Current Perspectives on Teaching World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca

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The purpose of this article is to explore recent research into World Englishes (henceforth WEs) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF),[1] focusing on its implications for TESOL, and the extent to which it is being taken into account by English language teachers, linguists, and second language acquisition researchers. After a brief introduction comparing the current situation with that of 15 years ago, I look more closely at definitions of WEs and ELF. Then follows an overview of relevant developments in WEs and ELF research during the past 15 years, along with a more detailed discussion of some key research projects and any controversies they have aroused. I then address the implications of WEs/ELF research for TESOL vis-à-vis English language standards and standard English, and the longstanding native versus nonnative teacher debate. Finally, I assess the consensus on WEs and ELF that is emerging both among researchers and between researchers and language teaching professionals. The article concludes by raising a number of questions that remain to be investigated in future research.

As I was about to deliver a paper at a British university a few months ago, the conference organiser hesitated midway through introducing me, pointed to the phrase *World Englishes* on the biographical information I had provided, and asked whether the plural form was a mistake. I mention this incident purely to highlight how unusual it has become in recent years for those working in the TESOL and applied linguistics profession anywhere in the world to query the *-es* and, by the same token, how far knowledge about the spread of English has advanced among the profession. Back in 1991, when *TESOL Quarterly*

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[1] Put simply, *WEs* is used in this article to refer to the indigenized varieties of English in their local contexts of use. *ELF* refers to English when it is used as a contact language across lingua-cultures whose members are in the main so-called nonnative speakers. Further elaboration on these terms is provided in the next section.

had its last anniversary, by contrast, WEs as a topic was notable for its absence in the 25th anniversary issues. Where it had any presence at all, this was either by implication or as a peripheral issue in articles devoted to other subjects. The only article that prioritised WEs to any noticeable degree in 1991 was written by Douglas Brown, part of which explored a number of sociopolitical issues relating to the spread of English. Even there, however, WEs was not mentioned by name, but was discussed under the somewhat ambiguous rubric of *English as an international language* (I will discuss this term later).

By coincidence, 1991 was also the year in which Braj Kachru responded to Randolph Quirk in a cross-Atlantic disagreement that subsequently became known as the *English Today* debate (see Seidlhofer, 2003, which presents a number of major controversies between prominent scholars in the field of applied linguistics). Their opposing positions were labelled by the two protagonists themselves as *liberation linguistics* (Quirk, 1990, referring to Kachru's position) and *deficit linguistics* (Kachru, 1991, referring to Quirk's position). We will return to this issue later in the discussion of English language standards. For now, suffice it to say that the controversy attracted the attention of a wider audience of TESOL professionals not traditionally interested in WEs and was no doubt in part responsible for their growing awareness of the subject. This awareness has, in turn, been reflected in journals such as *TESOL Quarterly,* which, in the period since 1991, have published an increasing number of articles whose authors consider the teaching and learning of English in relation to the realities of the language's current spread and use. Equally significant is the fact that whereas in 1991 WEs and ELF were neglected in the *TESOL Quarterly* anniversary issues, they have been assigned a dedicated slot in this 40th anniversary issue. Also worth mentioning in this regard is a recent issue of *TESOL Quarterly* edited by John Levis (2005), in which pronunciation is approached from a variety of WEs and ELF perspectives rather than, as is more often the case, as an isolated feature of second language (L2) English acquisition whose only desirable endpoint is a so-called native-like accent.

On the other hand, as will become clear, much work remains to be done, even at the level of theorising, let alone in practice. Articles oriented to WEs still tend to be the exception rather than the rule in *TESOL Quarterly,* while nothing at all was published on ELF until 2003, and then only in the Brief Reports and Summaries section (a short piece by Mauranen discussing her corpus of ELF in academic settings). And the same is true of comparable TESOL and applied linguistics journals published in the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere. This is bizarre considering the fact that—as countless scholars have pointed out—speakers of WEs and ELF vastly outnumber those of

English as a native language (ENL) and even those of English as a second (immigrant) language (ESL)[2] and English as a foreign language (EFL).[3]

WES, ELF, AND WORLD STANDARD ENGLISH

As Bolton (2004, p. 367) points out, there are three possible interpretations of the expression *World Englishes.* Firstly, it serves as an "umbrella label" covering all varieties of English worldwide and the different approaches used to describe and analyse them. Secondly, it is used in a narrower sense to refer to the so-called new Englishes in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean (Kachru's *outer circle*).[4] In this article, I am using the term in this narrower sense. Thirdly, it is used to represent the pluricentric approach to the study of English associated with Kachru and his colleagues, and often referred to as the *Kachruvian* approach, although there is considerable overlap between this and the second interpretation of the term. The first use is also sometimes represented by other terms, including *World English* (i.e., in the singular), *international English(es),* and *global English(es),* while the second is in fact more commonly represented by the terms *nativised, indigenised, institutionalised,* and *new Englishes* or *English as a second language.* And still other terms are currently in circulation (see Erling, 2005; McArthur, 2002, 2004). Despite the range of interpretations of the term *World Englishes* and its alternatives, however, the links between them are so strong, and the field now so well established, that there seems to be little confusion over the intended reference.

