these diverse domains. English found itself in the midst of all of the changes and soon became the leading language. Therefore, it was simply a matter of the English language being 'in the right place at the right time' (Crystal, 2003, p. 78).

English speakers around the world

English speakers are commonly divided into three categories: **English as a native language (ENL)**, **English as a second language (ESL)** and **English as a foreign language (EFL)**. Speakers of ENL, also often called native English speakers (a concept problematized in Chapter 9) mainly include the populations of the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, which have been referred to as 'the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English' (Kachru, 1992a, p. 356). ESL speakers come from former British colonies, such as India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Singapore. EFL speakers, who are on the rise, come from countries such as China and Japan, where traditionally English has no internal purposes and they historically learned English to use with native English speakers. This division is commonly used to refer to the worldwide distribution of English speakers, even though categorizing speakers is problematic (fully discussed in Section 1d). For example, many people defined as ESL speakers in fact speak English as a native language. Moreover, in EFL settings, as Chapter 6 will show, the English language has clearly become more than a mere 'foreign' language. Many people may not actively travel to a 'traditional' English-speaking country, but it is increasingly likely that they will need to write and carry out negotiations in English, particularly if they are working in the globalized business arena. Today, English is used to communicate with other **non-native English speakers** more than with native English speakers. Therefore, the term 'EFL' has become a bit of a misnomer, and these speakers would now be better described as 'speakers of ELF'.

Despite the problems with grouping speakers into overly simplistic categories such as this, and problems in finding reliable estimates of English speakers who fit within these categories, it is estimated that today:

- there are between 320–380 million people who speak English as a first language;
- there are between 300–500 million people who speak English as a second language;
- there are nearly one billion people who speak English as a foreign language, or as a lingua franca.

(Crystal, 2003, p. 61)

Because there is no single source of statistical information on language totals, Crystal used the UNESCO statistical yearbook, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Yearbook*, Ethnologue: Languages of the World, and census data to calculate the above estimates. These figures are not uncontroversial and EFL estimates are particularly difficult to assess due to problems in identifying how to determine proficiency. For example, functional proficiency in English is low in populous Asian nations, such as China, Japan, Indonesia, and Vietnam, and therefore may give a false impression of actual English use in these regions (Gil, 2010). Today, more people are adding English to their linguistic repertoire and using English alongside one (or two, or more) other languages. The British Council has recently estimated that over 1 billion people are learning English worldwide, 750 million

of whom are learners who are traditionally defined as EFL speakers (British Council, 2014). If this is the case, there are now more non-native English speakers than there are native English speakers – a gap that will increase as English continues to grow as a global lingua franca.

1d Representing English speakers

It is clear from the previous section that what makes English different from other lingua francas of the past is the sheer diversity of people using the language. As a result of such diversity, a number of attempts have been made to 'capture' and categorize English speakers through various models. These are, mostly, pluralist constructs that seek to capture the diversity in the English-speaking population. Several of these models are discussed in this section.

Strevens' World Map of English

One of the first attempts to categorize the world's English speakers was Strevens' World Map of English (Strevens, 1980 – see Figure 1.3). The aim of the upside-down tree diagram superimposed onto a world map is to highlight that the form of English by a certain group does not exist in a vacuum, but exhibits similarities with other varieties of English. It shows, for example, that West African English is more similar to the English spoken in East Africa than in Australia. It also aims to show that every variety of English is aligned with one of the two main branches of English (British or American), and to illustrate the historical and geographical relationships between them and their various 'children' in different parts of the world. The model, however, is quite America-centric in that it positions American English *with* British English, and does not represent the origins of American English *in* British English. Other Englishes, such as Irish English (which is much older than American English), are relegated to smaller branches, so historical representation is also somewhat confused. This model promotes a stereotype that American English and British English are somehow the fundamental central Englishes of the world (a notion that will be revisited in Section 2d on standard language ideology).

