



**English as a Lingua  
Franca**

**Jennifer Jenkins**

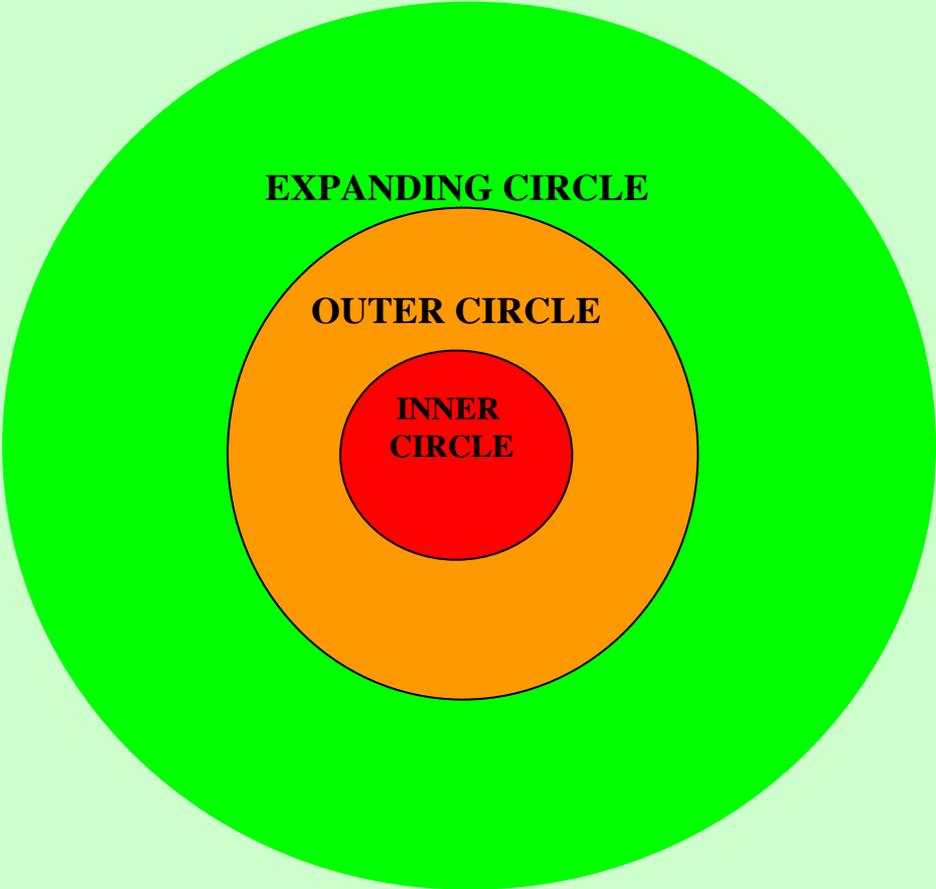
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# Kachru's three circle model of English



About 80 per cent of the English speakers in the world are nonnative speakers. They will have a great impact on the English language. The so-called center countries (e.g., the United Kingdom and the United States) will no longer be able to set the trends.

(George Braine, 2006, *Essential Matters* 3/4, Dec 2006)

Of this 80 per cent of non-native English speakers, the largest group are Expanding Circle English speakers who use English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

# What is English as a Lingua Franca?

- At its simplest, ELF is a way of referring to communication in English between speakers who have different first languages.
- ELF interaction can include native English speakers, but in most cases, it is a contact language between people who share neither a common native tongue nor a common national culture, and for whom English is an *additional* language.
- Conceptually it is very different from English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

# EFL vs ELF

## **EFL**

Part of modern foreign languages

Deficit perspective

Metaphors of transfer/  
interference / fossilization

Code-mixing and switching are  
seen as interference errors  
seen as

(Jenkins 2006)

## **ELF**

Part of World Englishes

Difference perspective

Metaphors of  
contact/evolution

Code-mixing and  
switching are

bilingual resources

# ELF research/ers

- ELF corpora (especially VOICE, ELFA)
- ELF in specific locations (e.g. Deterding & Kirkpatrick on East Asian ELF, Seidlhofer, Breiteneder & Pitzl on European ELF)
- different linguistic levels (e.g. Cogo, Firth, House on ELF pragmatics; Dewey, Seidlhofer on ELF lexicogrammar, Jenkins on ELF accents)
- different domains (e.g. Mauranen on academic ELF, Charles on business ELF)
- teachers' and learners' attitudes towards ELF (e.g. Jenkins, Matsuda, Sifakis/ & Sugaris, Timmis)