The same cannot be said, by contrast, for ELF, despite Larry Smith's visionary work on English as an international language dating way back to the 1970s and 1980s (see, e.g., Smith, 1976, 1983). One complication

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[2] This use of *ESL* should not be confused with another frequent use of the term, that is, to describe the English use of speakers for whom it is an indigenized language in countries such as India, Nigeria, and Singapore.

[3] As was pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, there is considerable overlap between ELF users and EFL learners, partly because many of those who start out thinking they are learning English as a foreign language end up using it as a lingua franca.

[4] For ease of reference, I am using Kachru's well-known three concentric circle model of the spread of English (see, e.g., Kachru, 1985, 1988, 1992). Although this model is still used regularly by many WEs and ELF scholars (myself often included) as the standard framework, a number of scholars have suggested that it requires some updating as a result of changed circumstances since the 1980s. Comments have been made and/or alternatives suggested by, among others, Crystal (2003), Graddol (1997), Kandiah (1998), Modiano (1999a, 1999b), Seidlhofer (2002), Toolan (1997), Tripathi (1998), and Yano (2001). Kachru (2005) has responded at length to some of these comments and suggestions (as outlined in Jenkins, 2003), describing them as "misrepresentations of the model's characteristics, interpretations and implications" (Kachru, p. 220).

for ELF is the fact that *international English* is sometimes used as shorthand for *English as an international language,* or *EIL,* itself an alternative term for ELF. Used in this way, it can be misleading because, as Seidlhofer (2004) points out, "it suggests that there is one clearly distinguishable, codified, and unitary variety called International English, which is certainly not the case" (p. 211). Thus, in one sense (Bolton's second), *international English* is used to refer to the local Englishes of those non–mother tongue countries where it has an intranational institutionalised role, although some researchers (e.g., Görlach, 1990; Trudgill & Hannah, 2002) also include the mother tongue English countries (Kachru's *inner circle*) in their definitions. On the other hand, *international English* is also used in another sense (not discussed to by Bolton) to refer to the use of English as a means of international communication across national and linguistic boundaries (primarily, but not exclusively, across the countries of Kachru's *expanding circle*). These two meanings, as Seidlhofer (2004) observes, are therefore in "complementary distribution" (p. 210). It is because of the potential for confusion of the word *international* that ELF researchers prefer the term *English as a lingua franca* to *English as an international language,* although to add to the confusion, both terms are currently in use.

A further problem relates to the so-called phenomenon of *World Standard (Spoken) English* (W(S)SE). This is a hypothetical, monolithic form of English that scholars such as Crystal (e.g., 2003), Görlach (e.g., 1990),[5] and McArthur (e.g., 1987, 1998) believe is developing of its own accord, although Crystal (2003) considers that "U.S. English does seem likely to be the most influential in its development" (p.188). This form recalls Quirk's (1985) "single monochrome standard form" (p. 6; see also Quirk, 1995) based on the native speaker English that he advocates for nonnative speakers of English regardless of their communicative context. (I will return to this notion later.)

Unfortunately, some WEs scholars assume that ELF (EIL) refers to the same phenomenon as WS(S)E and then criticise ELF (EIL) for promoting a monocentric view of English based on American or British norms rather than a pluricentric view based on local norms. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Firstly, far from prioritising inner circle norms, ELF researchers specifically exclude mother tongue speakers from their data collection. Indeed, in its purest form, ELF is defined as a contact language used only among non–mother tongue speakers. For example, according to House (1999), "ELF interactions are defined as interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in

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[5] Görlach refers to it as *International English,* thus contributing to the confusion over the term *English as an international language* pointed out by Seidlhofer.

English, *for none of whom English is the mother tongue*" (p. 74, italics added). The majority of ELF researchers nevertheless accept that speakers of English from both inner and outer circles also participate in intercultural communication (albeit as a small minority in the case of inner circle speakers), so do not define ELF communication this narrowly. In their search to discover the ways in which ELF interactions are sui generis, as House (1999, p.74) puts it, they nevertheless restrict data collection to interactions among non–mother tongue speakers. And if the point is reached when ELF forms can be codified, they believe that as far as ELF interactions are concerned, any participating mother tongue speakers will have to follow the agenda set by ELF speakers, rather than vice versa, as has been the case up to now. This is a very long way from Crystal's proposed WS(S)E, whose main influence will (he believes) be American English.

Secondly, it is not the case that ELF research, like WS(S)E, is proposing the concept of a monolithic English for the entire world. Although ELF researchers seek to identify frequently and systematically used forms that differ from inner circle forms without causing communication problems and override first language groupings, their purpose is not to describe and codify a single ELF variety. The existence of ELF is not intended to imply that learners should aim for an English that is identical in all respects. ELF researchers do not believe any such monolithic variety of English does or ever will exist. Rather, they believe that anyone participating in international communication needs to be familiar with, and have in their linguistic repertoire for use, as and when appropriate, certain forms (phonological, lexicogrammatical, etc.) that are widely used and widely intelligible across groups of English speakers from different first language backgrounds. This is why accommodation is so highly valued in ELF research. At the same time, ELF does not at all discourage speakers from learning and using their local variety in local communicative contexts, regardless of whether this is an inner, outer, or expanding circle English.