McArthur's Circle of World English

McArthur's Circle of World English (McArthur, 1987 – see Figure 1.4) places **World Standard English** at the centre, or 'hub', of the wheel. (Debate about the existence of a World Standard English will be discussed in subsequent chapters and returned to in the final chapter of this book.) In this model, the existence of regional varieties is highlighted, including both 'standard' and other forms, and then eight regions are represented by various spokes that encircle the hub. These include the standard and other forms of African English, American English, Canadian English, and Irish English. Beyond these, but linked to them by spokes marking off eight regions of the world, are the 'subvarieties', such as Aboriginal English, Inuit English, Ugandan English, and Singapore English.

While this is a tidy attempt at illustrating the world's Englishes based on geographic location, it is not indicative of the true historic, political, and linguistic ties that exist in

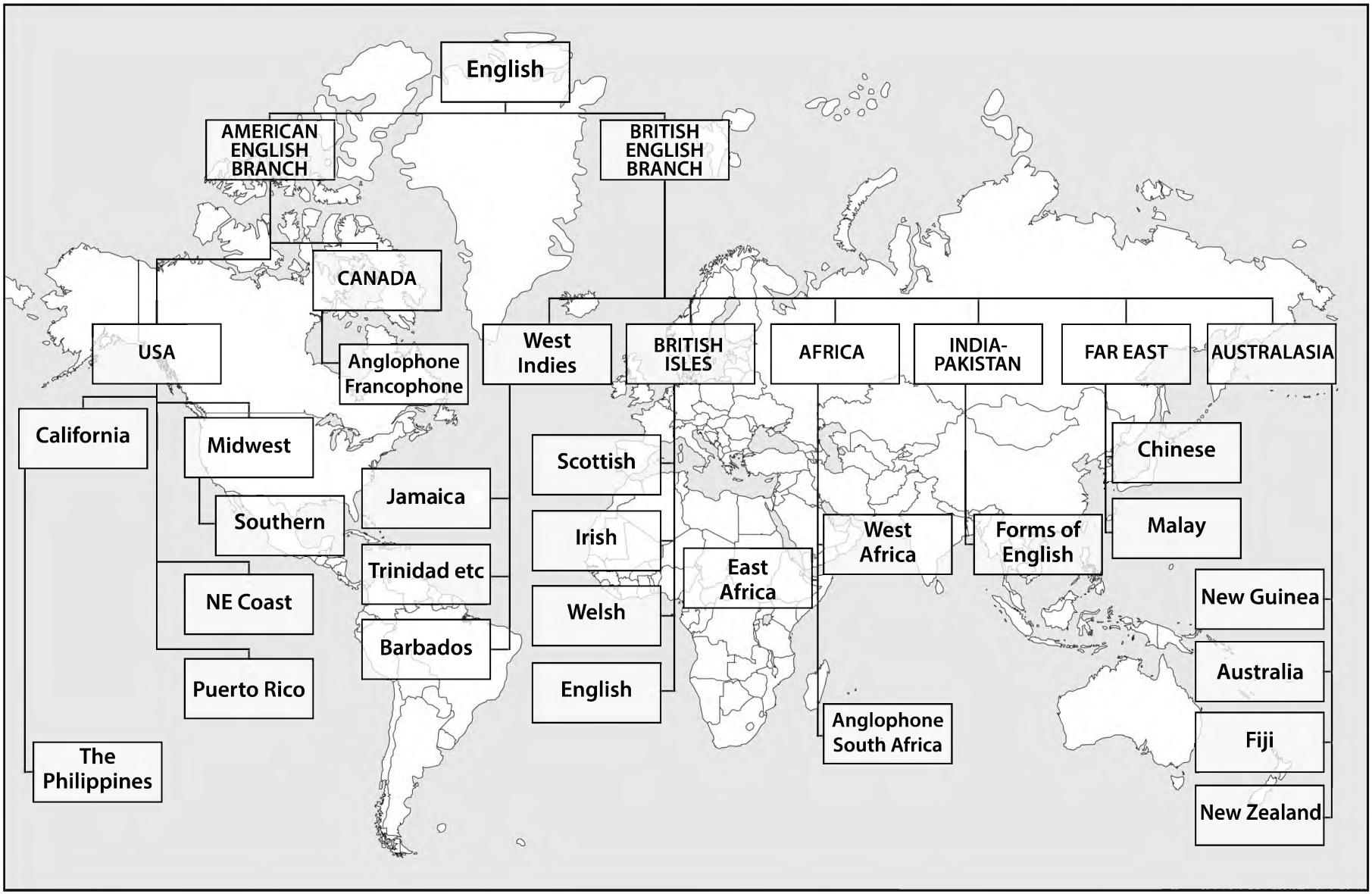

Figure 1.3 Strevens' World Map of English, which has been reproduced here in a slightly altered form, although all text and capitalizations have been retained. (For the original see Strevens, 1980, p. 86)

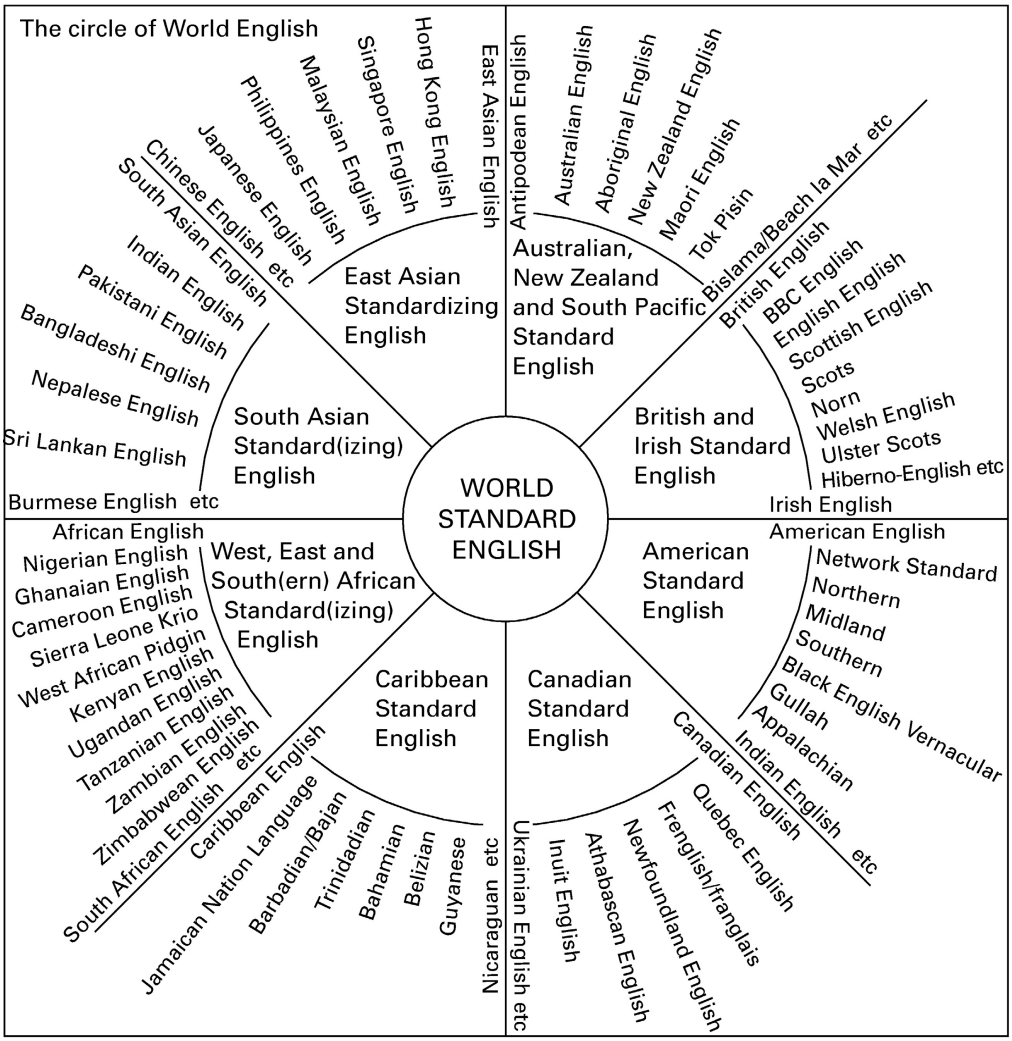

Figure 1.4 McArthur's Circle of World English (© Cambridge University Press, reproduced with permission)

