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## ENGLISH BY OTHER NAMES: A LESSON OF SURVIVAL IN THE JUNGLE OF CONCEPTS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

There seems to be considerable confusion and conceptual ambiguity in the discourse on English in the global context caused by a plethora of various names referring to English and its role and functioning in the present day world. The emergence of nomenclatural richness may be indicative not only of the maturity of a given field and the development of comprehensive conceptual frameworks, but it may also point to inconsiderate (often causing disarray) search for style variants or a lack of uniformity among scholars as to a given subject matter. In the discourse on the English language, further ambiguity, especially for students, may be caused by disparate understandings of the same concepts on the part of various language scholars. What follows is a brief overview and discussion of the most popular terms used in the literature on the subject of English in the world.

### 1. Introduction

The complexity and multitude of ways of conceptualizing English(es) in the global context may be attributed to its outstanding spread throughout the world and its acquiring the range and depth unparalleled in the history of human languages by any other language of wider communication. What further adds to this conceptual richness is that English has become the most widely and the most comprehensively studied language of the world. The aim of the paper is an attempt to point to the complexity of the nomenclature used to refer to the numerous varieties of English(es) and to clarify their meanings and mutual relatedness.

### 2. A traditional-cum-conservative outlook on English

Almost traditionally, scholars discussing English and its varieties as used around the world employed (now somewhat obsolete) a tripartite distinction

between ENL (English as a native language), ESL (English as a foreign language) and EFL (English as a foreign language). This conceptualization relates to differences in the status of English and the functional domains occupied by the language in a given country in which English is spoken by, respectively, native-language users, second-language users and foreign-language users. It is believed that in EFL countries English has not acquired any significant or official roles and that it is usually learned and used to communicate with either native speakers of English or with other foreigners for whom English is also a non-native language (cf. Trudgill 2003: 44). One of the weak points of this conceptualization seems to be ESL countries, i.e. former British and American colonies. The varieties of English used there are thought to have a non-native status, despite their considerable acculturation and prominent role in internal affairs (esp. in the educational system, the media and/or the government) (cf. Trudgill 2003: 44).

Arguments are advanced that the differentiation between EFL, ESL, ENL is getting increasingly inadequate to capture the complexity of the contexts and situations in which English is used these days. The greatest controversies are caused by the question of who can count as a native and by the criteria to be applied to establish that. This is not so easy a question as linguists used to think in the past. Importantly, communicative competence is unlikely to dispel any doubts in this matter because non-native speakers of English can frequently use the language, at least in certain domains, more fluently and competently than the natives (McArthur 2003: 57). Another conundrum is how to distinguish today between ESL and EFL countries. Some states which have traditionally been ascribed the status of an EFL country may now, due to an ever increasing importance of English, be more adequately called an ESL country.

More recently, it is getting quite popular among researchers to use various pre-modifiers to talk about local EFL varieties. The usage of such names as Japanese English, Euro-English or Nordic English to refer to the so called learner (performance) varieties of English is to give some clues as to the geographical or national performance characteristics of their English language users (cf. Kachru 2006b: 114). Such learner (performance) varieties of English designate non-institutionalized, non-nativized and unacculturated kinds of English which, by and large, occupy in specific locales only a limited number of functional domains. In some cases, the use of the pre-modifiers may be related to a growing trend to manifest and acclaim one's national or local identity not simply as *a* foreign language user indiscriminately parroting native speakers' models but *the* language user coming from a specific and unique locale, speaking a world lingua franca with his/her distinctive accent.

### 3. English in the world and its acculturated varieties

In response to this limited and limiting view of English around the world, a more sociolinguistically-realistic conceptualization was developed to do better

justice to the functioning of English in the post-colonial contexts. Linguists working in the so called Kachruvian paradigm (focusing primarily on the Outer Circle contexts) have adopted the concept of World Englishes which is to be “indicative of distinct identities of the language and literature (...) ‘Englishes’ symbolizes variation in form and function, use in linguistically and culturally distinct contexts, and a range of variety in literary creativity” (Kachru 2006a: 69). Nevertheless, the term World Englishes as used by some scholars goes beyond its original meaning. It seems to have acquired multiple meanings and applications. It can serve as “an umbrella label” designating the field of English in the glocal context with all its differing approaches (Bolton 2006: 186). Alternatively, some researchers use it to refer to the New Englishes of the Caribbean, West and East African societies. It may also denote the Kachruvian approach to the study of the English language worldwide (a World Englishes paradigm).