The tensions nevertheless remain, and some scholars of outer circle Englishes continue to contest the legitimacy of ELF, much as the legitimacy of outer circle Englishes was contested in the past (see Seidlhofer, in press-a, for possible reasons). Such scholars continue to describe the expanding circle Englishes indiscriminately as EFL varieties, in other words, English learned as a foreign language for use in communication with native speakers. For example, Bolton (2004), in his survey of the world's Englishes, outlines Kachru's three circle model, which characterises expanding circle varieties as "norm-dependent" (p. 376, i.e., dependent on British or American norms), without further comment and does not mention ELF (or EIL) at all. Thus, he ignores the fact that the three circle model "is not designed to deal with the

characteristic functioning of the language in the Expanding Circle, as a lingua franca" (Seidlhofer, 2002, p. 202). One frequent and misplaced criticism of ELF made by WEs scholars is that it supposedly ignores the pluricentric nature of English. For example, in the call for papers for their edited collection (Rubdi & Saraceni, in press), the editors claimed that

> an alternative viewpoint to EIL is one which acknowledges the polymorphous nature of the English language worldwide, identifying different varieties under a World Englishes paradigm, [whose emphasis] is not on prescribing either a reduced or extended form of standard English, but on questioning the very concept of "standard," and on advocating a pluricentric model rather than a monolithic one.[6]

Kachru (1996a, 2005) in fact argues against the entire notion of ELF on the basis that the term is not being used in its original sense, and that it is "loaded" (2005, p. 224), although he does not explain how.

Despite the controversy surrounding ELF research, the phenomenon seems slowly to be gaining recognition in East Asia, Europe, and to a lesser extent, Latin America. (Later in this article, I discuss controversies emanating from inner and expanding circle sources.) It is also beginning to gain the approval of sociolinguists in the way that the outer circle Englishes have already done. Whether in another 15 years, it will have made progress comparable to that made by the indigenized Englishes over the past 15, and whether either ELF or WEs will have made greater inroads into TESOL practice, remains to be seen.

OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WES AND ELF RESEARCH

Regardless of the relatively limited uptake of WEs and ELF research findings by TESOL practitioners and even fewer mainstream second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, productivity with potential relevance for SLA has been growing apace. As Y. Kachru[7] (2005) points out, "researchers . . . are interested in all aspects of the emergence, grammars, sociolinguistics, ideological issues, creative literatures, and teaching and learning" (p. 157). WEs has been concerned with these issues for around three decades. However, during the period in question, research activity has increased substantially. Y. Kachru (2005, pp. 157–159) neatly categorises WEs research interests as follows: the historical

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[6] Seidlhofer (in press-a) is responding directly to this accusation against ELF/EIL.
[7] Unless Y. Kachru is specified, references to Kachru are to B. B. Kachru.

background to the spread of English; the linguistic processes responsible for features among varieties; the sociocultural contexts of English use; intelligibility both across varieties and within indigenized varieties in their local settings, together with the role of code-mixing and code-switching; the impact of English on local languages, or *Englishization* and, conversely, the impact of local languages on English, or *nativization;* bilingualism and multilingualism; literary creativity in institutionalised settings; the functional allocation of varieties within English-using communities; the communicative needs of users which underlie observed linguistic differences; and, most relevant to the context of this article, the teaching and learning of English in the outer and expanding circles. In each of these categories, there is a growing body of publications, some of which will be singled out in the following discussion.

Starting with corpus-based research, most corpora to be collected have tended to focus on British and American Englishes. However, this 15-year period is noteworthy for the small but growing availability of corpora that include outer circle Englishes, with expanding circle corpora in the pipeline. For example, the International Corpus of English (ICE) project draws on 18 countries from both inner and outer circles (cf. Greenbaum & Nelson, 1996). One of the few corpus projects drawing exclusively on the expanding circle, Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), will be discussed at greater length later.

This period has also seen an increase in dictionaries and grammars of different Englishes such as *The Macquarie Dictionary* (1997), which includes words from a range of Southeast Asian Englishes. Other such descriptions are included in the large number of book-length treatments of WEs that add to the existing body of scholarly books in the field, such as Kachru's earlier volumes (e.g., 1982, 1986), and Platt, Weber, and Ho (1984). Like these older works, many of the recent books deal with Englishes in the Asian context. For example, the Hong Kong University Press has published a series including Pennington (1998) and Bolton (2002) on Hong Kong English; Adamson (2004) on China English; Stanlaw (2004) on Japanese English; and Kachru (2005) on "the Asianness in Asian Englishes" (p. xv).[8] In the same period, Kachru's groundbreaking 1982 volume was republished in a revised and updated edition (1992). Other important books on Asian Englishes published in this period include Pakir's (1992) collection of studies of Singapore English lexis, Brown, Deterding, and Ee Ling (2000), and Deterding, Brown, and Ee Ling (2005), both on the pronunciation of Singapore English, and Bolton (2003) on China English. Meanwhile, a number of edited

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[8] Although not a book-length treatment, Shim (1999) represents an important early stage in the description and codification of South Korean English.

collections (e.g., Ho & Ward, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2002) cover a range of Asian Englishes along with implications for their teaching and learning.