# Lexical innovations in ELF

## from VOICE, Dewey, and Cheshire

- Extension to the collocational field of words with high semantic generality, e.g. *take an operation*
- Assigning meaning to function words, e.g. *about, back*, as in “I *back* to Korea next week”.
- Shift towards common meaning of ‘false friends’, e.g. BrEng *actually* (= ‘in fact’) shifts to mean ‘currently’ in ELF (‘true friends’)
- Word coinage, e.g: *holder* instead of BrEng ‘jacket’ or ‘cover’
- Novel collocations, e.g. *severe criminals, space time*
- Novel use of morphemes, e.g. *angriness, touristic, importancy, smoothly*
- creation of hybrids: *Drogenfreak, Telefon junkie, Metallfan*

# ELF lexicogrammar

- use of 3rd person singular zero marking, e.g. “she think”
- extension of *which* to serve functions previously served only by *who* and vice versa, e.g. “the person which”, “the book who”
- shift in article use
- use of invariant question tag, e.g. *isn't it?*
- shift in preposition use, e.g. ‘to discuss *about*’
- countable use of ‘uncountable’ nouns, e.g. “informations”, “advices”, “staffs”
- increased explicitness, e.g. ‘How long *time...?*’, ‘black *colour*’

# NS English idioms and the problem of unilateral idiomaticity

- In my spare time I like to chill out (Dewey 2007)
- Can I give you a hand? (Seidlhofer)
- as changeable as the weather (Koo)
- Bob's your uncle (Carter)

# NS English idioms: the problem of production

- it was a cake (German)
- the ball is in your area (Spanish)
- it was brain-gobbling (Austrian)
- it's up yours (Taiwanese)
- I don't want just any Dick or Harry (ELF)

## NNS English idioms and creativity: examples from the outer circle

- direct translation from L1 (e.g. Malay: 'to shake legs' from Malay = 'to be idle')
- L1-L2 hybrid (e.g. Nigerian: 'to put sand in someone's gari' = 'to threaten someone's livelihood' - *gari* = flour)
- variations on NS English idioms (e.g. 'to eat your cake and have it', 'to be in hot soup', 'the gift of the gap' (all Singapore English))

# ELF pronunciation: Lingua Franca Core

## Summary of core features:

- consonant sounds except voiceless/voiced *th* and dark *l*
- vowel quantity
- consonant deletion
- nuclear stress

# Non-core features

- vowel quality except the sound in RP *fur*
- vowel addition
- weak forms
- consonant sounds *th* and dark *l*
- word stress
- pitch direction
- stress-timed rhythm

# Implications for speakers of Japanese English

1. Consonant sounds l-r, b-v, h, f, n, t, d, s, z but not voiced/voiceless 'th'
2. Vowel sound /ɜ:/ but not other vowel substitutions that do not involve length
3. Consonant clusters: addition of vowels between consonants is generally intelligible
4. Intonation: nuclear stress
5. Accommodation skills

# ELF speakers

- innovate in English making use of their multilingual resources to create their own preferred forms
- code switch (more on Saturday!)
- make skilled and extensive use of accommodation strategies (ditto)
- in all these, prioritise communicative effectiveness over narrow definitions of 'correctness'

# One kind of response towards ELF

“I don’t want to learn some simplified version of English. I want to learn this language in all its richness and beauty” (Szpyra 2005).

“... giving up on this high objective [RP] – and the LFC boils down to this exactly – will easily bring the ideal down into the gutter with no checkpoint along the way” (Sobkowiak 2005).

“Jenkins offers ... a broken weapon ... she risks bringing ELF users stuttering onto the world stage” (Prodromou, various).

# ... and an English teacher in France

... We can accept that a non-native speaker may make **mistakes**, but it would be foolish to try to incorporate **all the different types of mistakes** of all nationalities **to create** a new lingua franca. Most foreign learners don't want that ... When they hand over their money to the language teacher, they don't want to be taught Spanish English or European English or World English: they want to learn **real English**, even if they know they'll fall short of **perfection**

(Michael Bulley, letter to *The Observer* newspaper, 20 July 2008).

