers from focusing on 'products' rather than 'processes'. Sociolinguists generally try to avoid the bias of conceiving of language in terms of already codified forms (as in grammars and dictionaries) or written norms (as in literature or print media). They argue that language is constantly being made and remade by speakers in terms of their situation, need, interlocutor, audience, knowledge of other 'languages', general strategies of communication, etc. The classic account is perhaps that of focusing and diffusion – Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985); it is implicit in Bakhtin's (1981) idea of dialogism; it also finds favour in the work of some creolists (e.g. Baker 2000; Mufwene 2001). An analogy might help to make this more concrete. Although we think of fluent adult speech as the prototype of English, the developing capacity of a three-year-old child is also 'English'. Yet, it is not possible to draw a strict line as to when exactly 'child language' turns into 'English proper'. The same principle applies to the transitions shown by adults in moving from a minimal ability in English (as sometimes eventually manifested in jargons, pidgins or early fossilised interlanguages) to increasing development towards an accepted community norm of 'English'. That is, jargons and early inter-languages are perhaps no less, and no more, varieties of English than a very young child's developing variety of L1 English. This issue goes to the heart of conceptions of English and of the 'native speaker of English', which are still debated in sociolinguistics and which we take up again in section 1.6.

Secondly, we advocate a 'prototype' definition of the term 'English', with some varieties considered clear-cut examples (e.g. middle-class English in Edinburgh, the L2 English of teachers in Nigeria, rural people's English in the Appalachian region of the USA). We also accept that the boundaries of terms are fuzzy, so that some Englishes may have overlapping memberships. The following are examples of phenomena with multiple memberships:

   (a) English hybrids – e.g. the mixed variety of English and Malay,
       described by Baskaran (1994);
   (b) decreolising English Creoles – e.g. the continuum between Creole
       and Caribbean English in Jamaica, described by de Camp (1971);
   (c) underworld slang – e.g. the grafting of an 'antilanguage' lexi-
       con onto English grammar in Elizabethan cant, as described by
       Halliday (1978).

To return to question (ii), overlaps certainly develop amongst some
categories identified within the ELC as English spreads geographically
and enters new domains of use. The distinction between ESL and EFL
is cast in terms of the presence or absence of a 'sizeable number' of
L1 English speakers capable of exerting influence on the L2 in a terri-
tory. As it is not possible to specify such a critical mass, this must be
taken as a soft boundary. Even if a critical mass were roughly specifi-
able, it would have to be tempered by factoring in more sociolinguistic
concepts like interaction between speakers and the accessibility of L1
speakers. South Africa counts largely as an ESL rather than EFL ter-
ritory, yet in the apartheid era, Black people were rigidly segregated
from Whites with obvious consequences for the acquisition of English.
Although ESL was the general outcome of contact in South Africa,
it is a moot question whether in some parts of the country English
was till recently virtually a foreign language. In their description of
English in East Africa, Hancock and Angogo (1982:307–8) differentiate
between non-native English spoken fluently as a second language and
non-native English spoken imperfectly as a foreign language within
the same territory. This shows that the apartheid South African case
is perhaps not all that special. It also shows the overlapping nature of
the categories. Should we then change our definitions to allow ESL to
operate even in EFL territories (to describe the competence of, say, a few
speakers who have been to an English-speaking country) and to allow
EFL pockets in an ESL territory? In this vein Kachru's (1992:55) distinc-
tion between 'institutionalised' and 'performance' varieties is a useful
one. Briefly, an institutionalised English is one that has been intro-
duced formally in a territory via education and is used in some civil,
administrative and governmental functions. A performance variety is
one which does not have this backing and is reliant on ad hoc skills of
communication that individuals may pick up via EFL education or via
brief contacts with tourists, traders, etc. Performance varieties include
EFLs, jargons, rudimentary pidgins and so forth.[2]

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[2] Again things are far from watertight: a pidgin may expand and become institu-
  tionalised (the most famous case being that of Tok Pisin, an English-based pidgin

Another indication of overlapping memberships concerns the inter-mediate status of 'Protectorates' in the former British empire – territories that were not fully colonised but which did receive educational and other infrastructural support from Britain to wrest them away from the influence of rival imperialists. Territories such as Egypt and the southern African kingdom of Lesotho may well have a status inter-mediate between ESL and EFL territories. The spread of English in Europe in more recent times calls into question whether territories like Holland and Scandinavia are still EFL or whether they are moving towards ESL. Over a decade ago Robert Phillipson (1992:24–5) remarked that 'in the Nordic countries (Scandinavia and Finland), a shift is under way from EFL to ESL, and this has implications for school teaching and for society as a whole' – see further Chapter 7.

