

# Language variation and change

Lecture

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## Language variation and change

- Key concepts
- Attitudes

## Overview

- Reasons for language variation and change

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- Reasons for language variation and change
- New Englishes in the Outer Circle

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- Reasons for language variation and change
- New Englishes in the Outer Circle
- English around the world

## Overview

- Reasons for language variation and change
- New Englishes in the Outer Circle
- English around the world
- English as a lingua franca

# Language variation and change

## All languages in a constant state of change

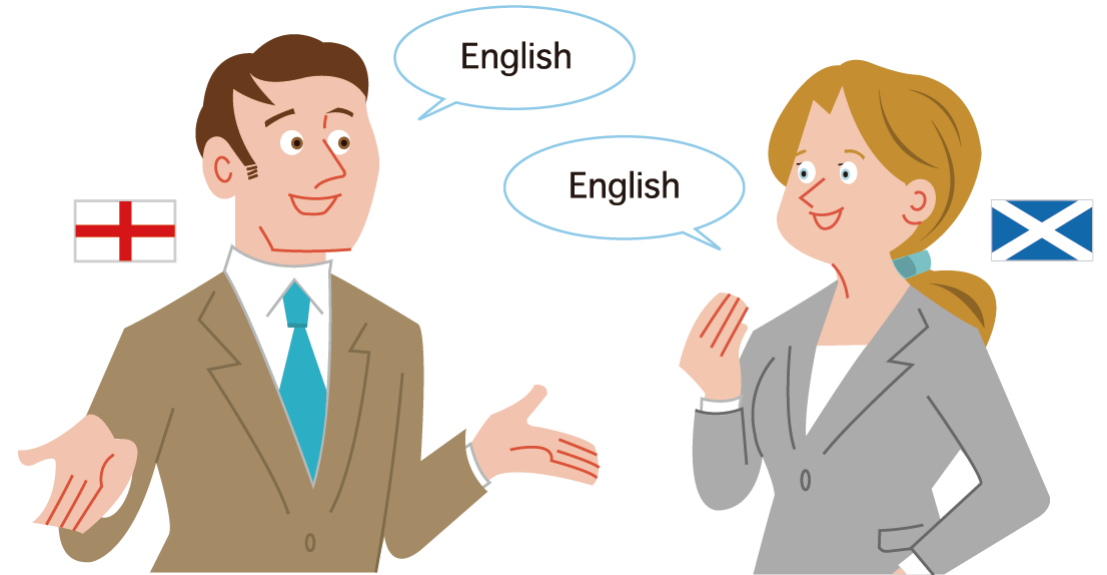
- Pronunciation
- Orthography
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Pragmatics (language in use)



## Contact with speakers of...



other languages

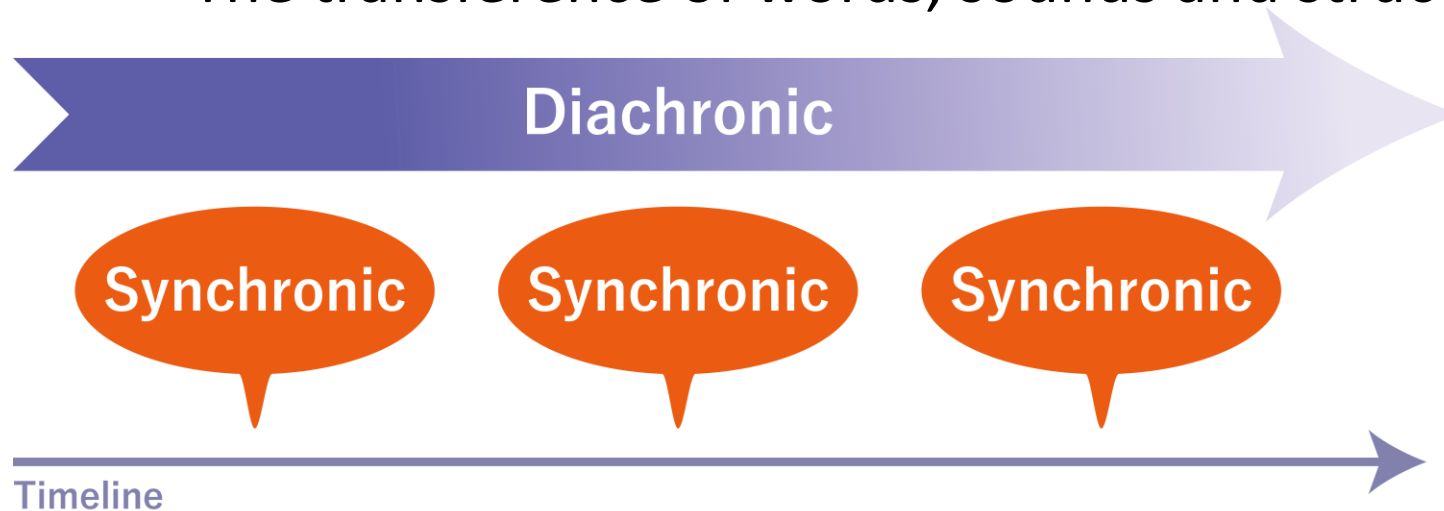


other dialects



## Contact with other languages or dialects

- Diachronic change (happening over time)
- Synchronic change (happening at a particular point in time)
  - The transference of words, sounds and structures



## ‘Standard’ English as a mixed language

- Germanic origins
- Influences from the French, Latin, Old Norse and Celtic languages
- Loan words from other languages
  - French (e.g. army, nationalism, passport)
  - Latin (e.g. agenda, September)
  - Greek (e.g. gymnasium, mathematics)
  - Italian (e.g. piano, balcony, umbrella)
  - Indian (e.g. bungalow, shampoo)
  - Arabic (e.g. coffee)



# Language variation and change

A loan word?  
Code-mixing?  
Code-switching?



**✗ English**

**○ Englishes**

## Englishes

- Contact with many other languages
- Plural form, thus 'Englishes'
- Dynamic, multifarious and pluricentric

## New Englishes

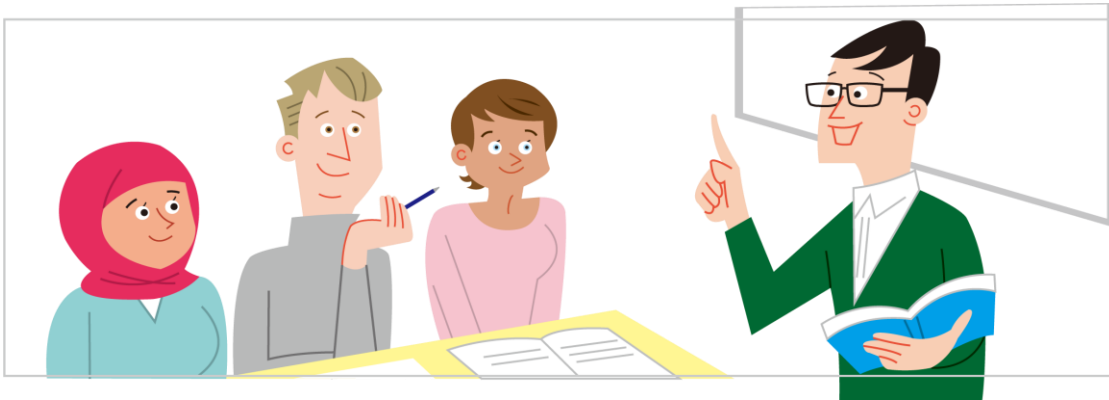
- A type of Englishes spoken as an official second language in former colonies of the British Empire
- Resulted from the channel three spread
- Shaped by contact with indigenous languages
- Localised or 'nativised' by adopting some unique language features