## Even a sociolinguist...

The demand for English will continue and possibly increase, which means that more and more people will acquire **broken, deficient forms of English** which are adequate to the extent that they permit the communicational functions they were learnt for ... However, the **incomplete acquisition** reflected in such instances will never become the basis for a linguistic norm ... There is *no danger of such deviant uses 'polluting' the standards of native speakers* even if they become a minority in the global anglophone community. Int[ernational] E[nglish] will not be **corrupted by such uses** ... (Görlach M. 2002. *Still more Englishes*. Amsterdam: Benjamins).

# Typical **misconceptions** involved in these kinds of responses

- it's a **reduced and simplified** kind of English
- it promotes **errors and 'anything goes'**
- it's a **model for imitation**, and therefore a single variety, **monolithic**
- it's **being prescribed** for all learners, and therefore **removes learner choice**

## New research project: Exploring attitudes towards ELF

- content analysis of writings about English in 'global' publications
- discourse analysis of spoken and written discussions about ELF
- questionnaire drawing on folk linguistics methods
- semi-structured/qualitative interviews

## Content analysis of three ELT publications

<i>Items</i>	<i>EL Gazette</i>		<i>Guardian Weekly</i>		<i>IATEFL Issues</i>	
Adverts for teacher ed.	NS	108	NS	37	NS	8
	NNS	1	NNS	0	NNS	0
Exam board adverts	NS	14	NS	3	NS	2
	NNS	0	NNS	0	NNS	0
Book adverts/ reviews	NS	59	NS	2	NS	11
	NNS	0	NNS	0	NNS	1
Articles	NS	46	NS	12	NS	14
	NNS	6	NNS	5	NNS	5
Advice/ activities	NS	8	NS	14	NS	1
	NNS	0	NNS	0	NNS	0

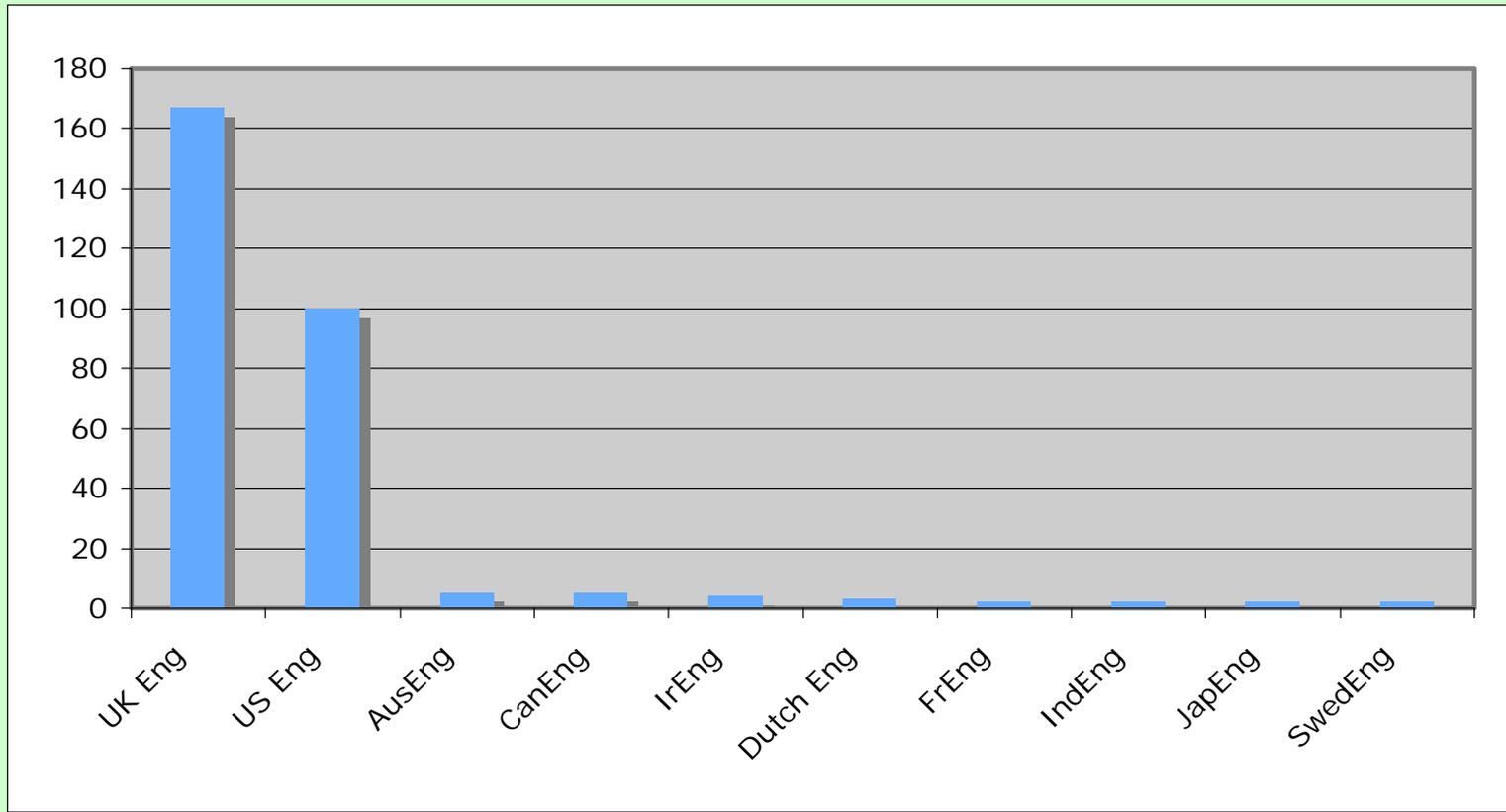
# The NS English ideology in ELT testing

