Part I

World Englishes Today

1   The Agony and Ecstasy

Introduction

In this chapter the agony and ecstasy discussed are restricted to "Englishes," but this linguistic conflict actually applies to most languages of wider communication (e.g., Chinese, French, Hindi-Urdu, Portuguese, Spanish, Tamil), and to languages of not-so-wide communication (e.g., Dutch, Swedish, Korean, and Serbo-Croatian).[1] All these languages are in varying degrees "pluricentric";[2] they have multilinguistic identities, multiplicity of norms (both endocentric and exocentric), and distinct sociolinguistic histories. However, the pluricentricity of English is overwhelming and unprecedented in linguistic history. It raises a variety of issues of diversification, codification, identity, creativity, cross-cultural intelligibility, and power and ideology.[3] The universalization of English and the power of this language have exacted a price: for some, the implications are agonizing, while for others they are a matter of ecstasy.

In my discussion of these two reactions to the spread and functions of English, I would like to discuss ecstasy over the triumph of English first, and then move to the other part: the agony. But before I do this, my choice of the term *Englishes* calls for an explanation: Why *World Englishes* and not *World English*?[4] This question invariably arises in reaction to my conceptualization of English around the world. The answer to it involves linguistic, attitudinal, ontological, and pragmatic explanations. The term *Englishes* is indicative of distinct identities of the language and literature. *Englishes* symbolizes variation in form and function, use in linguistically and culturally distinct contexts,

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1 This chapter highlights a variety of issues concerning the global spread of English, the development of World Englishes, and users' love–hate relationship with the language. I have focused on most of these issues in my teaching and research since the 1960s. This chapter, therefore, draws heavily on my earlier publications and presentations. I have provided extensive references to literature for further details, explanations, and, where necessary, illustrations.

2 See Kloss (1978 [1952]), specifically pp. 66–67. For a discussion and case studies of pluricentric languages, see Clyne (1992).

3 See L. Smith and Nelson (1985), L. Smith (1992), B. Kachru (1982b and 1992b, B. Kachru 1985b); regarding power and ideology, see relevant references in B. Kachru (1994d).

4 For detailed discussion, see B. Kachru (1985b).

and a range of varieties in literary creativity. And, above all, the term stresses
the *WE-ness* among the users of English, as opposed to *us* vs. *them* (native vs.
nonnative). I believe that the traditional concept of *us* vs. *them* used in
describing language diffusion does not apply to English in the same way as
it does to other languages of wider communication.

It was more than a generation ago, in 1975, that in his presidential address to
the English Association in London, George Steiner (1975: 4) referred to the
pluricentricity of English, saying that "the linguistic center of English has
shifted." Steiner (1975: 5) argued that

this shift of the linguistic center involves far more than statistics. It does look as if the
principal energies of the English language, as if its genius for acquisition, for innov-
ation, for metaphoric response, has also moved away from England.

Steiner was not thinking of North America or Australia only, but of East, West,
and South Africa; India; Ceylon (now Sri Lanka); and of the U.S. possessions
in the Pacific. And during the past two decades this "shift" has become more
marked, more institutionalized, and more recognized.

The major characteristics of this unprecedented change in linguistic behav-
ior and the depth and range of the spread are better understood if the English
language in diaspora is viewed in several phases. The first phase began closer
to home, with initial expansion from England restricted to the British Isles up
until the establishment of Great Britain in 1707. The second phase of diaspora
takes us to North America (United States and Canada), to Australia, and to
New Zealand. This phase entailed movements of English-speaking populations
from one part of the globe to another. It is, however, the third phase, the Raj
phase, that altered the earlier sociolinguistic profile of the English language
and the processes of transplanting it: it introduced English to South Asia; to
Southeast Asia; to Southern, West, and East Africa; and to the Philippines.

