**1.2 THE FIELD OF ‘WORLD ENGLISHES’**

The terms most often used to describe the varieties we are interested in are ‘New Englishes’ or ‘World Englishes’. It has become customary to use the plural form ‘Englishes’ to stress the diversity to be found in the language today, and to stress that English no longer has one single base of authority, prestige and normativity. There are at least four books bearing the main title New Englishes: Pride (1982); Platt, Weber and Ho (1984); Foley (1988) on Singaporean English and Bamgbose, Banjo and Thomas (1997) on West African English. The pluricentrism is also captured in the eye-catching book title The English Languages (MacArthur 1998). Yet, as we shall see, neither ‘New Englishes’ nor ‘World Englishes’ is an entirely satisfactory term. Kachru (1983a) pointed out that the ‘New English’ of India was actually older than English in Australia, which is not generally considered ‘New’-- since it is to a large extent a continuation of the norms of nineteenth-century ﬁrst-language (henceforth L1) working-class British English. The second term ‘World English’ runs the risk of being over-general, since British English is not generally studied within this paradigm. Yet one might quibble that it is a ‘World English’ too (from a commonsense notion of the word ‘world’, anyway). The term is often cited as parallel to the term ‘World Music’, which covers ‘non-Western’ musical forms. In all of these terms there is a problem of perspective that is difﬁcult to overcome. It is therefore necessary to ﬁnd a cover term for all varieties of English: the one we will settle for is **‘English Language Complex’** (henceforth ELC), suggested by McArthur (2003a:56). The ELC may be said to comprise all subtypes distinguishable according to some combination of their history, status, form and functions. The following list of subtypes, which takes a largely historical point of departure, will be ﬂeshed out in the rest of this chapter:

**(a) Metropolitan standards:** The term metropolitan (literally ‘mother city/city-state’) is an old one, going back to ancient Greece, denoting the relation between a state and its colonies. For the ELC the term would have once been applicable only to Standard English of England. However, it is uncontroversial today, long after US independence and its subsequent espousal of distinctly American English norms, to acknowledge the existence of at least two metropolitan standard varieties, whose formal models are those provided by the radio and television networks based largely in London and US cities like Washington, Los Angeles and (for CNN) Atlanta.

**(b) Colonial standards:** The colonial history of English has made it an important language in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe). A fairly large number of English speakers formed an inﬂuential group of speakers in the early history of these ‘Dominion’ territories. The varieties spoken there are referred to in historical dialectology as **‘extraterritorial’** Englishes. It is possible to speak of ‘colonial standards’ since informal and (to a lesser extent) formal varieties have arisen in these territories that may be considered ‘standard’. These standards were, until recently, not fully accepted within the territories, since the metropolitan standards exerted a counter-inﬂuence. Today the colonial standards are much more prominent as British inﬂuence recedes.

**(c) Regional dialects:** These are the varieties that may be distinguished on the basis of regional variation within metropolis and colony. A rule of thumb is that the older the settlement of English speakers, the ﬁrmer the regional differentiation within the language. Thus English dialects of the UK and USA are clearly deﬁnable in regional terms; this is less true of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

**(d) Social dialects:** Identiﬁable varieties within a region along the lines of class and ethnicity may occur. In London there is the difference between Cockney of the working classes, Received pronunciation (RP) of the upper-middle class and the intermediate ‘Estuary English’ (Rosewarne 1994). In Australia linguists identify Broad, General and Cultivated varieties (Mitchell and Delbridge 1965); the ﬁrst is the most localized, while showing numerous traces of its origins in British working-class dialects; the third is historically oriented towards RP, while the second mediates between these two poles. Amongst ethnolects (or ethnic dialects) Black English (also known as African American English) is identiﬁable as a distinct linguistic variety in the USA (though it has some regional variation too).