e.g. Pearson's Test of English (PTA):

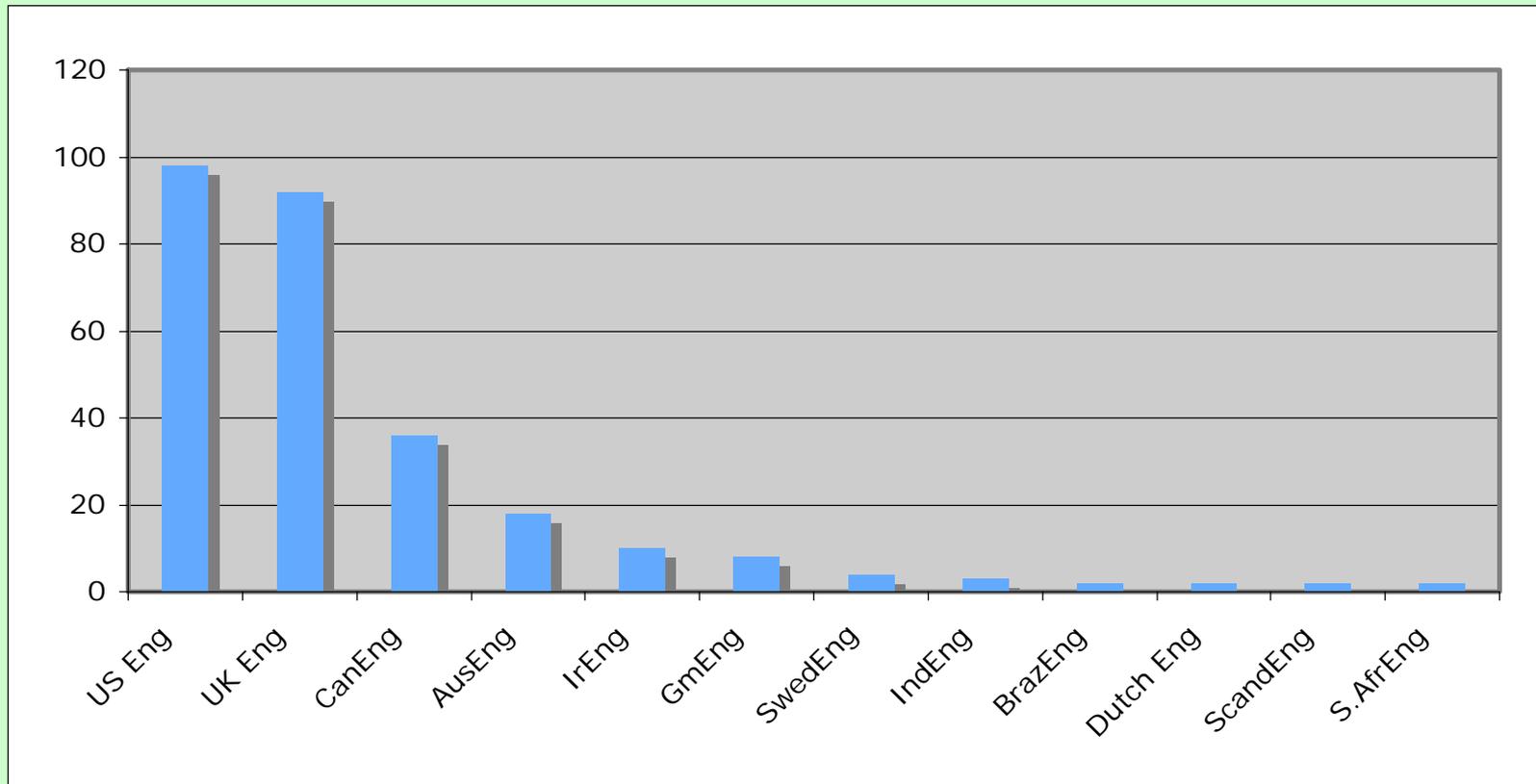
To create an international exam we started by hiring item writers from **the UK, the US and Australia** ... Because we are not using a single standard model of English we can grade all non-native students on a single scale. The first thing we look for is comprehensibility - are they understandable **to the native speaker?**

