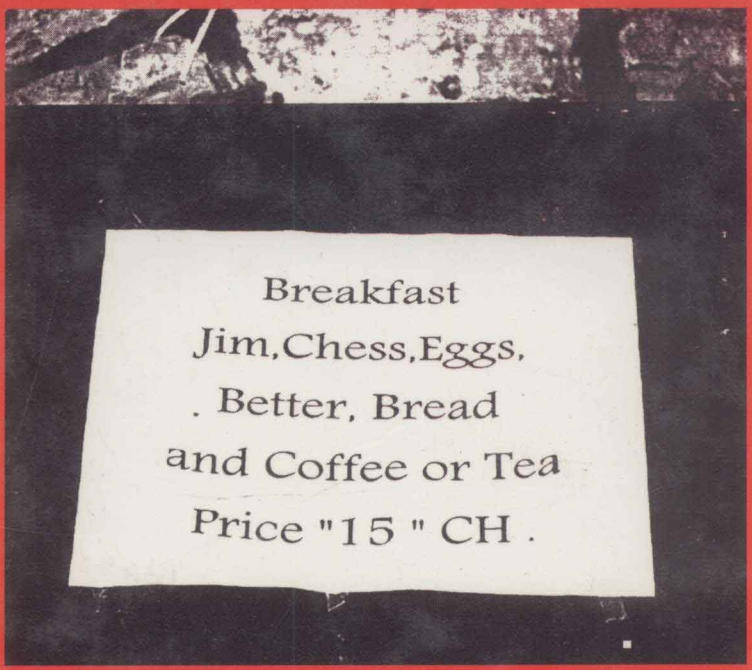
Varieties of English Around the World G28



Still More Englishes

Manfred Görlach

John Benjamins Publishing Company

Still More Englishes

Manfred Görlach
University of Cologne.

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Foreword

"Welcome to the center of the universe." With these words, David Murison (1913-1997) greeted visitors to Fraserburgh, his native place and a seaport in the northeast of Scotland. It was not obvious to an outsider that Fraserburgh was the center, though it is place where rain does not fall but blows horizontally off the North Sea and the aurora fills the sky with ghostly electricity. These distūrbances of the natural order are signs and portents of a center.

David didn't argue his point; he just let it sink in. And he was happy to return to that center after having spent so many years – 1946-1976 – in southerly Scotland making the *Scottish National Dictionary*. He put the language of those southerners in place, though the edge of that linguistic universe stopped at Berwick-on-Tweed. Its center was either in Fraserburgh or not far from it.[i]

When the *Dictionary* was finished, Fraserburgh's poet, George Bruce (b.1909), wrote a haiku:

> Noo a' that words
> are in their tomb
> whan will be
> the resurrectioun? (Bruce 2001:191)

This little poem, with its wonderful Scots rhyme, gets it just right because, in fact, the resurrectioun is at hand.[ii] Give a language a grammar and a dictionary and it is grounded, respectable, enabled. People who speak it can hold up their heads and talk shamelessly.

A quarter century ago, Manfred Görlach appeared in Ann Arbor to question me closely about my work. After a genial lunch, he pulled a tiny notebook from his short pocket and began the interrogation. How astonishing for me to have this unknown visitor who knew so much about what I had been writing and thinking.

Of course I returned the curiosity and enthusiasm, though I had no little notebook to help me ask informed questions. Manfred had been a prisoner of the GDR, and his time in prison for his heroic work in bringing people through the Iron Curtain had prevented him from getting up to scholarly speed with his age-mates.

As everyone knows, he has made up for his lost time with a breath-taking array

---

[i] See David Murison, *The Guid Scots Tongue*, Edinburgh, 1977. In his elegy for David Murison, Bruce defined his friend's scope: "his heid repository/ to territory that raxed fae Picts tae present,/fae John o Groats tae Tweed" (George Bruce, *Today Tomorrow: The Collected Poems of George Bruce, 1933-2000*, Edinburgh: Polygon 2001: 221).

[ii] The poem raises questions of "authenticity" of the sort explored by Görlach in chapter 2 of this volume. Whatever Bruce's pronunciation might be, Murison certainly did not pronounce *resurrectioun* with five syllables as in required here by the spelling and the haiku form.

of publications. He knows everyone in the field; has encouraged people to find their voices; he has discoursed learnedly on the voices of English speakers who had gone unnoticed or, if noticed, scorned.