It is primarily this phase of the diaspora on which I shall concentrate. It has
four major cross-linguistic and cross-cultural characteristics. First, it implanted
English within linguistic contexts where no English-using communities
existed and no large-scale English-speaking populations were relocated.
Second, English gained contact with genetically and culturally unrelated major
languages: in Africa with especially the Niger–Congo languages, in Asia with
the Dravidian languages, and in Southeast Asia with the Altaic languages, to
give just three major examples. Third, rather than one consistent pedagogical
model, there were diverse contexts, methods, and inputs in imparting English
education, often with no serious input from the native speakers of the lan-
guage. Fourth, though the arms of the Raj maintained a distance from the
native cultures, and from native people, the language of the Raj was going
through a process of acculturation. It was being influenced by the non-Western
cultures and their sociolinguistic contexts. The pluricentricity of English, thus,

is not merely demographic; it entails cultural, linguistic, and literary reincarnations of the English language. These sociolinguistic "reincarnations" may be viewed as processes of liberation, as it were, from the traditional canons associated with English.

The profile of this pluricentricity may be represented with reference to the Three Concentric Circles of English discussed in the Figure 1.1.[5]

The list of countries included in the circles, particularly in the Outer and Expanding Circles, is merely illustrative and is not intended to be complete; for example, South Africa, Ireland, Hong Kong, and Jamaica are not discussed here. These three circles have a message about the codification and diversification of English and provide motivation for various types of institutionalization of the language (B. Kachru 1985b). There are now three types of English-using speech fellowships: *norm-providing, norm-developing,* and *norm-dependent.*

In the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle, the ecstasy generated by the power of English has several dimensions: demographic, ideological, societal, and attitudinal. English is not only an access language par excellence, it is a reference point for paradigms of research and methodology. In research, areas such as second language acquisition, first language acquisition, stylistics, bilingual and monolingual lexicography, and theories of translation are closely related to English studies. In theory construction, generalizations about natural languages, their structural characteristics, and possible categories of language universals usually begin with analysis and examples from English.

And across languages and literatures, the impact of World Englishes is Janus-like, with two faces. One face is that of ENGLISHIZATION, the process of change English has initiated in the other languages of the world (see, e.g., Viereck and Bald 1986; B. Kachru 1994b). The second face is that of the NATIVIZATION and ACCULTURATION of the English language itself, the processes of change that localized varieties of English have undergone by acquiring new linguistic and cultural identities (see B. Kachru 1986a [reprinted 1990]; also Cheshire 1991). This explains the use of terms such as the *Africanization* (Bokamba 1982 [1992]) or *Indianization* (B. Kachru 1983b and earlier) of English, or the use of terms such as *Singaporean English, Nigerian English, Philippine English,* and *Sri Lankan English*.[6]

Whatever reactions one might have toward the diffusion and uses of English, one must, however, admit that we now have a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic universal language. And with it, what John Adams saw in his crystal

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[5] Population figures are taken from the United Nations website www.undp.org/popin/wdtrends/ p98/p98.htm, which lists world population figures for 1998. The statistic for Taiwan is from "Taiwan" Encyclopredia Britannica Online. www.eb.com:180/bol/topic?eu=l 15301&sctn=l.

[6] For references on these varieties, see McArthur (1992).

6   The Agony and Ecstasy

The "Expanding Circle" e.g.,

China	1,255,698,000
Egypt	65,978,000
Hong Kong	6,660,000
Indonesia	206,338,000
Israel	5,984,000
Japan	126,281,000
Korea	46,109,000
Nepal	22,847,000
Russia	147,434,000
Saudi Arabia	20,181,000
Taiwan	21,616,000

The "Outer Circle" e.g.,

Bangladesh	124,774,00
Ghana	19,162,000
India	982,223,000
Kenya	29,008,000
Malaysia	21,410,000
Nigeria	106,409,000
Pakistan	148,166,000
Philippines	72,944,000
Singapore	3,476,000
Sri Lanka	18,455,000
Tanzania	32,102,000
Zambia	8,781,000
Zimbabwe	11,377,000

The "Inner Circle"