*(EL Gazette, Sept 2008)*

# Accents ranked first 'best'



# Accents ranked second 'best'



# Map labelling task: Native and 'near-native' English accents

## *UK (RP) English accent*

“normal, traditional, authentic, proper, classical, clear, very easy to understand, perfect, beautiful, elegant, lovely to listen to.....”

## *Swedish English accent*

“almost mother-tongue like, quite natural like native speakers, clear, well-mastered.....”

# Non-‘near-native’ English accents

## *Russian English accent*

“harsh, unfriendly, aggressive...”

## *China English accent*

“choppy, incomprehensible, quarrel-like...”

## *Japanese English accent*

“difficult to understand, imprecise, flat”

But one German respondent: “far away from standard, but easy to understand as well”

## Respondents' comments: 'Prejudice'

I've tried to be honest when providing these answers but my honesty sometimes scares me. I am probably as biased towards certain accents of English as I encourage my students not to be.

It was difficult to deal with the concept of 'correctness' as it is already filled with prejudice to say the least. Applying it to the ever-called 'native speakers' of English felt very odd and uncomfortable, which in my opinion, served to show me how much I'm still attached to the idea that the English spoken by its native-users still is the model to be followed.

# ELF and identity issues: Italian participant

*[on whether she likes her Italian-English accent]*

Erm, mm, no ... I think there are **some problems** that I have.

*[on which English accent she would prefer to have]*

Oh, **mine, mine**. Because I don't want to ... how do you say ... I don't want to be what I am not. I am ITALian. I have my own culture, my original- my roots are Italian so I like if people tell me yes ... my origin. I LIKE it.

# Polish participant

*[on whether she likes her Polish-English accent]*

I'm happy with my English ... I'm PROUD of my English.

*[later in the interview]*

I've still got this probably a little bit of **linguistic schizophrenia** ... erm ... the thing that ... well I know that I don't need to speak like a British person... but because I've been taught for so many years that I SHOULD do it ... when I hear let's say someone speaking erm British English like a nice RP pronunciation ... I LIKE it.

# Chinese participant

*[on which English accent she would most like to have]*

(5) I think my OWN accent yeah because er: because first of all I am Chinese. I don't have to speak like n-American or British (1) it's like identity, because I want to keep my identity yeah.

[...] **it's quite conflicted- conflict for me** because I feel HAPpy when they say okay you have a native accent but erm if they cannot recognise from my pronunciation and if they think okay you are definitely American erm I don't feel that comfortable because I am inDEED a Chinese.

# Japanese participant

*[on how she would feel if somebody thought her English accent sounded like a native speaker's accent]*

Oh, I'm quite happy, maybe that's yeah, I'm seeking for THAT level.

*[later in the interview]*

Yes, that's the- **lots of contradiction** in the view, so in theory I can understand er varieties of English and non-native accent it's good, it's accepted as far as intelligibility exists, but pers- at a personal level still I'm aiming at native-like. [...] I recognised before this interview I still have the native-like model [as her goal] but now further recognition about the **contradiction in terms of my view**

# Taiwanese participant

I-I I feel really bad about THIS you know [...] I FEEL like I have to lose my identity (1) you know [...] I'm a Taiwanese person and I should feel comfortable about THIS okay erm an- and I just feel that when I'm speaking English I REALLY WANT to- I will want to be like a native SPEAKER, and it's really HARD you know

## Untroubled identities (Tribble's 2003 study)

*Polish teacher:*

“Everybody follows it [RP]. I don't think it can be changed. We should treat it as a model. There should be one model, because I guess it's fairly universal.”