Before he had departed from Ann Arbor, we had agreed to collaborate on the project that became *English as a World Language*. That collection of essays became the perimeter of a newly configured field of English studies, and Fraserburgh was one of the centers. There were many centers by the time we had finished. KL and PNG took their places beside UK and USA. No longer was there a metropolitan world with remote districts, but a world of striving for egalitarian diversity in English. The colonial cringe gave way to nation language, and in a small way we helped effect that change. As Görlach here concludes, "variation should not only be frankly admitted, but integrated within the curriculum" in language teaching.

Fraserburgh merits mention for another reason, since this volume contains yet another of Görlach's contributions to the study of Scots, and he rightly sees its history as "one of the most exciting areas as far as language is concerned" over the past five hundred years. Here his perspective as a self-described outsider to English is particularly to be valued since he has no personal axe to grind (on behalf of his own dialect) nor any necessary allegiance to the dialects that have declared themselves to be "English" while other kinds of talk are alleged to be "broken."

Above all, Görlach's vast scholarship is grounded in fact. In the papers that are collected here, he dashes the triumphalist claims by some Anglophones that a billion or more people use the language with some degree of competence and mutual intelligibility. In place of those wild-eyed views, he gives the facts.

Görlach's linguistic statements are similarly grounded in textual evidence, whether studying rhyming slang, present-day creative writing in vernaculars, or historical questions of language change. This healthy empiricism has over these years made his scholarship *gründlich* 'thorough, painstaking, careful'.

I am glad to recall the beginning of Görlach's remarkable enterprise in recounting our first steps in this discipline. For those who have arrived more recently to the field, this volume concludes with a carefully selected and annotated list of the work that will lead them, and us, into the future.

Richard W. Bailey
The University of Michigan

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Preface

The present collection of papers devoted to forms and functions of English around the world is an obvious complement to the three earlier volumes published in the VEAW series, *viz. Englishes* (1990), *More Englishes* (1995) and *Even More Englishes* (1998), the titles being devised and arranged with mnemotechnic convenience. I have again combined papers delivered at various conferences; some have been published before, and some have not (see footnotes to the individual chapters). I here concentrate on topics and regions neglected in my earlier collections; in general, there will be a notable shift away from discussions of varieties and towards societal questions of language policies and politics, and legal and educational concerns. Also, problems of EFL communities have now received greater attention than they have done before. At the end of the book, I have summarized part of my experience as a teacher and reviewer, selecting and characterizing in an annotated bibliography what I see as the most relevant books on the discipline: no such guide appears to be available, and I hope this survey will be helpful for colleagues who wish to teach a course on World English.

I am grateful to colleagues who greatly assisted in refining my thoughts and improving the English of the earlier versions (mentioned in the first footnote each) and to Helen Weiss in particular, who read through the entire draft of the book version; I also thank publishers for their permission to reprint my texts. All of these have been updated and linked with the other chapters (with which they now rub shoulders) by excising a few duplications, and by supplying cross-references and a joint bibliography. The editor of the VEAW series, Edgar W. Schneider, kindly agreed to include this fourth and final collection to complement my earlier research, and Richard W. Bailey, the coeditor of the influential collection which can be seen as starting me off on the discipline (Bailey & Görlach 1982), was immediately ready to supply a foreword, thus indicating that my contributions to the field have come full circle.

Cologne, February 2002 Manfred Görlach

List of Abbreviations

AAVE = African American Vernacular English
ABES = Annotated Bibliography of English Studies
AmE = American English
AusE = Australian English
BlE = Black English
BrE = British English
DEA = Dictionary of European Anglicisms
EFL = English as a Foreign Language
ELT = English Language Teaching
EModE = Early Modern English
ENL = English as a Native Language
ESD = English as a Second Dialect
ESL = English as a Second Language
ESP = English for Special Purposes
EWL = English as a World Language
EWW = English World -Wide
IndE = Indian English
IrE = Irish English
ME = Middle English
NZE = New Zealand English
OE = Old English
OED = Oxford English Dictionary
PacL = Pacific Linguistics (Canberra)
PCs = Pidgins and Creoles
VEAW = Varieties of English Around the World
RS = Rhyming Slang
St E = Standard English
SgE = Singapore English

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1 Global English (?)