the varieties of English represented. For example, Hong Kong English has much more in common historically, politically, and linguistically with British English than Japanese English, which is included in the same category. The same could be said for the Philippines, which is much closer to American English, due to its historical development, than to Chinese English.

Kachru's Three Circle Model

In Kachru's Three Circle Model (Kachru, 1992a – see Figure 1.5), varieties of English (or countries in which it is used) are presented as three overlapping circles (which were concentric circles in earlier diagrams) that are labelled 'Inner Circle', 'Outer Circle', and 'Expanding Circle'. This classification largely follows the categorisation of ENL, ESL, and EFL speakers respectively, as discussed in Section 1c. This classification dates back to a proposal by Barbara Strang in 1970, who labelled them as 'a', 'b', and 'c' speakers. This tripartite model was adopted and then developed further two years later by Randolph Quirk and his co-authors of the reference grammar of English book, *A Grammar of Contemporary English*, and by Manfred Görlach in several books in the 1990s. However,

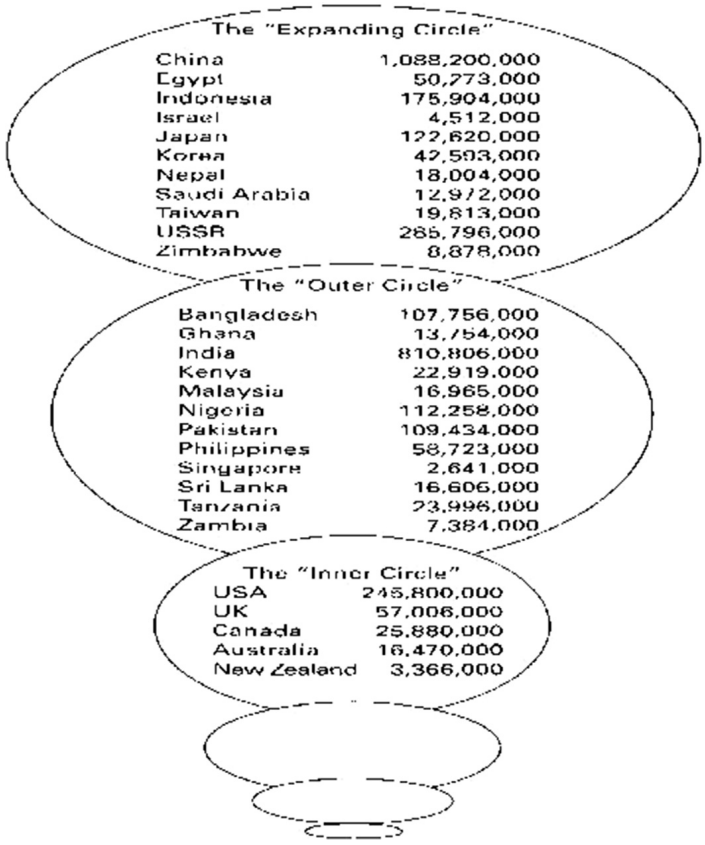

Figure 1.5 Kachru's Three Circle Model, reproduced with permission

instead of using Strang's letter categories, speakers were labelled as 'ENL', 'ESL', and 'EFL' speakers. Kachru (1985, p. 2) explains in an earlier publication that the Inner Circle is often viewed as 'norm-providing' in its projection of perceived norms of language use; the Outer Circle is 'norm-developing' in that **'New' Englishes** are developing their own norms independently from the Inner Circle; and the Expanding Circle is 'norm-dependent' in that it looks to the Inner Circle to provide such norms.