*Tunisian teacher:*

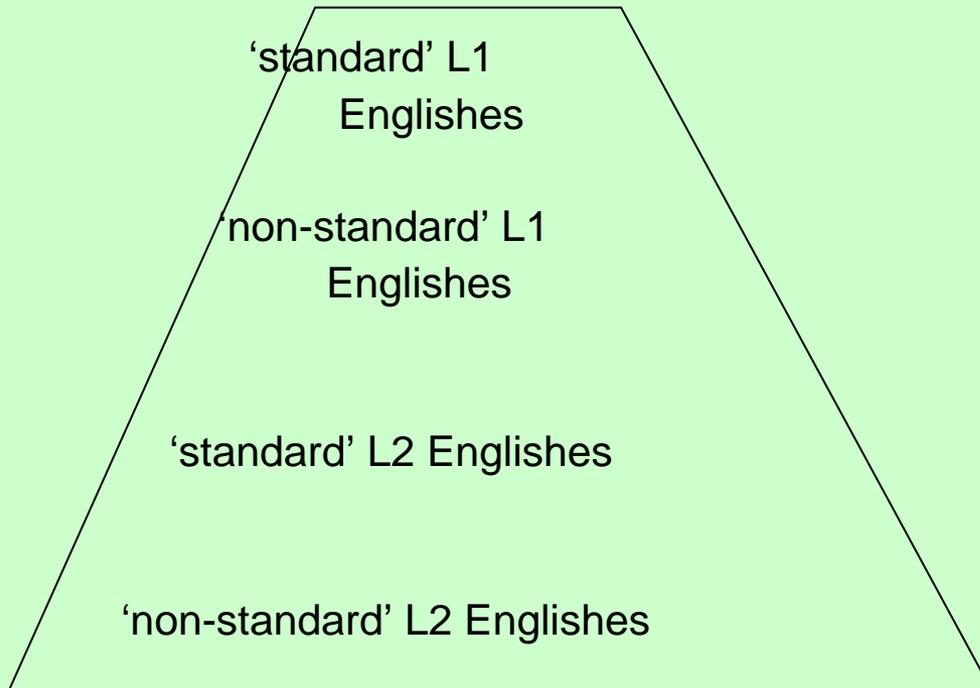
“We are all trying, all over Tunisia, to teach international English, which is British English. I know there is American English and Canadian English and I don't know what else, but we are trying to talk and to give British English, which is international and which is understood by everybody.”

# Where does this leave us?

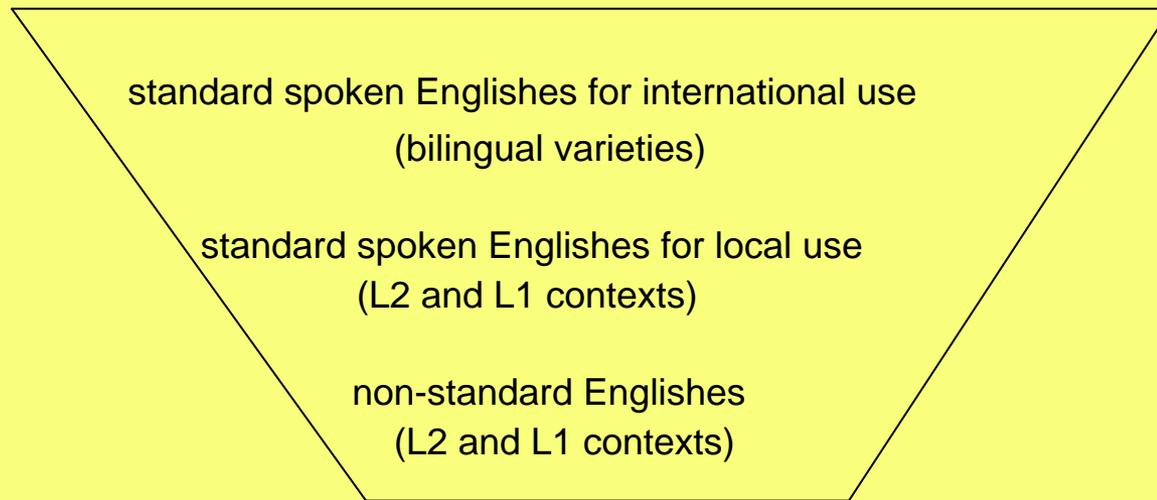
The ownership (by which I mean the power to adapt and and change) of any language in effect rests with the people who use it, whoever they are ... The major advances in sociolinguistic research over the past half century indicate clearly the extent to which languages are shaped by their use