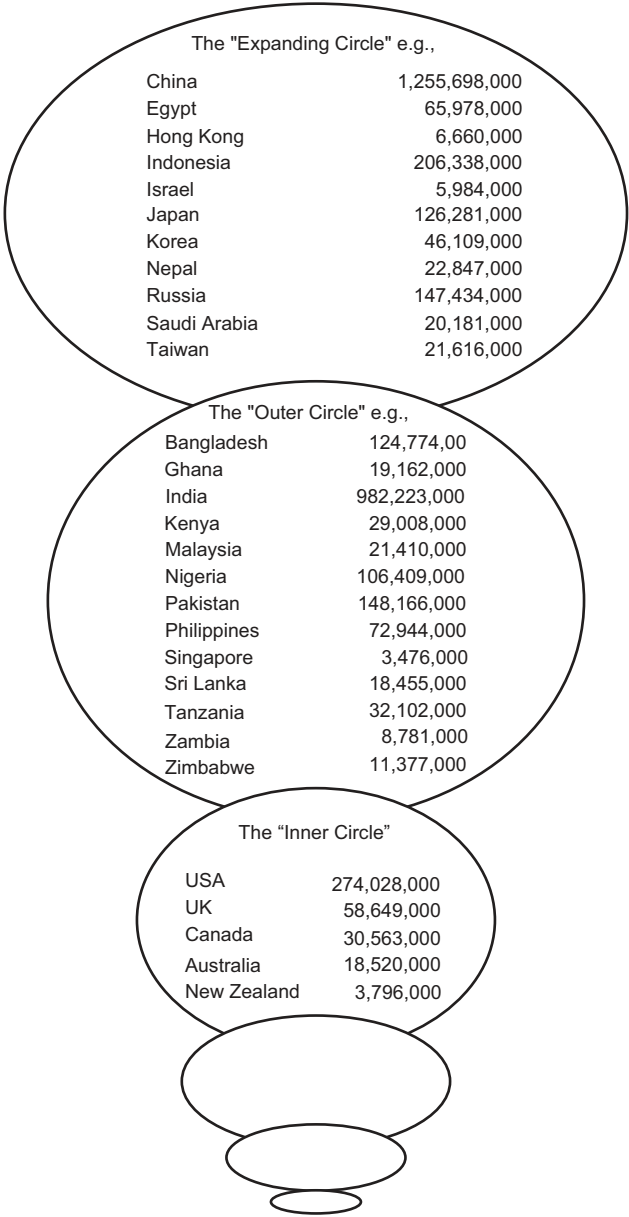|	
USA	274,028,000
UK	58,649,000
Canada	30,563,000
Australia	18,520,000
New Zealand	3,796,000

Figure 1.1 *The concentric circles of English*

ball in September 1780 has come true. Adams (cited in Mathews 1931: 42) prophesied that "English will be the most respectable language in the world and the most universally read and spoken in the next century, if not before the close of this." (When Adams said "English" he actually meant "American English.") Adams's prophecy is evident in such recent claims as "The sun never sets on the English language" (though, after 1940, the sun did set on the empire), or "English is the language for all seasons," or "English has no national or regional frontier."

This demographic distribution of English surpasses that of Latin in the medieval period, of Sanskrit in what was traditional South Asia and parts of Southeast Asia, and of Spanish, Arabic, and French. And now no competing languages exist, not at present – not French, nor any artificial languages such as Esperanto. In other words, English continues to alter the linguistic behavior of people across the globe, and it is now the major instrument of initiating large-scale bilingualism around the world – being a bilingual now essentially means knowing English and using English as an *additional* language, as a language of wider communication, with one or more languages from one's region. This unparalleled spread of English has resulted now in an attitude of triumphalism about the language.

It is, however, difficult to determine how many people know English. The answer depends on whom you ask. A conservative figure gives us two non-native speakers for every native speaker.[7] The liberal figure (Crystal 1985b: 9 and Strevens 1982) gives us roughly four nonnative speakers for every native speaker.[8] In China, there are many more English-using Chinese than the total population of the United Kingdom, if we estimate just 5 percent of the Chinese use English. In the case of India, if we count only 10 percent of the population as English-knowing, it is the third largest English-knowing country after the United States and the United Kingdom. I have stated elsewhere (see e.g., B. Kachru 1994a and earlier) that my earlier estimated figure of more than 60 million users of Indian English speakers is already out of date. The current profile is substantially different. A survey conducted in India (*India Today,* August 18, 1997) claims that "contrary to the [Indian] census myth that English is the language of a microscopic minority, the poll indicates that almost one in every three Indians claims to understand English although less than 20 percent are confident of speaking it." If viewed in a larger context,

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[7] That gives us an estimated figure of more than 750 million nonnative users of English.