Next to World Englishes, there are also other terms (related and overlapping to some extent) developed by scholars working outside the Kachruvian paradigm. The concepts IVE (indigenized varieties of English), LFE (localized forms of English), NVE (new varieties of English) and New Englishes refer roughly to the same ideas and phenomena; nonetheless, they are indicative of different approaches and research interests of the linguists using them. As regards indigenized varieties of English (IVE), they are kinds of English that developed in multilingual contexts in the process of indigenization which, according to this approach, amounts to social second language acquisition (macroacquisition) (Brutt-Griffler 1998: 386). A localized form of English, in turn, is thought to be recognized by the emergence of a variety “identifiable and definable through its distinctive mixture of features of grammar, lexis, pronunciation, discourse, and style” in places with a sufficiently large and stable English-using community (for instance, Singapore English or East African English) (Stevens 1992: 34). Regarding New Varieties of English (NVE), the term refers to the kinds of English which developed in the locales outside of Old Varieties of English (e.g. American or British English) and where there is some form of a local standard arranged along a lectal continuum (see Kam-Mei and Halliday 2002: 16). English in such a milieu can be an official language and a medium for the expression of the local culture (see Kam-Mei and Halliday 2002: 15). It seems that this label is sometimes used alternatively with the concept of New Englishes, but the latter seems to put a greater emphasis on the pluricentricity of Englishes and their greater independence from British and American English.

#### **4. English and its status as the first language in international communication**

Regarding the terms applied to refer to English and its status as the first language in international communication, they are often highly confusing since even the same scholar may use a given notion as a specific term related

to a particular approach and at another use it as a general label indicating the 'worldly' status of English.

This phenomenon is especially well illustrated by linguists' references to *English as a lingua franca* or *lingua franca English*. The origin of the term *lingua franca* itself goes back to the Arabic notion *lisan-alfarang*. It initially designated a language which was used in communication between speakers of Arabic and travelers from Western Europe and then stood for a rather stable language of commerce (House 2003: 557). Nowadays, the label seems to be frequently used by both non-linguists and many scholars as a non-specialist term to refer to a language which is chosen as a means of communication for people who do not share a common mother tongue. More recently, the concept *English as a lingua franca* has been adopted by scholars working on the (English) *lingua franca* core (esp. Jennifer Jenkins) as a specialist term which shows their new approach to the English as used by non-native speakers in international communication. A point is made that *lingua franca* is bereft of the ideological burden of such terms as foreigner talk, interlanguage talk, learner interaction since it "attempts to conceptualize the participant simply as a *language user* whose real-world interactions are deserving of unprejudiced *description*, rather (...) than as a person conceived *a priori* to be the possessor of incomplete or deficient communicative competence, putatively striving for the 'target' competence of an idealized 'native speaker'" (Firth 1996: 241). Importantly, there are some voices of criticism with respect to the conceptualization of English as ELF. Kachru himself argues that the term is not only abused but also misleading and "functionally inappropriate – when used for the sociolinguistic profile of world Englishes" (2006c: 467).

Another highly confusing term pointing to the contemporary status of English around the world is EIL (English as an international language)<sup>1</sup> and, what seems to be its shorthand variant, international English. To begin with, as Jenkins (2006: 160) notes, the phrase international English tends to be used as an alternative to English as a *lingua franca* (ELF). Some researchers opt for a systematic usage of English as a *lingua franca* to avoid unnecessary misconceptions, but others continue to use EIL and ELF interchangeably as style variants. In addition, it is argued that the combination of *international* with *English* is misleading as it wrongly suggests that there exists "[an] *international* English in terms of acceptance, proficiency, functions, norms, pragmatic utility, and creativity" and that EIL is "[a] clearly distinguishable, codified, and unitary variety" (Kachru 2006d: 449; Seidlhofer 2004: 210)<sup>2</sup>. According to McArthur (2004: 9), interna-

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<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the phrase international English has been applied as a technical term from 1980s and that its first non-specialist uses can be traced back to 1930s (McArthur 2004: 4, 7-8). The concept was popularized by the publication of the book *International English: A Guide to Varieties of Standard English* by Peter Trudgill and Jean Hannah (1982).