... Statistically, native speakers [of English] are in a minority for language use, and thus in practice for language change, for language maintenance, and for the ideologies and beliefs associated with the language - at least in so far as non-native speakers use the language for a wide range of public and personal needs. (Brumfit 2002, p.116)

# Traditional hierarchy of Englishes

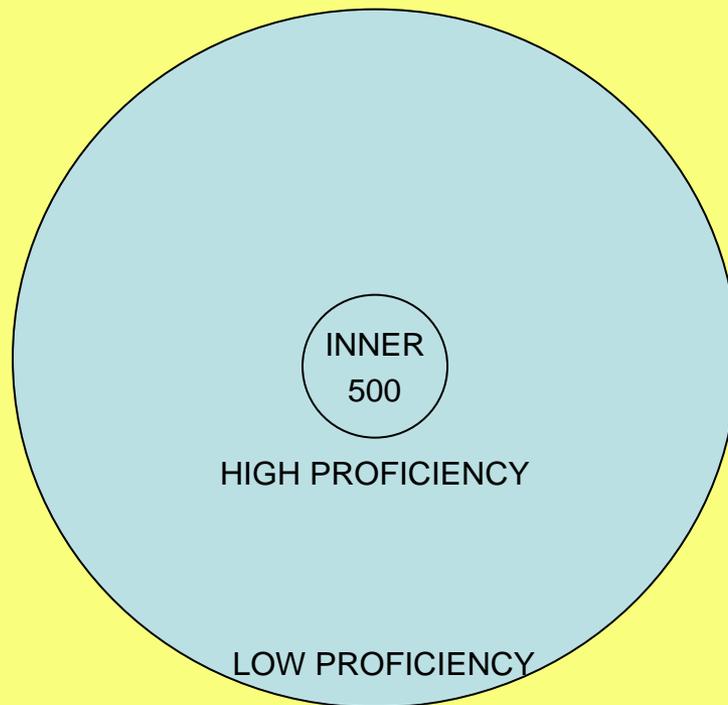


# Reconceptualised hierarchy of Englishes



Both hierarchies in Jenkins 2003. *World Englishes* (London: Routledge), pp.142-3.

# Revised version of Kachru's circle model by Graddol (2006, p.110)



# What about native English speakers?

We [the UK] have retained ways of thinking about the English language that were *more suited to empire* than they are to a modern, globalised world and *we are at risk of becoming outdated...* Where once we directed the spread of English around the world, *we are now just one of many* shareholders in the asset that it represents...

There needs to be recognition that people learn the language *in their own terms and to their own ends and these do not necessarily relate to the UK or any other country of which English is the mother tongue....* Policies must be sensitive to a *global population of English speakers*. English is more a family of languages than a single language with set rules and orthodoxies

Jones S. & P. Bradwell 2007. *As You Like It. Catching up in an age of Global English* (London: Demos).

# The native English speaker *problem*

“In many international fora, competent speakers of English as a second language are more comprehensible than native speakers, because they can be better at adjusting their language for people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds” (Phillipson 2003).

Korean Airlines “reportedly chose a French supplier for its flight simulators because its ‘offshore’ international English was more comprehensible and clearer than that of the UK competitor” (*Observer Business Supplement*, July 2005).

“The native speaker problem” (Graddol 2006).

# Dear [native] English speakers, please drop the dialects...

I would like [Anglo-Americans] to know that the English they speak at home is not always an internationally acceptable English... I sincerely believe there exists a cosmopolitan English - a lingua franca ... that is clearly different from what native English speakers use unconsciously in their daily life ... We non-natives are desperately learning English; each word pronounced by us represents our blood, sweat and tears ....

Dear Anglo-Americans, please show us you are also taking pains to make yourselves understood in an international setting.

(Mikie Kiyoi, *International Herald Tribune*, November 1995, and *English Today* 15/2, p.55).

# My English

Dear Inner Circle

My English is samurai

My English is Sushi

My English is sumo

I'm not gonna follow your English, OK?

My English is Jinglish

(provided by Nicola Galloway)



Thank you very much  
for listening



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