This model has been very influential in raising awareness of the existence of different Englishes, and the terms are commonly used. Yano (2001, p. 121) refers to it as the 'standard framework of World Englishes studies' and, in all current discussions around Global Englishes, this is probably the model that is most widely referred to. Thus in this book the terms 'Inner Circle', 'Outer Circle', and 'Expanding Circle' are also used. An updated version of this model is depicted (see Figure 1.6) with population data as of 2014. As with the original model, total national populations are shown as opposed to estimated numbers of English speakers.

Criticism of Kachru's model

Despite its usefulness and this book's conformity to Kachru's terminology, it is important to note that the model is severely flawed in a number of aspects. (For an overview of the criticism of the tripartite model see McArthur, 1998, pp. 43–46, and for an overview of criticisms of Kachru's model separately see Bruthiaux, 2003 and Jenkins, 2009.) The most prominent criticisms will each be discussed in turn.

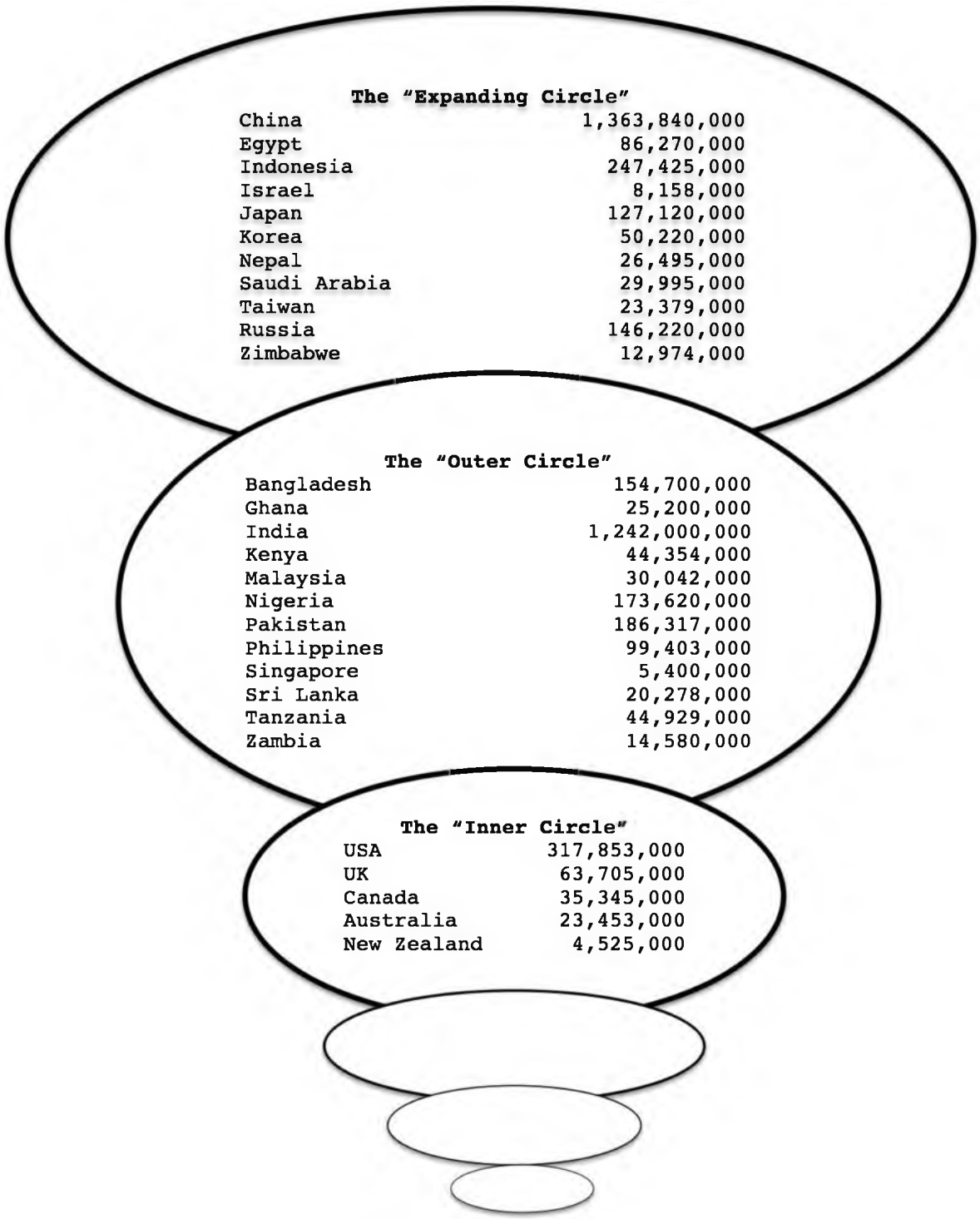

Figure 1.6 An updated version of Kachru's Three Circle Model of World Englishes using data reflecting estimated national population figures in 2014

THE MODEL OVERLY EMPHASIZES GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORIC FACTORS

First, the tripartite model fails to account for those ENL speakers who live in ESL and EFL territories. For example:

- Large numbers of Anglo-Indians live in India and large numbers of British expatriates live in Hong Kong. Furthermore, there are also several ENL communities in EFL

territories, such as the Anglo-Argentine community in South America and the large number of British citizens living in Spain.
- With increased international mobility, ENL, ESL, and EFL speakers can be found all over the world. There are also increasing numbers of international students, for example, in ENL countries, because of higher levels of international mobility, as well as increased desires to gain an English education in an ENL country.

Thus, by focusing on historical events rather than the sociolinguistic uses of English, the model does not give a realistic picture of English use today.

Second, the historical and geographical focus conceals the fact that the role of English is changing quickly in many Expanding Circle territories. In these regions, English traditionally had few intranational users, little internal function, and was often considered to be a foreign language. However, the model fails to emphasize that this situation is changing fast, as illustrated in Figure 1.7.