# Language variation and change

## New Englishes

- Far from uniform in their characteristics and current use
- Developed through the education system in places where English was not the main language

(Platt, Weber, & Ho, 1984)



# Language variation and change



Establishment of schools

Only spoken  
by colonisers



- Used as a medium of instruction
- Recruitment of local teachers
- Varieties of Englishes influenced by their mother tongues

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# Language variation and change

- New Englishes as a prime example of contact-based language change
- Increase in colonial settlements
- Independence of nations  
→ New varieties became more distinct.





# Language variation and change

## English

- Much more diverse than other lingua francas in the past



## English

- Much more diverse than other lingua francas in the past
- With varied use

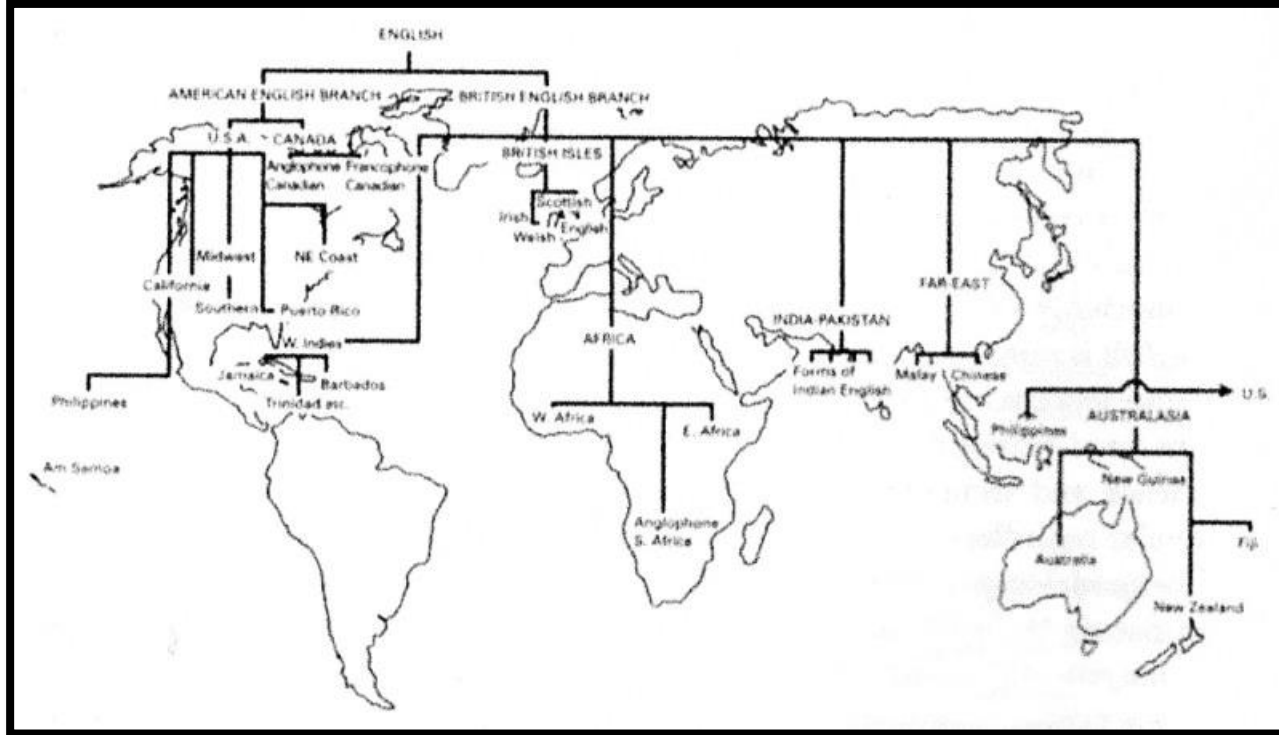
## English

- Much more diverse than other lingua francas in the past
- With varied use
- Attempts to 'capture' and categorise its speakers

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# Language variation and change

## World Map of English (Strevens, 1980)

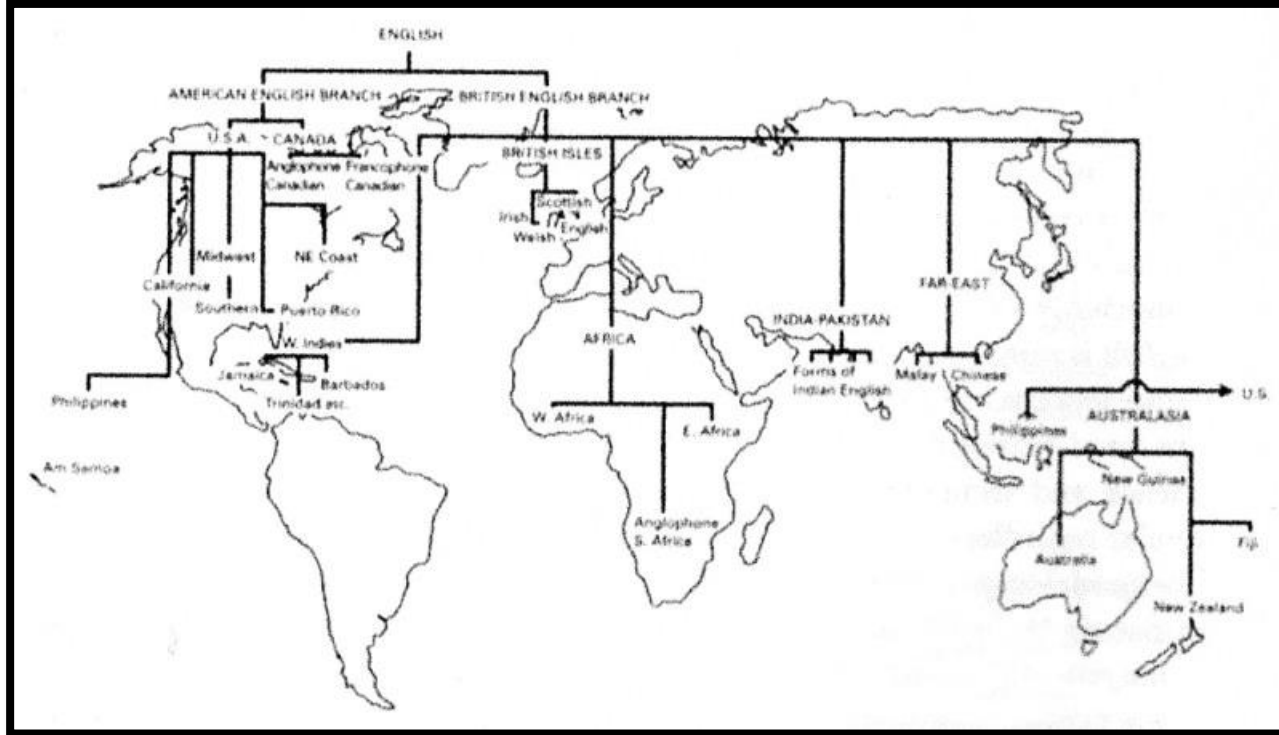


Strevens, P. (1980). Teaching English as an international language: From practice to principle. Oxford: Pergamon Press. (in the format Use in an e-coursepack via Copyright Clearance Center.)