[8] This optimistic estimate equals about 2 billion users. Crystal believes that "if you are highly conscious of international standards, or wish to keep the figures for World English down, you will opt for a total of around 700 million, in the mid-1980s. If you go to the opposite extreme, and allow in any systematic awareness whether in speaking, listening, reading or writing, you could easily persuade yourself of the reasonableness of 2 billion." However, he hastens to settle for a lower figure, saying, "I am happy to settle for a billion. . ." See also Strevens (1982).

these figures are staggering: The estimated population of India is almost 1 billion. The preceding figures indicated that almost 333 million Indians understand (some) English and almost 200 million have some spoken competence in the language. According to these figures, then, India now has an English-using speech community equal to the population of the major Inner Circle countries combined (the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada). The Indian Constitution actually recognizes English as an "associate" official language.[9] And China is not far behind. Yong and Campbell (1995) tell us that there are now 200 million students in the People's Republic enrolled in programs in English as a foreign language. These figures of the two Asian giants add up to 533 million. What is impressive indeed is that this profile of English has developed within this century, particularly after the 1930s.

The question remains: How many people use English around the world? As outlined earlier, no one seems to have a well-researched answer to the question, since we actually have no reliable figures on which an answer to this crucial question could be based. Nor do we know how to define an English "knower" to separate him or her from a "semiknower" of the language. However, there is no argument about one fact concerning English: even if we accept the most conservative figures, there are now two nonnative speakers of English for every native speaker. And if we accept an extremely optimistic figure of 2 billion users of English out of the total world population of more than 5 billion, we have roughly every third person using some variety of English as a nonnative speaker.

In those regions that have felt no direct impact of English – the formerly Francophone countries, for instance – the indirect impact has been no less real, and has been difficult to arrest. This impact occurs through "invisible" channels that bypass the strategies devised by language planners. The influence of English penetrates indirectly from the models of creativity, the international media, processes used for translation, and now electronic media and computer technology.

We see the hegemony of English across cultures in the domains of education, administration, literary creativity, and both intranational and international interaction. But, more important, we see it in the attitudes toward English and its users. It is the only natural language that has considerably more nonnative users than native users. And it is the nonnative users who are now responsible for its spread and teaching, and its extended cross-cultural functions. Interactions involving English in non-Western countries are mostly carried on by nonnative users with other nonnative users, not, as one would suppose, by nonnative users with native users. In its extent and impact on other cultures,

[9] India's Constitution recognizes English as an "associate" official language.

languages, and literatures, this, then, is a unique phenomenon in the history of language diffusion. One therefore has to ask, Do we have appropriate theoretical and methodological tools to account for this phenomenon?

Paradigms of Research and Paradigm Lag

This global initiation of bilingualism in English, its range and depth, and the implications of its stratification have not been followed by accommodating, modifying, and refining paradigms of research and methodology. In fact, research for understanding this remarkable phenomenon of our times – and all times – and its implications have yet to be clearly worked out and presented.

Dell Hymes (personal communication), a sociolinguist, reminds us, "We have methods highly elaborated for addressing the process of genetic relationships, but very little for addressing the process of diffusion, contact, etc." He goes on to say that the methods for typological classification, which involve the least use of language, are more developed, while "the functional classification, which involves the most use of language, is the least developed."

The resistance to a paradigm shift is not purely intellectual; there are other strategies in action here that are ideologically based and very subtle.[10] However, traditionally, three main paradigms have been used to describe and analyze World Englishes.

Descriptive

The descriptive approach in the study of the diffusion of English has been attitudinally neutral. One notices it in some lexicographical work, which I have termed "Raj lexicography" (see B. Kachru 1996c).

Prescriptive Paradigms

The prescriptivists' primary yardsticks were the "native speaker" and the manuals of English based on the native varieties.[11] Originally, this standard was applied to linguistic deviation at any level: grammar, lexis, discourse. The term "deviation" entails uses of language not consistent with the prescriptive "native" norms.