European Englishes have lagged some way behind their Asian counterparts in terms of research. This lag has been caused at least in part, it seems, by an assumption that European Englishes (along with the other so-called foreign Englishes) are not legitimate varieties because they did not arise through colonisation and have not undergone a process of institutionalisation.[9] Regardless of their perspective on the legitimacy question, some researchers have recently been attempting to redress the balance. As a result, the teaching, learning, and use of English in Europe has been brought onto centre stage in a number of edited collections, such as Cenoz and Jessner (2000), Gnutzmann (1999), Gnutzmann and Intemann (2005), Lesznyák (2004), and Meierkord (1996). There are as yet no entire books covering English in Latin America. However, an issue of the journal *World Englishes* has been devoted to this neglected subject (Berns & Friedrich, 2003). Meanwhile Phillipson (2003) takes a more critical look at the current role of English in Europe and its potential to threaten the vitality of the smaller European languages.

Speakers of European Englishes are typically also speakers of ELF, to the extent that they learn and use English more for interlinguacultural communication than to communicate with speakers who share the their first linguaculture (or, for that matter, with native English speakers). The same is true of many English speakers in other regions of the world, such as parts of East Asia (e.g., China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand) and throughout Latin America. Despite the fact that those who use English primarily as a lingua franca are thought to constitute the world's largest group of English speakers, research into ELF only began around 1990. As a result, ELF has so far been the exclusive focus of very few dedicated books (e.g., Jenkins, 2000, on pronunciation issues, and McKay, 2002, on pedagogical matters). However, two more books are in the pipeline (Jenkins, in press; Seidlhofer, in press b), and numerous articles have been written on the subject during the past decade. These include Lowenberg (2002), whose research focus had hitherto been the outer circle, but who demonstrates that the linguistic processes involved in ELF are, in essence, no different from those involved in language change in the inner and outer circles.

Since 1991, there has also been a dramatic increase in broader-based

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[9] The problem seems to afflict European and Latin American Englishes to a greater extent than noninstitutionalised Asian Englishes such as China English and Japanese English. The Asian Englishes technically fall into the same (noninstitutionalised) category as European and Latin American Englishes, yet this has not prevented book-length publications featuring them. On the other hand, the fact that they are the subjects of books does not necessarily mean that they are accepted as legitimate varieties of English.

publications dealing with the spread of English. Cheshire (1991), for example, presents a number of empirical studies of nativised and mother tongue Englishes. Trudgill and Hannah (2002) in their fourth, and most comprehensive, edition describe the features of a similar range of Englishes mainly, but not entirely, on the basis of their own observations. McArthur (2002) includes discussions of ELF and noninstitutionalised varieties such as Euro-English in his wide-ranging but less detailed (in terms of features) guide. A number of volumes dealing with WEs in the Kachruvian sense also cover a broad range of WEs (e.g., Smith & Forman, 1997; Thumboo, 2001), while other broadly based volumes focus on teaching-related issues (e.g., Candlin & Mercer, 2001; Kelly Hall & Eggington, 2000). Some publications take a more historical perspective. These include two popularising accounts, McCrum, O'Neill, and Cran (2002, originally 1986) and Crystal (2003, originally 1997), both of which have been criticised for their perceived triumphalism (see, e.g., Phillipson's 1999 critique of Crystal, 1997). More scholarly historical approaches include Crystal (2004), McArthur (1998), and Watts and Trudgill (2002). On the other hand, apart from a short historical introduction, Graddol (1997), looking forward rather than back, is currently working on a new publication that will revisit his 1997 book and suggest new ways of understanding the future role of English.

Others researching WEs during the past 15 years have adopted a more critical stance toward the spread of English. The genre could be said to date back to the publication of Bailey (1991), although as Bolton (2004) points out, "the discourse on world English(es) changed gear dramatically in 1992 with the publication of Phillipson's book *Linguistic Imperialism*" (p. 384). Pennycook (1994) had a similar impact, and these two authors together "have been influential in establishing the agenda for the critical discussion of world English(es)" (Bolton, p. 385), one which has recently begun to filter through to (some members of) the TESOL profession even in English mother-tongue countries. Other important publications in this vein have followed, including Parakrama (1995), Pennycook (1998), Canagarajah (1999), Holborow (1999), De Swaan (2001), Kubota (2002), Tollefson (2002), and Mair (2004). The critical linguists can be divided into *anti-imperialists* such as Phillipson, who would prefer English(es) not to be the most widely used world language, and those such as Canagarajah and Parakrama, whose concern, like Kachru's, is more with resisting the hegemony of native speaker standards and appropriating English for their own local use. Taking a very different approach, though one which shares some common ground with that of the latter group of critical linguists, is Brutt-Griffler (2002), who presents the spread of WEs as resulting from the agency of its non–mother tongue speakers rather than from their passivity and exploitation. This is a position that she shares with ELF researchers.

Demonstrating the view that WEs and ELF can no longer be considered optional extras, some editors are starting to include them as independent entries in their handbooks of applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and language teaching and learning. See, e.g., the entries by Bolton (2004), Gnutzmann (2004), Y. Kachru (2005), and the review article by McArthur (2001). The same perspective underpins the appearance of books on WEs and ELF designed for study in English linguistics and teacher training programmes at university level (e.g., Jenkins, 2003; Kirkpatrick, in press; Melchers & Shaw, 2003). During the past 15 years, too, three dedicated journals, *World Englishes, English World-Wide,* and *English Today,* have been supplemented by others such as *Asian Englishes* (published in Tokyo). Overall, then, it is evident that the WEs seeds sown by the Kachrus and others in the 1980s have blossomed and flourished during the past 15 years, and that ELF, too, has more recently become a vibrant area of study. The implications of this vast WEs and ELF activity for TESOL practice and SLA research are profound.