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# Language variation and change

## World Map of English (Strevens, 1980)



### Strength:

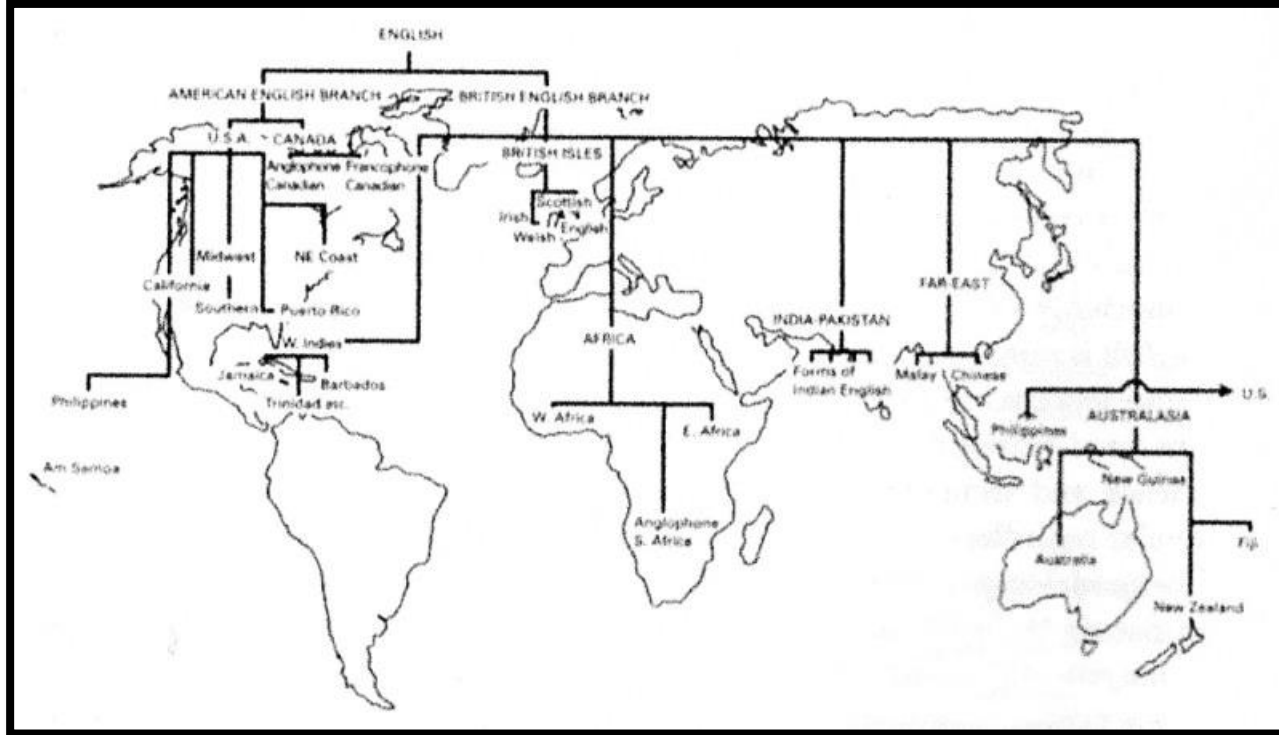
Highlights historic and geographic relationships among the Englishes

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# Language variation and change

## World Map of English (Strevens, 1980)



### Weakness:

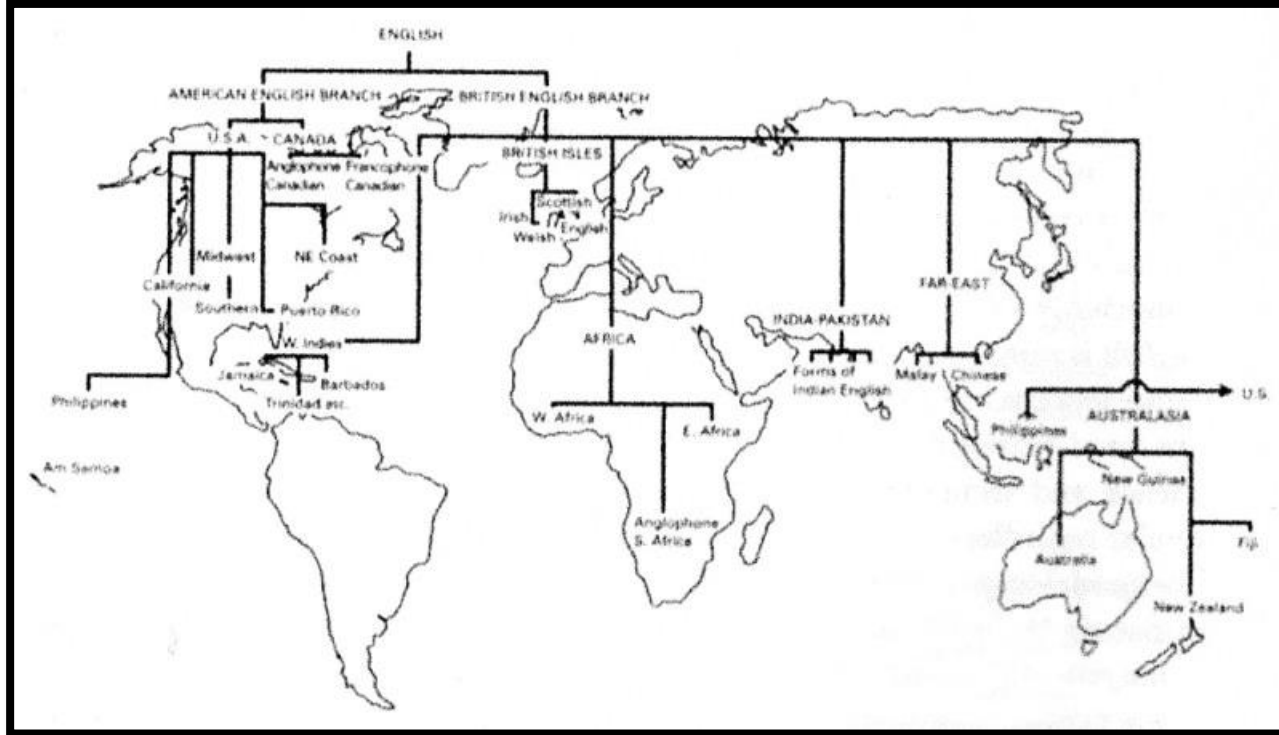
American-centric and historically flawed (e.g. Irish English)