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, McArthur (2006: 112-113) maintains that a World Standard English has been a reality for some time now and that it hinges on a dual print standard (American and English).

tional English carries the following three-fold connotations: “distribution across nations; standardness; and *lingua-franca*-hood.” Seidlhofer (2004: 210) adds that the term international English either signifies Outer Circle localized varieties of English fulfilling various intranational functions or points to English when used as a globalized means of international communication. Moreover, some researchers by referring to international English mean “the English used in territories where it is a majority first language or an official additional language” (Seidlhofer 2004: 210). Widdowson (1998: 399), in turn, points out that it is vital to distinguish between the two meanings of the notion. First of all, EIL can be said to be “international in that it occurs locally in different dialectal versions within communities all over the world, in Inner and Outer Circle locations” and, second of all, “we might take the term to mean that the language is *used* internationally *across* communities as a means of global communication” (Widdowson 1998: 399). Nevertheless, his proposal is to use EIL as a specialist term where English is conceptualized “as a range of self-regulating registers for international use” (Widdowson 1998: 399).

Still another concept which seems problematic is the term EWL (English as a world language) or World English for short. The history of World English is argued to go back to 1920s when the expression designated first standard English and then “all English” (McArthur 2004: 3). Again, most of the ambiguity is caused by the uses of the notions in both specialist and non-specialist ways. What is more, when used as a specialist term, it frequently denotes different things – depending on the approach taken by a given linguist. McArthur (2004: 5), for instance, points out that “*world English* is both shorthand for English as a world language and a superordinate term for *Australian English*, *British English*, *Irish English*, *Nigerian English*, and the like” and that “[i]t embraces all aspects of the language: dialect, pidgin, creole, variety, standard, speech, writing, paper-based, electronic.” A different approach is taken by Halliday (2003: 416) who makes the point that one should discern that “English has become a world language in both senses of the term, international and global: international, as a medium of literary and other forms of cultural life in (mainly) countries of the former British Empire; global, as the co-genitor of the new technological age, the age of information.” Similarly to Halliday’s ‘global’ reference of the concept, Brutt-Griffler (2002: 110) asserts that “[t]he emergence of World English has accompanied the development of the world econocultural system” and that “World language is

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To specify, it is thought to result from “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” (McArthur 2006: 114). Some further reasons for the emergence of a single world standard are perceived to be an ever increasing quantity of prose (especially on the Internet) and the nature of the print word itself which, due to its more permanent character than the fleeting speech, is subject to constant evaluation by present and future generations of speakers of English all over the world (McArthur 2006: 97ff).

a product of the sociohistorical development of the *world econocultural system*, which includes the world market, business community, technology, science and cultural and intellectual life on the global scale.” Nevertheless, Brutt-Griffler’s use of the term is closely related to her conceptual framework focusing on the development of a world language through the process of macroacquisition.

The last widely used term to refer to English and its current position in the world is EGL (English as a global language) and its just as frequently used style variant – global English. The notion is believed to have its origins in the mid-1990s when linguists started to associate English with its extensive (global) use and correlate it with the social and economic aspects of globalization (McArthur 2004: 4ff). A point should be made that in some dictionary entries world and global English seem to be synonymous; this is also how David Crystal tended to use the two terms in his book *English as a Global Language* (McArthur 2004: 10). Quite surprisingly, Halliday’s use of the term a *global language* does not appear related to the phenomenon of globalization:

A global language is a tongue which has moved beyond its nation, to become ‘international’; it is taken over, as second tongue, by speakers of other languages, who retain some features of their national forms of expression. If its range covers the whole world we may choose to call it ‘global’ (Halliday 2003: 408).

One should also discern a seemingly similar concept of global Englishes which was developed by Pennycook to fit in with his novel theoretical framework concerning the phenomenon of English in the global context. The term draws on both critical theories of globalization and the world Englishes paradigm. It emphasizes the tension between the destructive forces leading to the homogenization of the world and the appropriation of English which is seen as “a pluralized entity” (Pennycook 2007: 18). In this vein, Pennycook (2007: 18) points out that “[w]hile in some ways this term is intended to capture these two polarities – a critical theory of globalization and a pluralist vision of Englishes – I will also be distancing myself from these two ways of viewing English in the world (imperial or pluralist) since both have considerable shortcomings.”

## 5. Some attempts at organization

Knowing the meanings behind the terms as used by various linguists is important, nonetheless, it is also vital to know how the different notions found in the scholarly discourse relate to each other. Unfortunately, there seem to be only a few frameworks helping to systematize the multitude of terms referring to different varieties of English.