SOME KEY RESEARCH PROJECTS AND CONTROVERSIES

As I pointed out in the previous section, WEs and ELF research during the past decade and a half has been prolific. This large body of work means that I will be able to single out only a very small proportion for more detailed discussion. Even selecting from those that have the most direct relevance to TESOL is no easy matter and (like all such selections) is bound in any case to be partial in reflecting my own personal preferences. Having said that, I believe that certain projects stand out in their significance for the teaching of English. In the case of WEs, these projects relate to challenges to interlanguage theory and to work exposing and resisting linguistic imperialism. In the case of ELF, the projects concern empirical descriptions of this emergent phenomenon currently being carried out in East Asia and Europe.[10] However, the division into WES and ELF relates more to the geographic orientation of the researchers than to the object of the research itself because the two areas overlap considerably and are mutually relevant. As almost always occurs when old paradigms are challenged and/or new approaches suggested, all these projects are proving controversial.

Starting with research of those working in the field of WEs, the first

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[10] This is not to minimise the importance of other work, particularly the linguistic and sociolinguistic profiles of Englishes in both outer and expanding circles that have, hitherto, been relatively unexplored. These include Bolton's (2002) and Joseph's (2004) work on Hong Kong English, Bolton's (2003) on China English, and Stanlaw's (2004) on Japanese English.

project to be considered is not strictly speaking research so much as scholarly debate. I refer here to the challenge which has been taking place since the early 1990s to the concept of interlanguage (IL), a challenge which I believe has as much relevance for ELF and expanding circle varieties of English as it does for the Englishes of the outer circle. According to IL theory (e.g., Selinker, 1972, 1992), a second language speaker's competence lies on an *interlanguage continuum* at some point between their first language (L1) and their second language (L2), in this case, English. Any differences between their output and standard British or American English are to be regarded as errors caused mainly by L1 *interference* (or, less pejoratively, *transfer*), while the point at which these so-called errors become fixed within the individual learner's repertoire is attributed to a phenomenon known as *fossilization.* Apparently not influenced by the findings of WEs scholars in the intervening period, Selinker reproduced his IL theory in expanded form in 1992. It seems to have been this recycling of the theory, and particularly his applying of fossilization to WEs contexts, that stimulated the renewed and strengthened challenge to the theory by a group of WEs scholars (e.g., Kachru, 1996b; Y. Kachru, 1993, 1994; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; S. N. Sridhar, 1994; Sridhar & Sridhar, 1994).

The main arguments presented against IL theory are that outer circle English speakers are not attempting to identify with inner circle speakers or to produce the norms of an exonormative variety of English grounded in an inner circle experience. Such norms, they contend, are irrelevant to the sociolinguistic reality in which members of the outer circle use English, and attempts to label the English of whole speech communities as deficient and fossilized are thus unjustifiable because these labels ignore the local Englishes' sociohistorical development and sociocultural context. In a nutshell, they are the result of a monolingual bias that is unable to comprehend the bilingual experience. Brutt-Griffler (2002) has recently added to the debate by arguing that a major problem with traditional SLA is its focus on individual acquisition and IL error, rather than acquisition by entire speech communities and new varieties. This critique is as relevant to ELF and the emerging Englishes of the expanding circle as it has always been for the outer circle varieties.

Other important challenges to the mainstream SLA perspective share common ground with the critique of interlanguage theory. For example, a number of scholars have recently investigated the role of identity in language learning: Norton (1997, 2000) and Block (2003) bring issues of power, ownership, and identity into the equation; Norton Pierce (1995; Norton, 2000) considers identity and investment in language learning; Kramsch and Lam (1999) examine issues of identity and voice; and Lin, Wang, Nobuhiko, and Mehdi (2002) investigate developing hybrid English speaker identities. Further challenges to SLA have come from

the sociocultural theorists such as Lantolf (2000), who consider such issues as the transformative agency of L2 learners; from Cook (1999, 2002b) and Firth and Wagner (1997), who critique the native speaker goal of traditional SLA and TESOL; from Dörnyei and Csizér (2002), who question the widely accepted meaning of *integrativeness* in the light of WEs; and from Mufwene (2001), who considers the roles of language contact and accommodation in a much more profound and insightful way than SLA researchers have ever done.

Despite the accumulating evidence against IL theory, the literature on teaching English still regularly contains advice for teachers in both outer and expanding circles on how to reduce IL errors and how to reverse fossilization, while the testing of English remains wholly predicated on the concept. There is still little if any awareness among TESOL practitioners and SLA researchers[11] that learners may be producing forms characteristic of their own variety of English, which reflect the sociolinguistic reality of their English use, whatever their circle, far better than either British or American norms are able to.