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# Language variation and change

## World Map of English (Strevens, 1980)



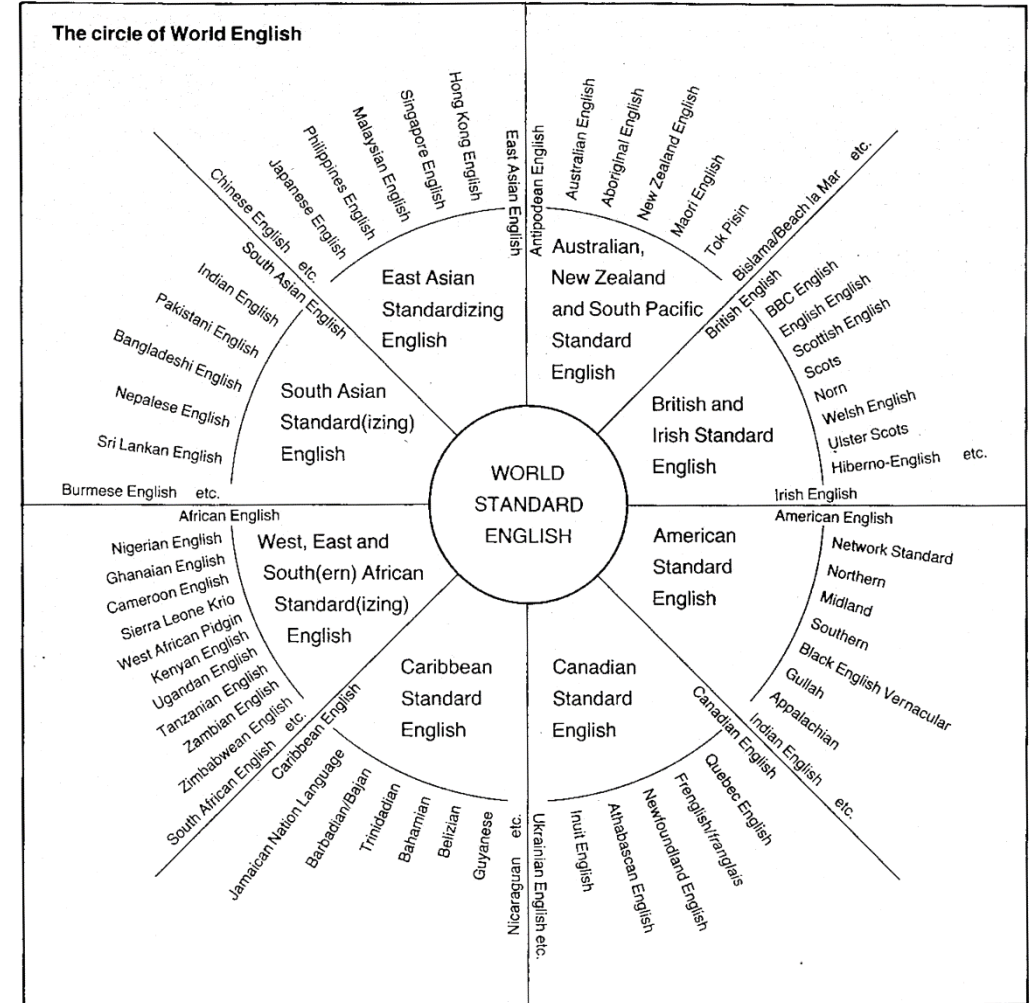
### Stereotype:

American and British Englishes are fundamental and central.

Strevens, P. (1980). Teaching English as an international language: From practice to principle. Oxford: Pergamon [Press.](#) (in the format Use in an e-coursepack via Copyright Clearance Center.)

# Language variation and change

## Circle of World English (McArthur, 1987)





# Language variation and change

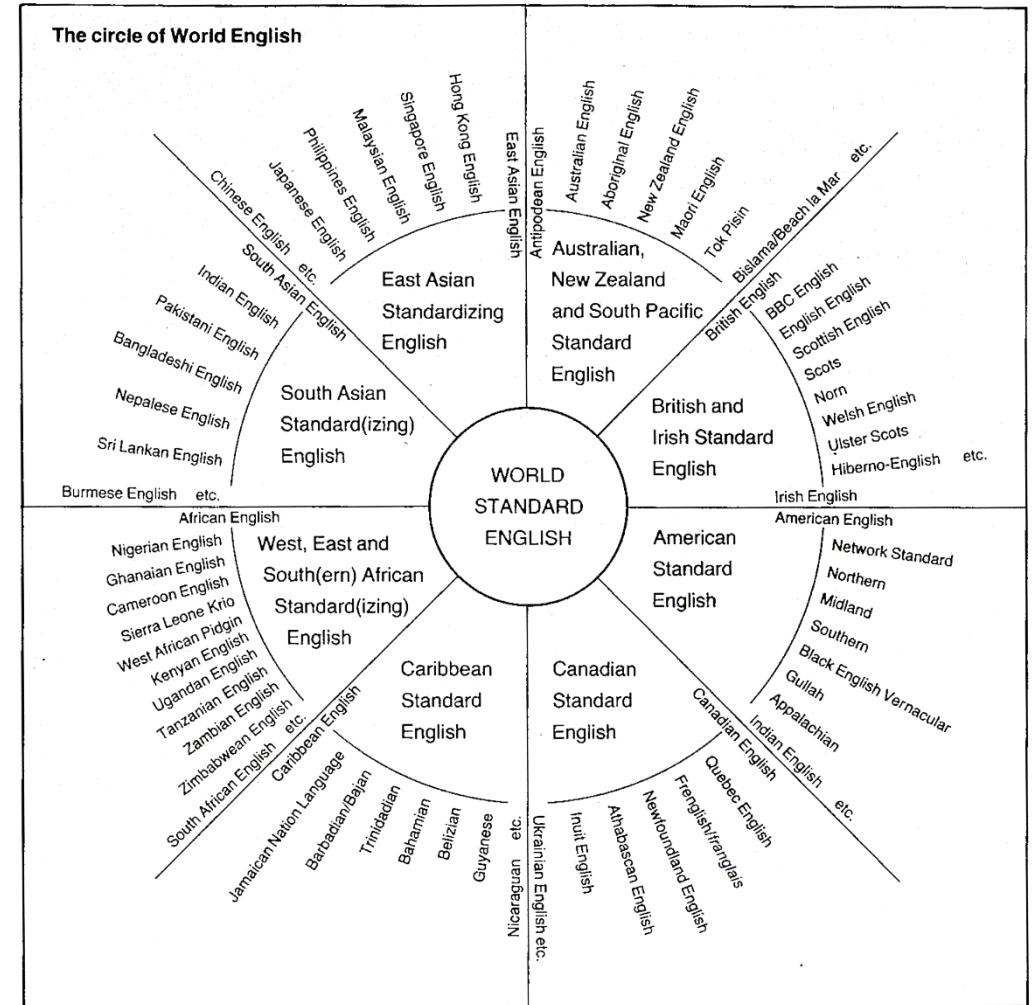
## Circle of World English (McArthur, 1987)