1.1 *The problem*

The world-wide spread of English, in particular in the course of the past fifty years, is a phenomenon that, while it can certainly not be overlooked, is open to various explanations, evaluations and methods of scholarly description. If we wish to systematize the complex evidence in order to make it susceptible of orderly description, the following approaches concentrating on (groups of) topics are possible, and have all been tried, in particular over the past thirty years:

1) The historical documentation of the spread and its political, economic and cultural causes, breaking up the data according to types of English-using speech communities (ENL, ESL, ESD, EFL) including pidgin/creole societies and the evaluation of these data as being English or not.
2) The classification of regional/national varieties correlated with the emergence of internal linguistic norms; the sociolinguistic analysis of the internal variation, problems of prestige/stigmatization, correctness and educational consequences.
3) The distribution (and possibly dominance) of English in certain registers, the description of English for special purposes and its features in science and technology, the media and literature, aviation, economics etc.; the frequently criticized universal impact of (American) English in international spoken and written communication.
4) The institutional status of English varieties in legislation and language rights; problems of codification in lexicography, grammars and usage guides. Systematic descriptions of 'deviations' and their interpretation correlated with language policies and ideologies.
5) The restricting impact of English on other languages; the role of English as a 'killer' or 'stifler'. Transfers from English to contact languages on all levels (spelling, pronunciation, morphology, syntax, lexis and pragmatics).

All these questions are interrelated and the complex connections present particular problems of description for scholars aiming at empirical adequacy. There is a danger that in a field characterized by emotional judgments and plausible-sounding verdicts and all-to-easy solutions a discipline that urgently needs the utmost objectivity and methodological rigour may slide into narrative exposition by self-appointed experts. The major risks underlying this danger are found in the requirement that combinations of methods should be applied from a great many disciplines including linguistics, colonial history, politics, sociology, education, ethnopsychology, literary analysis and media research. Moreover, until a few decades ago, research tended to be restricted to individual communities and national varieties which made reliable comparisons (and therefore

generalizations) impossible or at least precarious. Even where the data available are sufficient in bulk for comparisons, it is often overlooked that social conditions do not permit us to make straightforward comparisons. Sophisticated methods developed for the description of one speech community may be inapplicable or at least grossly inadequate for the analysis of another – for instance, the application of classic Labovian sociolinguistics to non-native-speaker societies is misleading, and the model needs adaptations even for ENL communities outside the United States (Milroy 1987).

1.2 *English on its way to become a world language*

Global English as the world's lingua franca was seen as a likely development at an early time. Daniels's prediction was of course a little premature when he very boldly stated:

> And who in time knowes wither we may bent
> The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
> This gaine of our best glorie shal be sent,
> T' inrich vnknowing Nations with our stores?
> What worlds in th' yet vnformed Occident
> May come refin'd with th' accents that are ours? (*Musophilus*, 1599)

Around 1800, French was still an option, and for many the preferable choice; Bailey summarizes Rivarol's prize-winning essay on the "universality of the French language", submitted in 1783 to the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin:

> his essay reviewed both the political prospects of competing European languages and the internal merits of them from the point of view of euphony, adequacy, and logic. The aesthetic and conceptual blemishes of German, he declared, descended to its daughter language, English; English faults included an unstable pronunciation, obscure vocabulary, bizarre syntax, and "rules that have fewer applications than they have exceptions". English is full of circumlocutions and obsequious expressions that he found astonishing in the speech of a free people [...] Though English literature had some evident merits, Rivarol found it generally lacking in good taste, charm, and scope in presenting the full range of human experience. Most important, French reflected a "natural" logic superior to all other languages.
>
> (Bailey 1991:100-1)

Bailey has collected a great number of 19th-century statements illustrating the increasing self-confidence of speakers of English, in a way correlated with the colonial expansion of the Empire – while America at that time still played a very moderate role. Support for world English from the 1860s onwards also came from the Continent. Jacob Grimm saw linguistic advantages that predestined English for its new functions in 1864:

> Of all modern languages, not one has acquired such great strength and vigour as the English. It has accomplished this by simply freeing itself from the ancient phonetic laws, and casting

off almost all inflections; whilst, from its abundance of intermediate sounds, tones not even to be taught, but only to be learned, it has derived a characteristic power of expression such as perhaps was never yet the property of any other human tongue. Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development, have proceeded from a surprisingly intimate alliance of the two oldest languages of modern Europe – the Germanic and Romanesque. It is well known in what relation these stand to one another in the English language. The former supplies the material groundwork, the latter the higher mental conceptions. Indeed, the English language, which has not in vain produced and supported the greatest, the most prominent of all modern poets (I allude, of course, to Shakespeare), in contradistinction to the ancient classical poetry, may be called justly a LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD: and seems, like the English nation, to be destined to reign in future with still more extensive sway over all parts of the globe. For none of all the living languages can be compared with it as to richness, rationality, and close construction, not even the German – which has many discrepancies like our nation, and from which it would be first obliged to free itself, before it could boldly enter the lists with the English. (translation quoted from Bailey 1991:109-10)

In 1868 W. Brackebusch published his Göttingen Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Is English Destined to Become the Universal Language of the World?" – and his answer was a clear YES. Jacob Burckhardt took up the claim in 1874 when he stated that "To save books written in German they must be translated into English" (Hochhuth 2002). Even at the heyday of German imperialism Otto Will in his Berlin dissertation of 1905 was ready to admit the better position of English to serve as a world language.

1.3 *The increase in numbers of speakers*

The historical evidence relating to native speakers of major European languages up to the 1920s is documented in Jespersen's educated guesses; it can be represented as follows:

	English	French	German	Spanish	Italian	Russian
1500	5	11	10	9	10	3
1600	6	14	10	9	10	3
1700	9	20	10	9	11	87
1800	30	28	32	26	15	28
1900	120	48	78	50	45	80
1936	191	65	85	100	50	80
1985	330	85	110	210	55	145
1999	370	85	110	250	55	150
ratio 1900:1999	3.08	1.77	1.41	2.5	1.22	1.88

Fig. 1: Numbers in millions of native speakers of major European languages (based on Jespersen 1928/ [9]1956:234 and Fischer, *Weltalmanach 2002*

What these data, for all their imprecision, clearly indicate is that the rise of English to the status of one (not yet *the*) world language has a historical basis in its spread throughout the British Isles, and later through colonization, to North America, Australia/New Zealand and, in much more diluted form (since not based on pre-1850 settlements), to other parts of the world. We can simplify the data before the 1920s as follows (cf. 6.1 below):

ENL	settlement up to 1850	colonial levelling national norms	killer language
ESL	colonial administration, esp. 1880-	external norms register restrictions	stifler language
ESD	often plantation societies with pidgin/ creole, 1830-	diglossia > dialectalization of low language	
EFL	utilitarian; mostly taught in schools	strictly external norms; often predominantly of written use	possibly slowing down modernization

Fig. 2: Types of English-using communities correlated with the spread of English

However, the later history of the expansion 1920-2000 is no longer mainly characterized by the acquisition of native speakers. The more recent spread can be described in general terms, but not properly quantified due to the scarcity of empirically sound evidence:

1) The number of native speakers has stagnated in Europe for some years now; increases were notable in North America and (with less dramatic numbers) in Australia and New Zealand. Only small proportions of speakers in ESL societies have adopted English as their home language and made it (near-) native for their children (e.g. in Singapore), but the numbers of such families are increasing in partly ENL countries such as South Africa – and of course among immigrants. World-wide, the proportion of ENL speakers is steadily declining (Graddol 2001:48).
2) ESL societies, which make use of English for internal purposes (e.g. for administration, law, parliament, parts of the media and literature, education often from primary school), consist largely of former colonial societies (Nigeria, India etc.) or quasi-colonies of the United States (Liberia, the Philippines, Samoa). Increases in numbers of speakers have been dramatic as a consequence of the particularly rapid growth of the population and a growing proportion of English learners (of various degrees of competence) in these societies owing to the high prestige of English and its usefulness for the upwardly

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