A second WEs project, this time empirical, concerns the controversial phenomenon known as *linguistic imperialism.* As mentioned earlier, Phillipson's (1992) book, *Linguistic Imperialism* (based on the analysis of documents and interviews with linguistic scholars) had a major impact both on subsequent WEs research and, at least in theory, on the TESOL profession. In fact the phrase *linguistic imperialism* is now almost a household word among teachers and applied linguists, regardless of their orientation to it. Taking up the theme of linguistic imperialism, and drawing on his ethnographic research, Canagarajah (1999) demonstrated—this time from an insider perspective—how linguistic imperialism can be challenged and resisted in practice and the language appropriated for local use. He carried out his research in an outer circle context (the Sri Lankan Tamil community), but as he points out, it is also relevant to a number of expanding circle countries, such as South Korea and Vietnam, who have "come under the neo-imperialist thrusts of English-speaking center communities" (p. 4). Indeed, as the use of English continues to expand globally, and its influence on non–mother tongue communities of either circle grows, Canagarajah's example of practical ways of appropriating English during the learning and teaching process could become increasingly relevant to the lives of English users of either circle.

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[11] A very small number of SLA publications are, nevertheless, beginning to mention the need to consider sociolinguistic influences. Mitchell and Myles (2004), for example, include a final chapter on sociolinguistic perspectives. Even here, however, their purpose is to explore the sociolinguistic factors involved in learners' achievement (or not) of the assumed target, that is, native-like English, rather than to consider other targets altogether.

However, the linguistic-imperialist view of the spread of English has not gone uncontested. Whereas Canagarajah and others take linguistic imperialism as a given and consider how to resist it, still others such as Bisong (1995), Brutt-Griffler (2002), and House (in press) do not believe it has (or had) a major role in the spread of English in the first place. Canagarajah's book has nevertheless received wide acclaim, perhaps in part because it is grounded in firsthand experience and because of its pro-active approach to the linguistic imperialism it identifies. On the other hand, although it has run to several reprints, Phillipson's book has received approbation and criticism in roughly equal measure, the latter perhaps provoked by its rhetorical style (see Berns, Barrett, Chan, Chikuma, Friedrich, Hadjidimos, et al., 1998).

Despite the widespread distribution of the research into linguistic imperialism, it has not so far led to noticeable changes in English teaching and teacher education policy. The best that can be said to date is that it has raised many teachers' and teacher educators' awareness of the extent to which the spread of English works in native speakers' interests and sometimes marginalises nonnative speakers. And on a small scale, it does seem that efforts are being made to reduce the "native-speakerist" element in some teaching materials (e.g., by the inclusion of more non–mother tongue speakers).

The final research projects relate to ELF. As mentioned earlier, a number of studies into ELF in different regions and in relation to different linguistic levels have been carried out. These studies include Deterding and Kirkpatrick (2005), on the pronunciation of East Asian ELF; House (1999), on the pragmatics of ELF; Jenkins (2000), on ELF phonology; James (2000), on ELF in the Alpine-Adriatic region; Kirkpatrick (2004), on East Asian ELF; and Mauranen (2003), on spoken academic ELF. Probably the largest, most advanced, and best known ELF research project to date is Seidlhofer's corpus, VOICE. Seidlhofer, in a groundbreaking paper (2001), pointed out the conceptual gap in relation to uses of English as a lingua franca in the expanding circle and argued forcefully for descriptions of ELF and, possibly, its eventual codification. VOICE is her means of putting this into practice.

Although the corpus aims to provide a basis for research into any aspect of ELF, Seidlhofer (2004) herself has focused so far on ELF lexicogrammar, presumably because of its importance to language pedagogy. Her objective is to find out which items are used systematically and frequently, but differently from native speaker use and without causing communication problems, by expert speakers of English from a wide range of L1s. The research so far has, she says,

brought to light certain regularities that at least point to some hypotheses. . . . In particular, typical "errors" that most English teachers would consider in

urgent need of correction and remediation, and that consequently often get allotted a great deal of time and effort in English lessons, appear to be generally unproblematic and no obstacle to communicative success. (p. 220)

The following are some of the potential salient features of ELF lexicogrammar that Seidlhofer (2004, p. 220) has identified in VOICE:

- non-use of the third person present tense–s ("She look very sad")
- interchangeable use of the relative pronouns *who* and *which* ("a book who," "a person which")
- omission of the definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in native speaker English and insertion where they do not occur in native speaker English
- use of an all-purpose question tag such as *isn't it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn't they?* ("They should arrive soon, isn't it?")
- increasing of redundancy by adding prepositions ("We have to study about . . . ." and "can we discuss about . . . ?"), or by increasing explicitness ("black colour" vs. "black" and "How long time?" vs, "How long?")
- heavy reliance on certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as *do, have, make, put, take*
- pluralisation of nouns which are considered uncountable in native speaker English ("informations," "staffs," "advices")
- use of that-clauses instead of infinitive constructions ("I want that we discuss about my dissertation")

On the other hand, one of the main causes of communication breakdown that Seidlhofer's research has identified, is *unilateral idiomaticity* (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 220). This occurs when one speaker uses a native speaker idiomatic expression such as an idiom, phrasal verb, or metaphor, that the interlocutor does not know.

Obviously the implications of ELF research for TESOL are far reaching. At the time of writing, however, ELF is proving highly controversial, among those who share Quirk's deficit linguistics frame of mind[12] as well as among those WEs scholars who mistake ELF for a version of World Standard English. So although ELF reflects the sociolinguistic reality of the largest group of English users, that is, the majority of those in the expanding circle, it may prove difficult to put it into practice.