‘Standard’ and other forms

- African English
- American English
- Canadian English
- Irish English

‘Subvarieties’

- Aboriginal English
- Ugandan English
- Singapore English

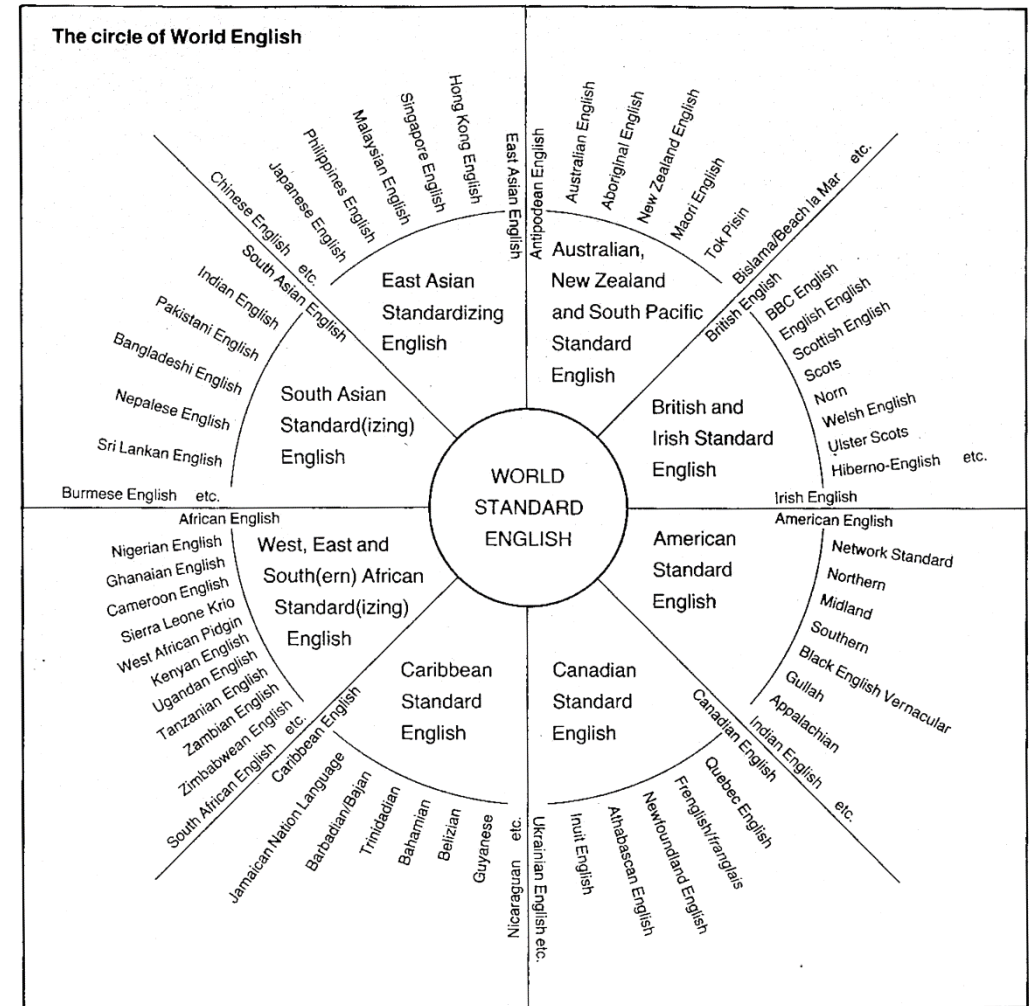


# Language variation and change

## Circle of World English (McArthur, 1987)

**Strength:**  
Tidy depiction of Englishes according to geography

**Weakness:**  
Not indicative of historic, political and linguistic ties between Englishes

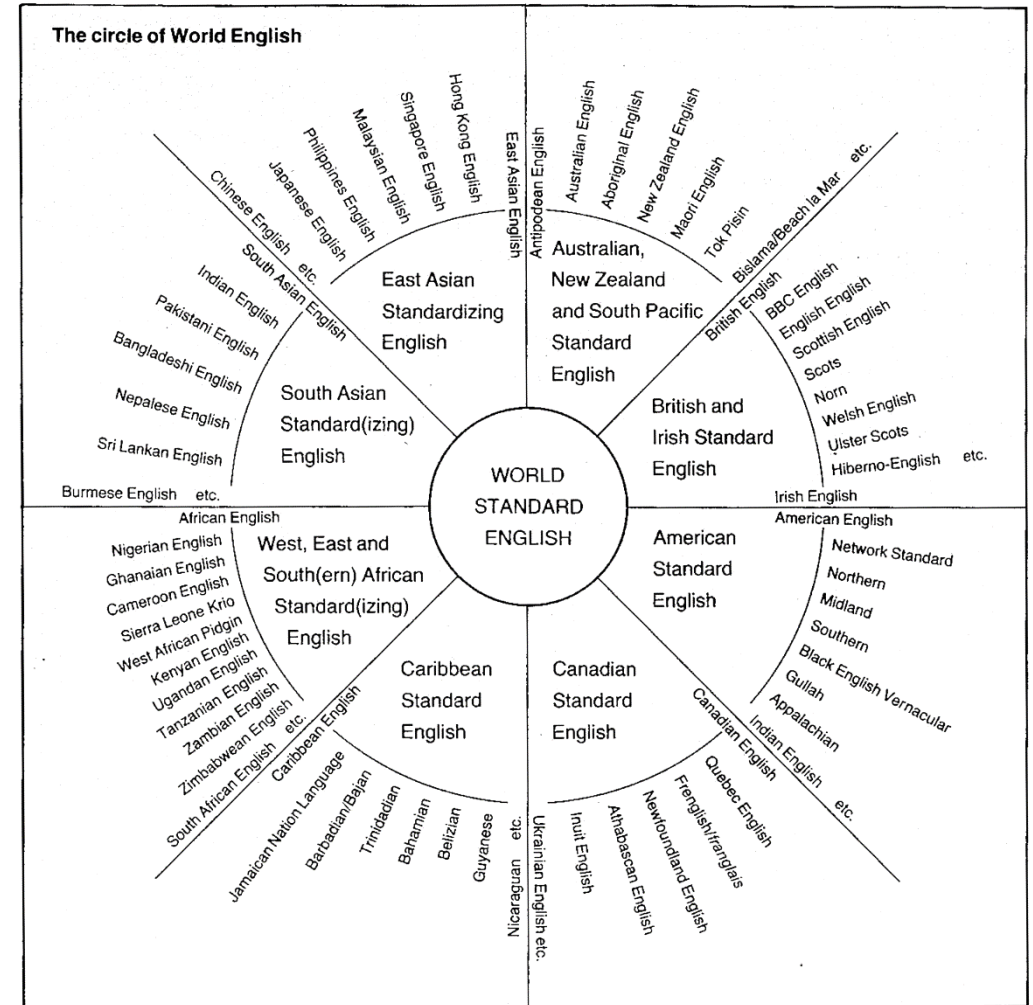


# Language variation and change

## Circle of World English (McArthur, 1987)

### Examples

- Hong Kong English  
British English  
> Japanese English
- Philippines English  
American English  
> Chinese English