Groups (a) to (d) are frequently labelled off as a special group, ‘mother tongue’ or L1 English or English as a Native Language (ENL), or in B. B. Kachru’s (1988) terminology, which we discuss later on, Inner Circle varieties. Of equal interest in modern sociolinguistics are the other members of the ELC outlined below:

**(e) Pidgin Englishes:** Pidgins are deﬁned prototypically as rudimentary languages that have no native speakers, though they may subsequently gain in complexity. They arise from trade and other -- largely colonial -- forms of contact. English-based pidgins like West African pidgin English may be considered to belong to the English family, since they are **‘lexiﬁed’** by English -- i.e. English is the source of much of their vocabulary.

**(f) Creole Englishes:** Creoles are fully developed speech forms, which show so much restructuring as to bear little resemblance grammatically to their lexiﬁers. These languages are ‘mixed’ in the sense that typically their grammars and lexicons come from different sources -- see Singler and Kouwenberg (in press) for recent debates over terminology in this ﬁeld. Although a variety like Jamaican Creole is structurally an independent language, it has overlapping membership with the ELC in terms of its vocabulary and the possibilities of being inﬂuenced by English, which is the ‘authorised’ language of the education system.

**(g) English as a Second Language (ESL):** Typically these are varieties that arose in countries where English was introduced in the colonial era in either face-to-face communication or (more usually) via the education system of a country in which there is, or had once been, a sizeable number of speakers of English. In ESL countries like Kenya, Sri Lanka and Nigeria, English plays a key role in education, government and education.

**(h) English as a Foreign Language (EFL):** This category typically refers to the English used in countries in which its inﬂuence has been external, rather than via a body of ‘settlers’. For EFL speakers English plays a role for mainly inter-national rather than intranational purposes. Whereas ESL countries produce literature in English (and other languages), EFL countries typically do not use English in creative writing. The trend towards globalisation in economics, communication and culture has made EFL prominent in places like China, Europe, Brazil, etc.

**(i) Immigrant Englishes:** In the context of migration to an English dominant country, varieties of English which originate as EFLs may retain some distinctiveness or may merge with the regional English of their territory, depending on a host of social and economic factors. Thus whilst English in Mexico is of the EFL variety, **Chicano English** of the USA shows greater afﬁnity with general US English. However, Chicano English is still a distinct variety amongst many speakers which we classify as an ‘immigrant English’. Our main reason for differentiating ‘immigrant English’ from ESL is in the degree of inﬂuence of metropolitan English over the former, since it is readily available in the local environment (we discuss this issue further below).

**(j) Language-shift Englishes:** These are varieties that develop when English replaces the erstwhile primary language(s) of a community. There is, nevertheless, frequently a sense of continuity with the ancestral language(s) and culture(s) in the shifting community. The difference between ‘language-shift English’ and ‘social dialect’ is one of degree; the former can, in time, shade into a social dialect. Essentially, a language-shift English has at some crucial stage of its development involved adult and child L1 and second-language (L2) speakers who formed one speech community. A social dialect in contrast is typically conceived of as having only L1 speakers. Thus **Hiberno English** is probably best classiﬁed as a social dialect in most areas of Ireland today; not so long ago it would have counted as a language-shift variety, with L1 and L2 speakers of the dialect closely interacting with each other.

**(k) Jargon Englishes:** Whereas a pidgin is a well-deﬁned (if rudimentary) variety, with norms that are tacitly agreed upon by its speakers, a jargon is characterised by great individual variation and instability (hence also described as a pre-pidgin).1 E.g. contact between South Sea Islanders and Europeans in the nineteenth century led to the formation of unstable jargons in many parts of the Paciﬁc. One of these developed into a stable, expanded pidgin, Tok Pisin, which is now one of the ofﬁcial languages of Papua New Guinea.

**(l) Hybrid Englishes:** Also called ‘bilingual mixed languages’, these are versions of English which occur in code-mixing in many urban centres where a local language comes into contact with English. Although sometimes given derogatory names, like Hinglish for the hybrid Hindi-English of north Indian cities, these hybrids may have prestige amongst urban youth and the young at heart in informal styles.