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[12] Many of the aspects of ELF that are found controversial, however, are based on misconceptions of the nature of ELF (see Seidlhofer, in press a; in press b).

IMPLICATIONS FOR TESOL

From what has been said so far, it will be evident that the research into WEs and ELF has immense implications for TESOL practice in all three circles and above all in terms of the kind of language we teach. The debate between the *monocentrists* and *pluricentrists,* or what Bolton (2004) calls the "centrifugal" and "centripetal" view of English (p. 368), over the (in)appropriateness of native-speaker standard English began before the period in question, but it accelerated with the *English Today* debate and Kachru's (1992) call for a "paradigm shift" (p. 362; repeated in Kachru, 1996b; see also Kachru & Nelson, 1996). The discussion then moved on apace with Widdowson's (1994) widely quoted commentary on the *ownership of English,* which brought the issues home even more starkly to native-speaking teachers in the United States and United Kingdom.

One of the most recent critiques of the weaknesses in the monocentrist centrifugal perspective on English is that of Seidlhofer (2005), in which she revisits Quirk's (1985, 1990) position on standard English and demonstrates how prevalent it still is today. She points out in particular that standard English is extremely difficult to define,[13] and that there is therefore considerable confusion and disagreement about what standard English actually is. She goes on to argue that "in terms of numbers of speakers and domains of use, an insistence on StE [standard English] as the only option for all purposes is . . . difficult to justify" (p. 159), a perspective which she characterises as "Anglo-Saxon attitudes" (p. 167). Seidlhofer makes a strong case for the rights of expanding as well as outer circle speakers to develop their own norms rather than continuing to defer to those of the so-called educated native speaker. An important development in this respect is recent work demonstrating how teachers and students accommodate other varieties of English into their multilingual classrooms (see, e.g., Heller, 1999; Heller & Martin-Jones, 2001).

Despite the strength of the counter arguments, the belief in native speaker ownership persists among both native and nonnative speakers—teachers, teacher educators and linguists alike, although it is often expressed with more subtlety than it was in the past. Even the sociolinguist Trudgill (in press), an unlikely supporter of either native speaker ownership or exonormative standards, contends that "even if native speakers do not 'own' English, there is an important sense in which it stems from them, especially historically, and *resides in them*" (italics added). If a sociolinguist can retain the attachment to the native speaker standard implied in Trudgill's comment, then it is not surprising that a

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[13] In fact the closest I can find to a definition is that of Honey (1997), who argues that standard English is the variety used by educated native speakers and that the way to identify an educated native speaker is from their use of standard English: a circular argument indeed.

similar position is still held by the majority of English teachers, teacher educators, and SLA researchers, not to mention the ELT examination boards and publishing industry. It is telling that Widdowson (2003, 2004) needed to return to the ownership and standard English issue 10 years later in two important books on English language teaching.

Seidlhofer (2005) argues that much of the problem results from a mismatch between the meta level, where WEs and ELF scholars are asserting the need for pluricentrism, and "grassroots practice," where there is still "(unquestioning) submission to native-speaker norms" (p. 170). However, the situation seems to me to be even more serious, especially for ELF because many academics (e.g. SLA researchers, applied linguists and the like) are conducting a counter discourse at the meta level. The indications are that much more progress, particularly in empirical and descriptive work, will have to be made before the implications of WES and ELF research are widely acknowledged even in theory, but especially at the practical level, in terms of the relevance of varieties other than standard American or British English.

Another critical debate of this period that remains stuck at the meta level concerns the relative merits of native and nonnative teachers of English, itself a product of the various discourses on the concept of the *native speaker*. See, for example, Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997) and Rampton, (1990, 1995), who argue against the native-nonnative distinction as contrasted with, for example, Davies (2002) and Mukherjee (2005), who are broadly in favour of the distinction.

With standard American or British English being the only varieties considered worth learning in many parts of the world, then equally, those considered best-placed to teach English in those places are its native speakers. It is this perspective which informs the so-called English villages recently established in Japan and Korea, where learners are immersed in native speaker English for weeks at a time. It also underlies schemes to bring native speaker teachers to parts of East Asia, for example, the NET scheme (Hong Kong), the JET scheme (Japan), and similar schemes being devised for Korea and Thailand. Such teachers may have little or no training other than a short preservice course, and few have experience of teacher education. As a result, their knowledge of the language and their teaching skills can compare badly with those gained in lengthy university degrees by nonnative teachers. But again, much of the discussion takes place at the meta level (see, e.g., Braine, 1999; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001; Cook, 2002a; Seidlhofer, 1999), while employers continue to argue that they are obliged to provide the (native speaker) teachers that learners (and in many cases, their parents) prefer.

Some progress has nevertheless been made since 1991, such as the establishing of the Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL Caucus. At the

same time, there has been more research into the concerns of nonnative teachers. See, for example, Kamhi-Stein's (1999) discussion of ways in which nonnative teacher educators can become "agents of curriculum change" (p. 157), and Nemtchinova's (2005) survey of the largely positive evaluation by learners and host teachers of the strengths of nonnative teachers. The extent to which such initiatives manage to alter attitudes of nonnative and native speakers alike toward nonnative teachers and their varieties of English nevertheless remains to be seen.