Notions like 'immigrant English' are also dependent on sociohistorical factors. This is not a term that is commonly used in the literature, where writers simply use the general label ESL. In our view, though, there is a difference between 'narrow' ESL, in which the L2 speakers are in a majority (and for which educated L2 speakers become the embodiment of a norm), and an 'immigrant English', where L2 speakers are in a minority and constantly exposed to the norms of the target language (TL), despite retaining a distinct social dialect themselves. The abbreviation *TL* is a useful one for English as L1, since it makes it possible to avoid the specifics of whether the target is standard English or a regional or social dialect, or whether British, American or other norms are involved. Another useful term for more or less the same concept is 'superstrate' language, which stresses issues of power and accessibility. Whilst 'TL' implies a second-language-acquisition perspective in which the target is more or less available (inside or outside of classrooms), 'superstrate' leaves it open whether the dominant colonial language is accessible to new learners or not. In Pidgin and Creole studies 'superstrate' contrasts with 'substrate(s)', the original language(s) of the group of speakers who are in a subordinate position in terms of power and status. In the study of pidgins and Creoles it is argued that though English often was a source of vocabulary (as 'lexifier' language), it was not really the target of acquisition, since on many plantations slaves were interested in developing a medium of inter-ethnic communication, rather than mastering the colonial language. The balance between English and the mother tongue in the immigrant English

in Papua New Guinea which underwent expansion and is now one of three official languages of the country). Hence the qualification 'rudimentary' is necessary to apply to (non-expanded) pidgins that are performance varieties.

context is not as clearly defined as in an ESL territory. The L2 status of an immigrant English may change within a generation or more, if conditions promoting assimilation to a superstrate form of English exist. Special conditions like the intention to return to the homeland or a heightened sense of ethnicity may run counter to this tendency. ESL is essentially an abbreviation for the acquisition of English under conditions of additive bilingualism (Lambert 1978), i.e. the addition of a socially relevant language to a community's repertoire. Immigrant Englishes (and language-shift Englishes) are frequently implicated in subtractive bilingualism, that is unstable bilingualism resulting in the gradual loss of a community's erstwhile language.

Finally – regarding question (iii) – there are indeed overlaps between a language-shift English and a social dialect. Yesterday's language-shift English may become tomorrow's social dialect (more specifically an ethnic dialect or 'ethnolect'). The former term (language-shift English) is desirable and necessary if one is interested in the process of shift and acquisition, rather than the ultimate 'social dialect' product. We leave it open whether language shift is reversible (Fishman 1991) – that is, in the above typology, if a language-shift English could revert to ESL, from being a social dialect under changing demographic or sociopolitical conditions. We return to the issue of 'models' of World Englishes in 1.5, in which we delineate ways in which different scholars have tried to show the relationship between these varieties in historical, political and structural terms.

1.2.1 Other distinctions made in the literature

The term 'non-native' is sometimes used in connection with the competence of ESL speakers. This has proved controversial and sparked an important debate about what it means to be a 'native speaker' (see section 1.6). Kachru (1983b:2–3) used the term 'nativised' to stress the adaptations that English has undergone in ESL territories, making it culturally and referentially appropriate in its new contexts. An example of this process is the use of new kinship terms via borrowing or other forms of adaptation like calquing, to satisfy the needs of politeness or respect. Thus new terms like *cousin-brother* may appear for a male first-cousin (in *inter alia* Indian English, Australian Aboriginal English and varieties of African English, e.g. those of Zimbabwe and South Africa). Similarly *big mother* occurs in the same varieties for 'one's mother's elder sister'. These neologisms denote a closer relationship than the superstrate forms *cousin* and *aunt* respectively. The term 'nativised' also suggests (though Kachru is less explicit about this) that though English may not be technically a native language in such