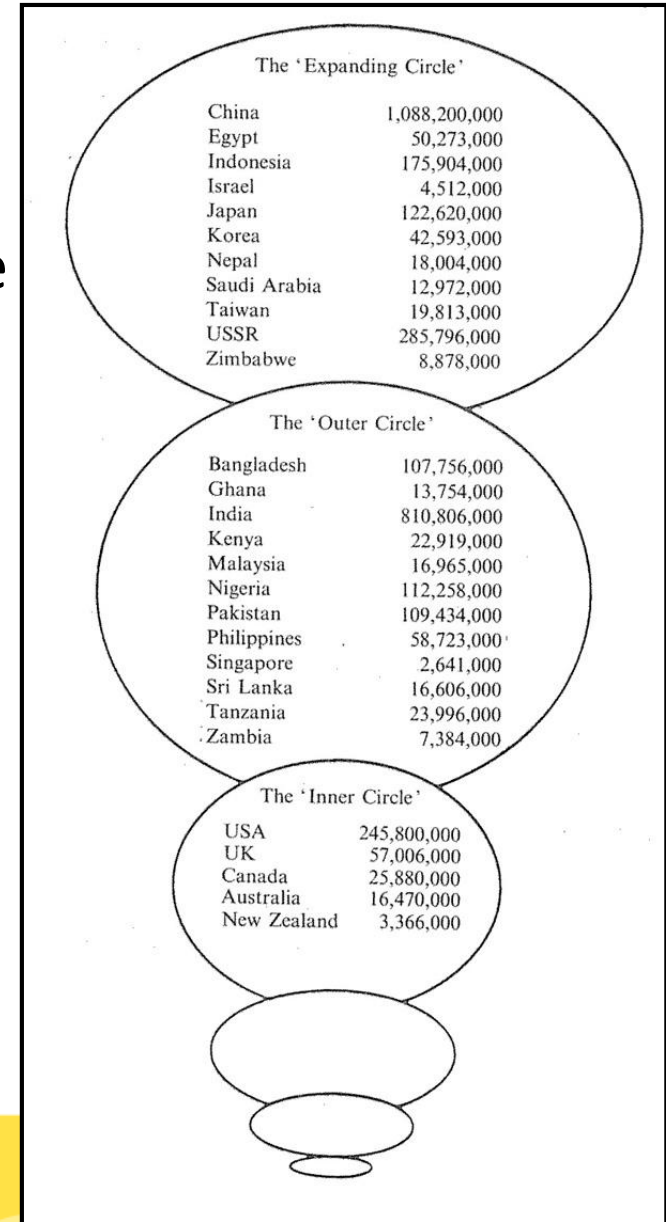
# Language variation and change

## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

The Expanding Circle

The Outer Circle

The Inner Circle



# Language variation and change

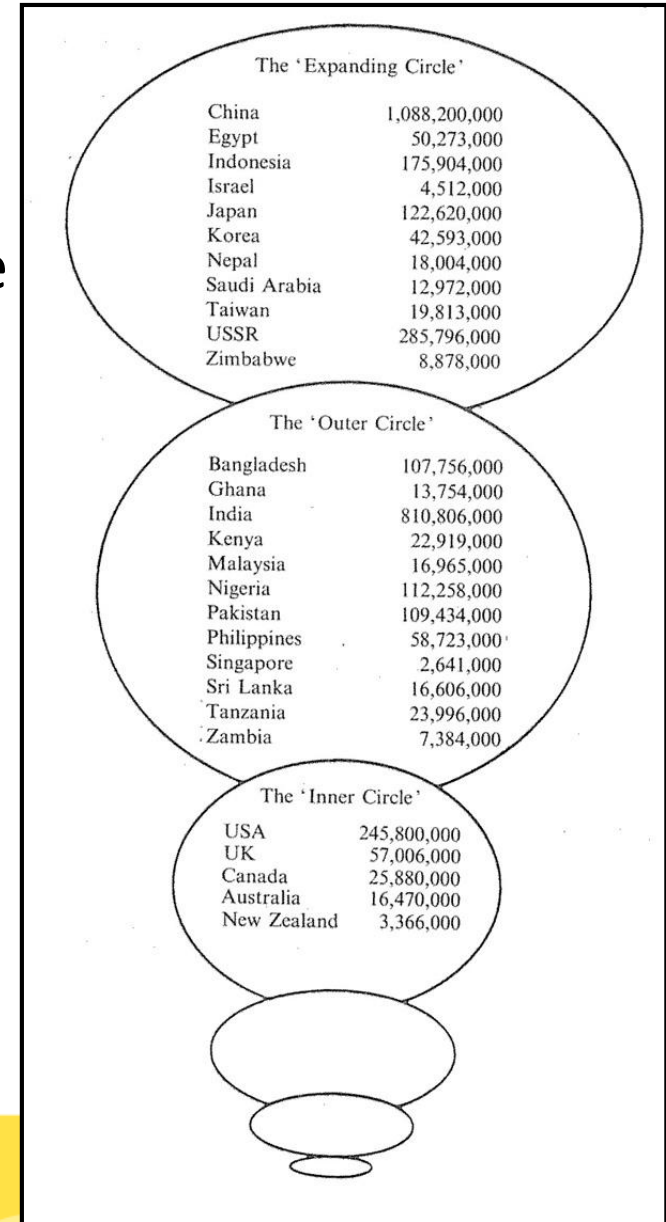
## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

- Influential in raising awareness of World Englishes
- Follows the categorisation of speakers
- Commonly used

The Expanding Circle (EFL)

The Outer Circle (ESL)

The Inner Circle (ENL)