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[10] A number of reasons for resistance to paradigm shift are discussed in, for example, Phillipson (1992), Fairclough (1989).
[11] For a detailed discussion of various attitudes toward idealization of the "native speaker" see Paikeday (1985).

Purist Paradigm

The purists' attitude involves more than *linguistic* purism. It also sees language as a medium for cultural, religious, and moral refinement and enlightenment. This attitude is well articulated in the Orientalist vs. Occidentalist debate concerning the language policy for what was "the Jewel in the Crown," South Asia. In the 1830s, proposing English for India's language planning, Macaulay (cited in Grant 1831–1832: 60–66) said:

I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. . . . A single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.

Again,

The true curse of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them would prove the best remedy for their disorders.

In the former U.S. president McKinley's view, the solution to the problems in the Philippines was "to educate the Filipinos and uplift and civilize and Christianize them and fit the people for the duties of citizenship" (cited in Beebe and Beebe 1981: 322).

The phenomenal spread of English cannot be understood within these three approaches: in all of thems English is seen essentially as a colonizer's linguistic arm, without any identity or name. Any non-English linguistic indicators – cultural, social, and religious – have been viewed as the markers of deficiency and not merely of difference. The manifestations of language contact were viewed as *interference.* That term acquired an immense attitudinal load: one has to be cautious about the implications of such undesirable labeling, as has been shown in several studies.[12]

Institutionalization and the Sacred Cows

The institutionalization of English in the Outer Circle – in Africa and Asia – raises a variety of theoretical, methodological, and ideological questions that go beyond the concerns of simple pedagogy. Answering such questions within the new contexts and functions of English and their implications has meant slaughtering several types of sacred cows: theoretical, acquisitional, sociolinguistic, pedagogical, and ideological. I shall briefly discuss some of these in the following.

[12] This caution particularly applies to the use of English in bi- or multilingual contexts.

The theoretical concerns relate to four cardinal concepts in language study: the SPEECH COMMUNITY, the NATIVE SPEAKER, the IDEAL SPEAKER–HEARER, and the MOTHER TONGUE. In linguistics literature, the definition of *speech community* varies from Leonard Bloomfield's vague definition ("a speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech") to the rather complex definitions of La Page and Gumperz (B. Kachru 1994c; see also discussion in Hudson 1980: 25–30). The underlying presupposition here, and certainly in earlier conceptualizations of the spread of English, is that monolingualism is the normal communicative behavior in which the mother tongue has a crucial function. Yet, the sociolinguistic reality is that, as Ferguson (1982 [1992]: vii) reminds us,

much of the world's verbal communication takes place by means of languages which are not the users' "mother tongue," but their second, third, or nth language, acquired one way or another and used when appropriate.

The consideration of monolingualism as normal linguistic behavior leads to yet another trap, that of considering the "native speaker" as a vital linguistic primitive. It was as a reaction to this reification of "native speaker" that Paikeday (1985) wrote his provocative book *The Native Speaker Is Dead!* But not quite. In 1991 Davies reincarnated the native speaker in *The Native Speaker in Applied Linguistics,* although, more than a decade earlier, Ferguson (1982 [1992]: vii) had warned us that

the whole mystique of native speaker and mother tongue should probably be quietly dropped from the linguists' set of professional myths about the language.

Sociolinguistically speaking, Chomsky's (1965) abstract idealization of the "speaker–hearer" presents unique problems with reference to World Englishes. What are the shared conventions of the users? How does one account for the variation that is characteristic of every level of language in each variety, e.g., the variation ranging from acrolect to mesolect to basilect, or, in South Asia, educated English to "Babu English," "Butler English," and "Bazaar English"?[13]

In acquisitional paradigms the dominant explanatory concepts with reference to the users of English in the Outer Circle are INTERFERENCE, ERROR, FOSSILIZATION, DEVIANCE, and INTERLANGUAGE. First, "interference" results in "error," which, if institutionalized, becomes "fossilization." "Fossilization" refers to those linguistic features that are "deviant" from the target language norm and are part of the linguistic performance of the user. These linguistic features are a part of what is termed an "interlanguage": the teachers' goal and learners' ideal is, of course, to attain nativelike competence. The

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[13] For a brief description of these varieties of English see McArthur (1992) and B. Kachru (1994a).