One of them was developed by Quirk (2006: 502) to deal with the “profusion and (...) confusion of *types* of linguistic variety that are freely referred to in educational, linguistic, sociolinguistic, and literary critical discussion.” The chaos is attributed to the existence of a wealth of different terms which despite being on “desperately different taxonomic bases” are treated as comparable and corre-

sponding (Quirk 2006: 502).<sup>3</sup> Quirk's proposal to sort out this disorganization is to distinguish between varieties that are *use*-related and *user*-related (2006: 503):

1. *Use* related:
  - a. content-marked (e.g. scientific English, legal English)
  - b. tone-marked (e.g. BBC English, working-class English)
2. *User* related:
  - a. ethnopolitical (e.g. American English, African English)
  - b. linguistic:
    - i. non-native (e.g. Nigerian English, Indian English; performance varieties – German English, Nordic English)
    - ii. native:
      - non-institutionalized (e.g. South African English, Yorkshire English, Australian English)
      - institutionalized (American English, British English)

As regards use-related varieties, they pertain to the ones that are assumed by an individual together with a certain role that he or she performs; any individual can master a number of such varieties (Quirk 2006: 503). In contrast, individuals are generally tied to only one user-related variety, i.e., Americans to American English, the British to British English etc. (Quirk 2006: 503-504). Speakers of American English, for example, are unlikely to express themselves in Australian English.

Importantly, one should discern that any taxonomic categorizations are a reflection of a given scholar's views, beliefs or even ideologies. Consequently, they are likely to meet with criticism. In the case of Quirk's taxonomic division, the question of who counts as a native speaker and which countries (and on what basis) may be regarded as having an institutionalized variety of English are possible areas of disagreement. According to Kachru (1985: 12), institutionalized varieties of Outer Circle countries are the ones which experienced "extended periods of colonization", and which consist of "large speech communities having diverse and distinct characteristics." These varieties function in bilingual or multilingual communities and play an important role in their language policies, culture and local identity (Kachru 2006b: 114). In contrast, Quirk (2006: 504-505) argues that a variety which can be referred to as institutionalized must be "fully described and with defined standards observed by the institutions of state." For him, there are two such varieties (American and British English) and no non-native variety can lay claim to be recognized so.

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<sup>3</sup> To realize this, it is enough to analyze the following terms: American English, legal English, working-class English, computer English, BBC English, Black English, South Asian English, Queensland Kanaka English, liturgical English, Ashkenazic English, scientific English, Chicago English, Chicano English.

In addition, is noteworthy that the numerous varieties of English which arose in the process of its spread and change can be discussed from other perspectives as well. They can be compared and analyzed through prioritizing their *acquisitional* characteristics (first vs. second, and foreign language), *sociocultural* properties (transplanted vs. non-transplanted varieties), *motivational* factors (integrative vs. instrumental motivation) or *functional* implementations (national vs. international language) (Kachru 2006b: 112-113). Furthermore, there is a proposal to introduce a more comprehensive and more general concept to refer to all English(es) around the world. A suggestion is made to use the term ‘the English language complex’ to cover such issues as English as a lingua franca; British English, American English, New York English; Euro English, Nordic English; and various varieties of the language being at different levels of the continuum of Anglo-hybrids (e.g. Scots, Scottish English and English) (McArthur 2003: 56-57). The English language complex would include kinds of English differentiated on the basis of three different criteria: (1) territorially delimited English languages (e.g. American, Indian, Nigerian); (2) historically distinct English languages (including among others “[p]recursors of present-day Englishes (...); [d]ialects or semi-languages with established names, traditions, orthographies, works of reference, literatures (...); [p]idgin-cum-creoles”); (3) anglo-hybrids e.g. Spanglish in the US, Frenglish in Quebec or Taglish in the Philippines (McArthur 1998: 215-216).

## 6. Final remarks

Ideally, clarity of reasoning should be coupled with a kind of attitude which one could call nomenclatural minimalism. It would facilitate considerably scientific communication and, possibly, contribute to the interdisciplinarity of science. This seems, nevertheless, far from being achievable, especially in times when the popularity of one’s own terminology and conceptual framework appears to have become a proof of expertise and status in the field. Nevertheless, some attempts should be taken to help students and nonprofessionals understand the scientific discourse better. In the context of research on English in the world, this could be achieved through clarifying if a given notion is used as a specialist term or as a general label. It would be advisable, for instance, to use pre-modification (e.g. International English) in cases when one refers to a term and resort to post-modification (e.g. English as an international language) when talking about things in general.



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