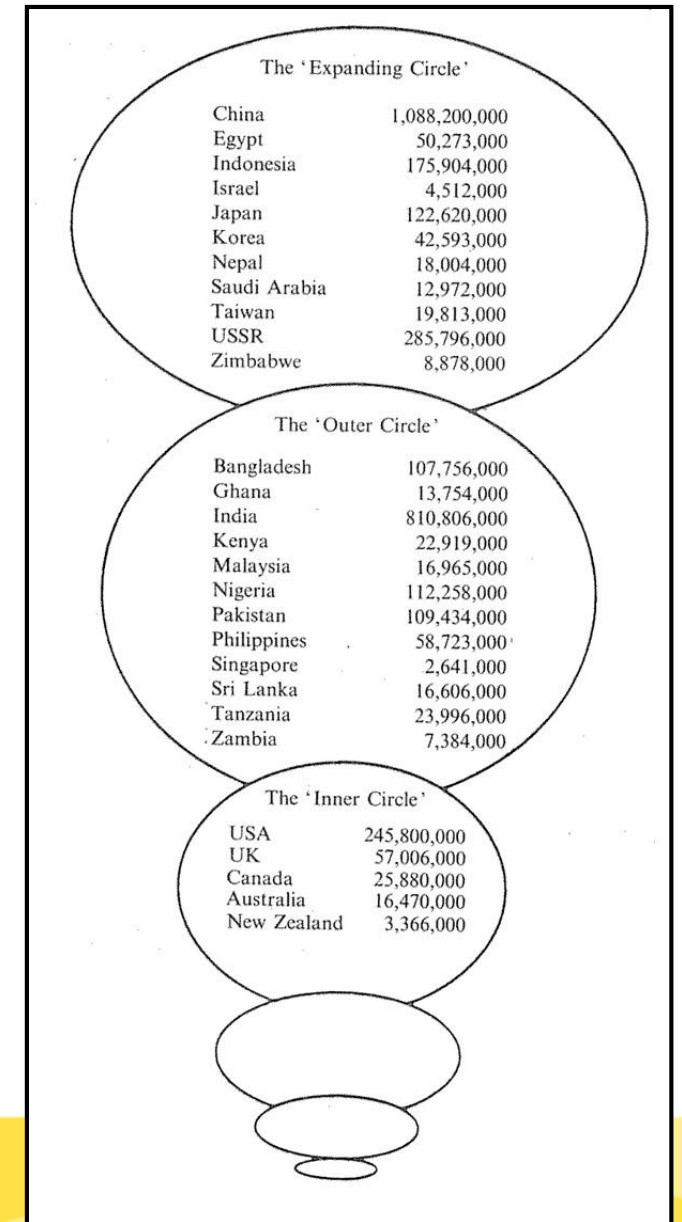


## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

Flaws (Bruthiaux, 2003; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2015)

Examples:

- Failure to account for those ENL speakers who live in ESL and EFL territories
- English speakers are present all over the world.

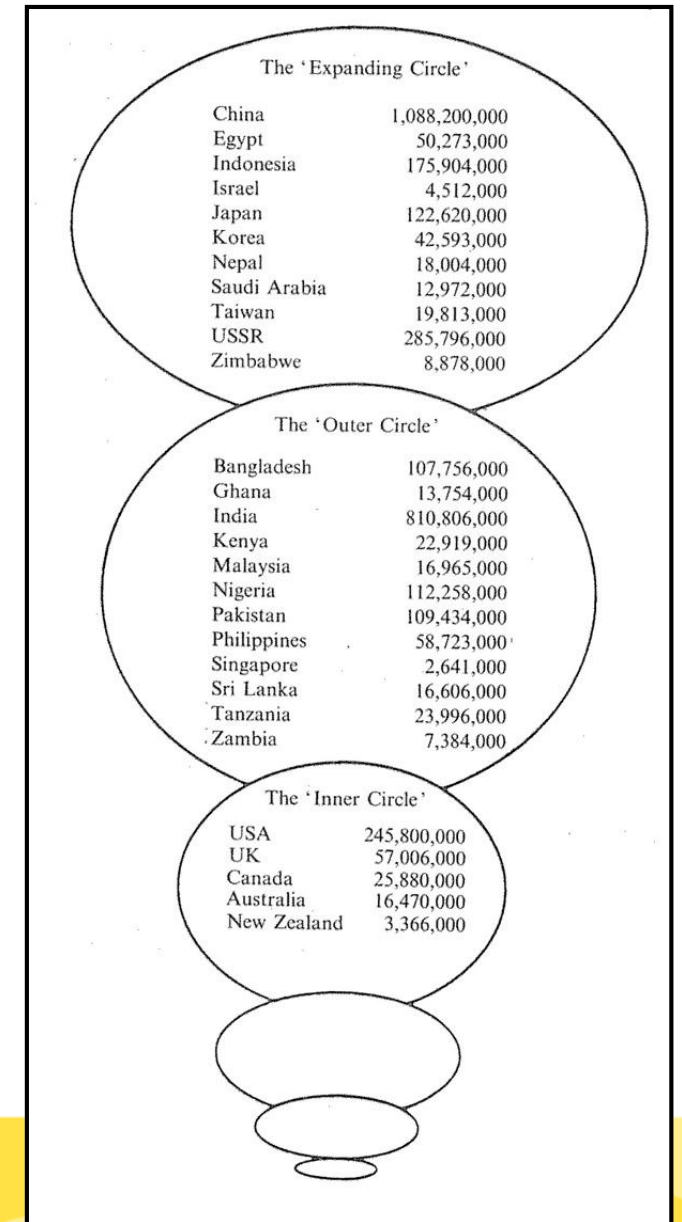


## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

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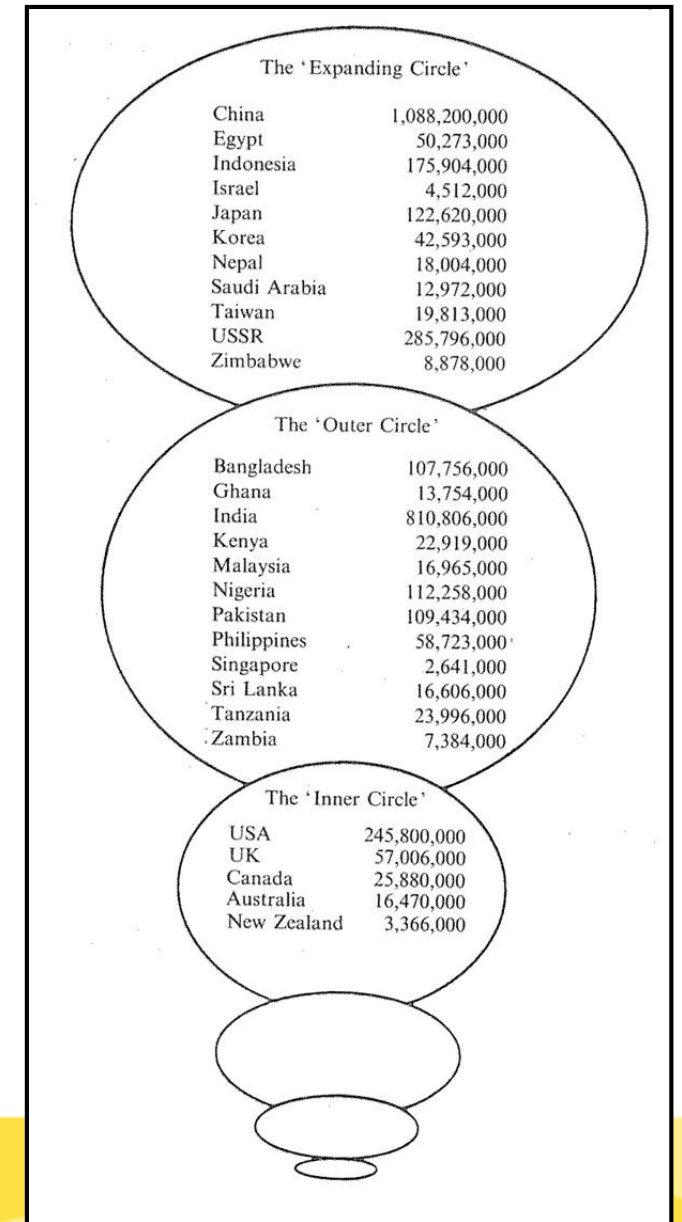
Examples:

- Failure to account for international students in the Inner Circle (native English-speaking countries)



## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

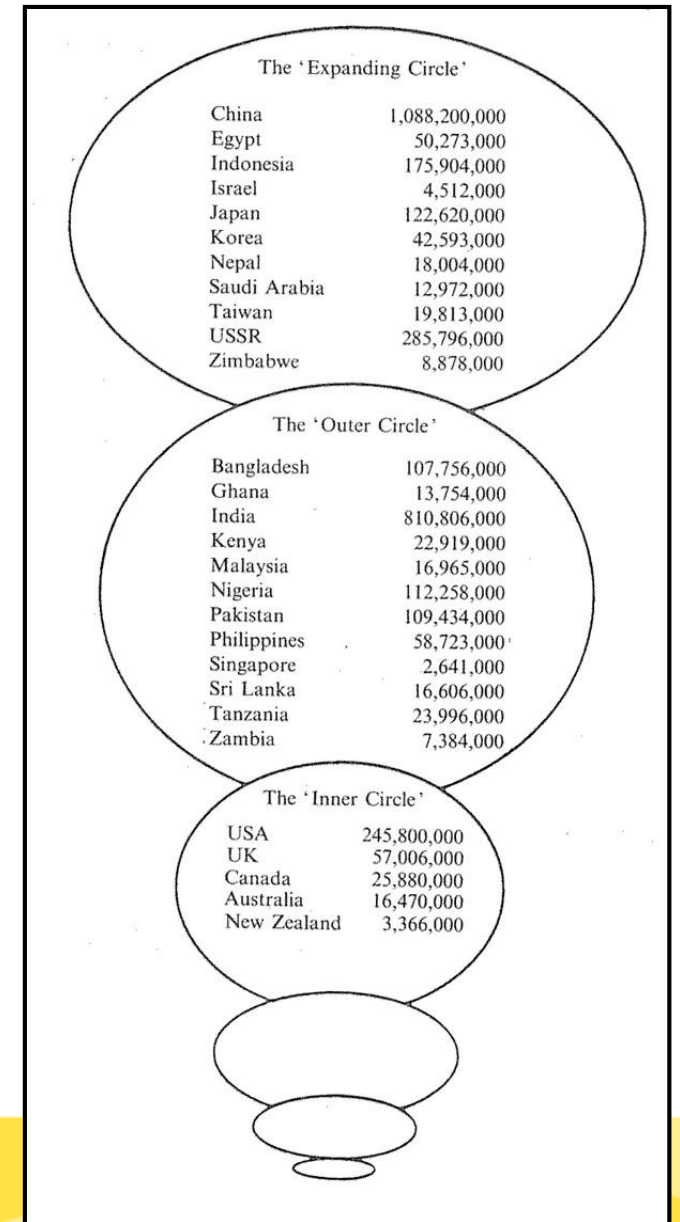
- Focuses on historical events rather than the socio-linguistic uses of English
- Failure to give a realistic picture of how English is being used today





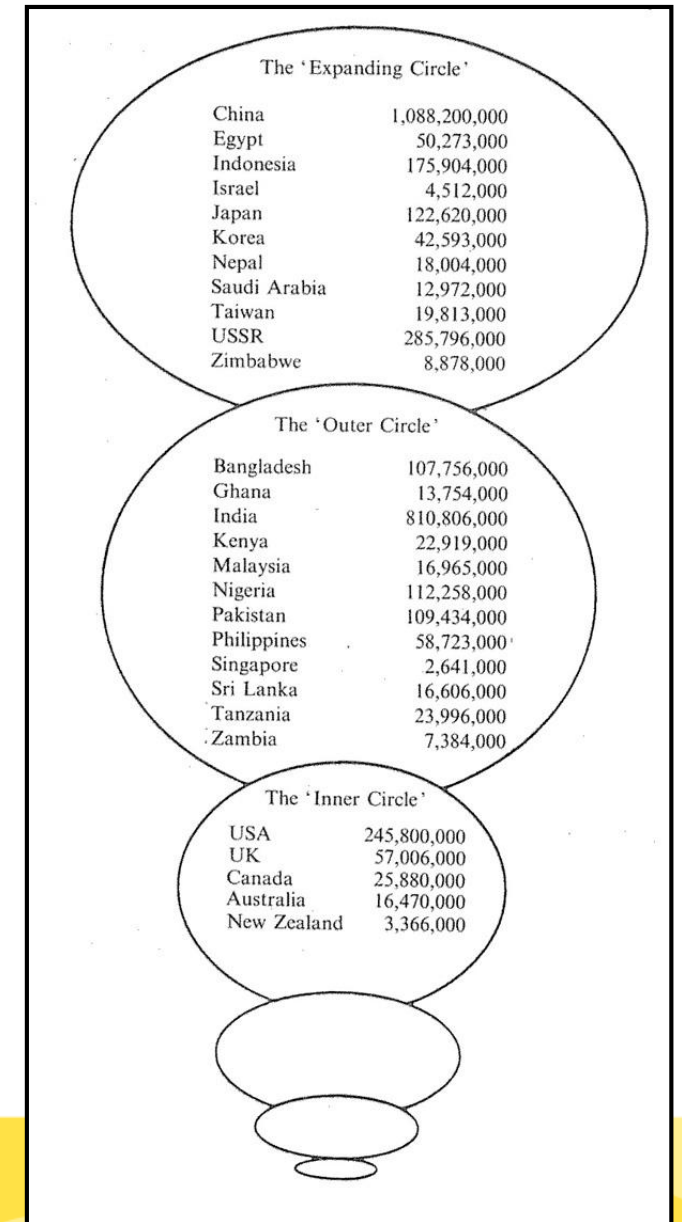
## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

- Also problematic when considering the use of ELF (**E**nglish **a**s a **l**ingua **f**ranca)



## Concentric Circle Model (Kachru, 1992)

- English speakers do not perfectly fit into one of the three circles.
- Globalisation, migration and the prevalence of computer-mediated communication among people all around the globe have changed the nature of English interaction.



# Language variation and change

## English as a lingua franca

*'How do people who speak different varieties of English and people whose level of English may be low communicate with each other using English as a lingua franca?'*

'Notwithstanding the different varieties being used, are there any shared or distinctive linguistic features in the Englishes used by these people?'

(Kirkpatrick, 2008, p. 28)

# Language variation and change

## English as a lingua franca

- Use of English as a contact language
- The ELF research paradigm
  - Allows for more fluid ways of using English as a lingua franca by speakers of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds

# Language variation and change

## English as a lingua franca

- *‘any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option’*

(Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7)

- No focus on ‘fixed’ speech communities, geography or on identifying core features

## Recap

- Language change and the reasons why languages change
- The use of English around the world
- Devised models to categorise the world's English speakers
- How English is being used today as a global lingua franca