Finally, the principal methodology of Western-led TESOL for the past 30 years, so-called communicative language teaching, with its heavy bias toward Western communicative styles and mores, has received its most serious challenge to date from Leung (2005; see also Luk, 2005). Again, it remains to be seen whether this challenge will translate into what Holliday (1994) describes as *appropriate methodology* for learners in different (and very often, non-Western) contexts of language learning and use.

EMERGING CONSENSUS AND REMAINING ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

Despite the somewhat pessimistic impression I may have given, the past 15 years has undoubtedly seen some progress in terms of an emerging consensus both among WEs and ELF researchers, and (to a more limited extent) in responses from teachers, applied linguists, SLA scholars, and others to their research. In particular, there is a growing consensus among researchers on the importance of language awareness for teachers and teacher trainers and educators in all three circles (see, e.g., Bolton, 2004; Canagarajah, 2005b; Seidlhofer, 2004). Teachers and their learners, it is widely agreed, need to learn not (a variety of) English, but about Englishes, their similarities and differences, issues involved in intelligibility, the strong link between language and identity, and so on.

Awareness raising fits well with another area of broad agreement among WEs and ELF researchers: the need for a pluricentric rather than monocentric approach to the teaching and use of English. This approach, it is believed, would enable each learner's and speaker's English to reflect his or her own sociolinguistic reality, rather than that of a usually distant native speaker.[14] To this end, it is gratifying to observe that the study of the subject *World Englishes* is growing around the world, on

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[14] The same applies to L2 speakers of English who happen to be living in inner circle environments. The critical question to ask is, with whom do L2 speakers of English (want to) interact? This is a crucial question for TESOL in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, but one that is rarely asked.

both undergraduate and masters university programmes (less so on teacher training programmes), although the paradigm shift has not yet started to filter though into language teaching itself, where much more needs to be done to raise learners' awareness of the diversity of English. For less proficient learners this awareness raising could involve exposure to a range of WEs and ELF varieties, while for more proficient learners, it could include discussion of the reasons for the spread of English, the development of diverse standards, the relationship between language and identity, and the like. This exposure is likely to encourage learners' confidence in their own English varieties, and in turn reduce the linguistic capital that many learners still believe native-like English to possess. However, as Holliday (2005) demonstrates, such a shift in attitudes and practices will not be implemented without a struggle.

Awareness raising and pluricentricity both link to another area of growing consensus among researchers: the importance of accommodation skills. Instead of speaking a monolithic variety of English, it is considered more important for speakers of WEs and ELF to be able to adjust their speech in order to be intelligible to interlocutors from a wide range of L1 backgrounds, most of whom are not inner circle native speakers. See, for example, Jenkins's (2000) empirical demonstration of the role of accommodation in intercultural communication. Again, this consensus remains largely in the realm of theory and is yet to be considered seriously by the majority of practitioners.

Many issues and questions nevertheless remain for the future, but I have space to mention only a few. One of the most pressing problems will be to find a way of incorporating a WES-ELF perspective into testing (Canagarajah, 2005a). Solving this problem will involve devising the means to distinguish between learner error and local variety, thus enabling testers to recognise systematic forms from outer and expanding circle Englishes as correct where they happen to differ from inner circle forms. It will also involve finding ways of identifying accommodation, so that candidates are able to adjust their English for the purposes of showing solidarity with, or promoting intelligibility for, an interlocutor, without the risk of being penalised because their resulting speech does not defer to native speaker norms. Both pluricentrism and accommodation in the teaching and testing of English are logical developments of WES and ELF research and far more relevant to the majority of learners than the acquisition of native-like competence. For, as Canagarajah (2005b) points out, "new competencies [are] required for communication and literacy in today's world," so that a single dialect of English "fails to equip our students for real-world needs" (p. xxv).[15] But until the

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[15] Ironically, a number of publications for learners (e.g., dictionaries) that are based on inner circle corpora still persist in describing their contents as real English. In fact, nothing

examination boards acknowledge the importance of these new competencies, teachers and curriculum planners will not do so either, for fear of jeopardising their students' examination prospects. In this respect, the examination boards are unlikely to be spurred into action by much of what is written on testing, which tends to fall back on acceptance of a native-speaker standard, despite the authors' expressions of sympathy with a WEs perspective. Davies, Hamp-Lyons, and Kemp (2003) are a case in point (and see Tickoo's 2004 response).

Related to the testing issue is the need to abandon the native speaker as the yardstick and to establish empirically some other means of defining an *expert* (and *less expert*) speaker of English, regardless of whether they happen to be a native or nonnative speaker. By the same token, inner circle ELT and applied linguistics publishers will need to find ways of promoting a more WES-ELF perspective in their teaching materials and books for teachers (see Matsuda, 2003). In a similar vein, editors of mainstream applied linguistics journals need to acknowledge the lack of empirical evidence showing the relevance of native speaker norms for international intelligibility and learn to recognise written norms that do not conform to those of an inner circle variety (see Ammon, 2000; Hu, 2004). In all these cases, further research into WES and ELF will provide invaluable support to those who are being asked to make such major shifts in perspective. Finally, to enable WES and ELF research to progress optimally over the next 15 years, we need to find ways of bringing WES and ELF scholars together in recognition of their shared interests, whatever their circle or research focus.

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could be further from the truth as far as the majority of learners' future communication needs are concerned.

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