Third, the model is problematic when one considers the ELF paradigm, discussed fully in Chapter 7, due to the focus on nationally defined identities and varieties within the circles, without acknowledging the use of ELF both within and across these three circles or categories. Therefore, this 'superficially appealing and convenient model conceals more than it reveals' (Bruthiaux, 2003, p. 165). Pennycook (2007, p. 22) calls models of World Englishes an 'exclusionary paradigm' that 'does little more than pluralize monolithic English'. The topics of variety recognition and status are discussed in Chapters 2 and 5.

THE MODEL IS TOO FOCUSED ON COLONIAL HISTORY

The model fails to recognize that Britain also had a mandate in many countries not in Kachru's Outer Circle. For example, Britain occupied Egypt after 1882 and it officially became a British protectorate at the end of the First World War, a period much longer than the American colonization of the Philippines (Bruthiaux, 2003). Nevertheless, Egypt is placed in the Expanding Circle while the Philippines is placed in the Outer Circle. Britain also had a brief mandate in countries such as Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, and Kuwait.

Bruthiaux (2003) also points out that the model overlooks regions in countries that have heavy colonial influences, such as Cameroon, which has more than 6 million non-native English speakers. Furthermore, English represents a prestige language in many countries that were never subjected to English-speaking colonization, such as the multi-ethnic Ethiopia and various parts of Central America (Bruthiaux, 2003, p. 166). Colonial history is not sufficient to understand the complex sociolinguistic uses of English in the world today.

THE MODEL FAILS TO CAPTURE THE TRUE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN MULTI-ETHNIC AND MONOLINGUAL TERRITORIES

Kachru's three-way categorization also distracts from complex realities and fails to acknowledge the changing status of English in many regions over the last few decades. For example, Canada and South Africa are very multilingual, yet in this model they are categorized as ENL/Inner Circle speakers, ignoring the French Canadians and Zulu (among others). Strongly multilingual Nigeria, Mauritius, and Singapore use English in a

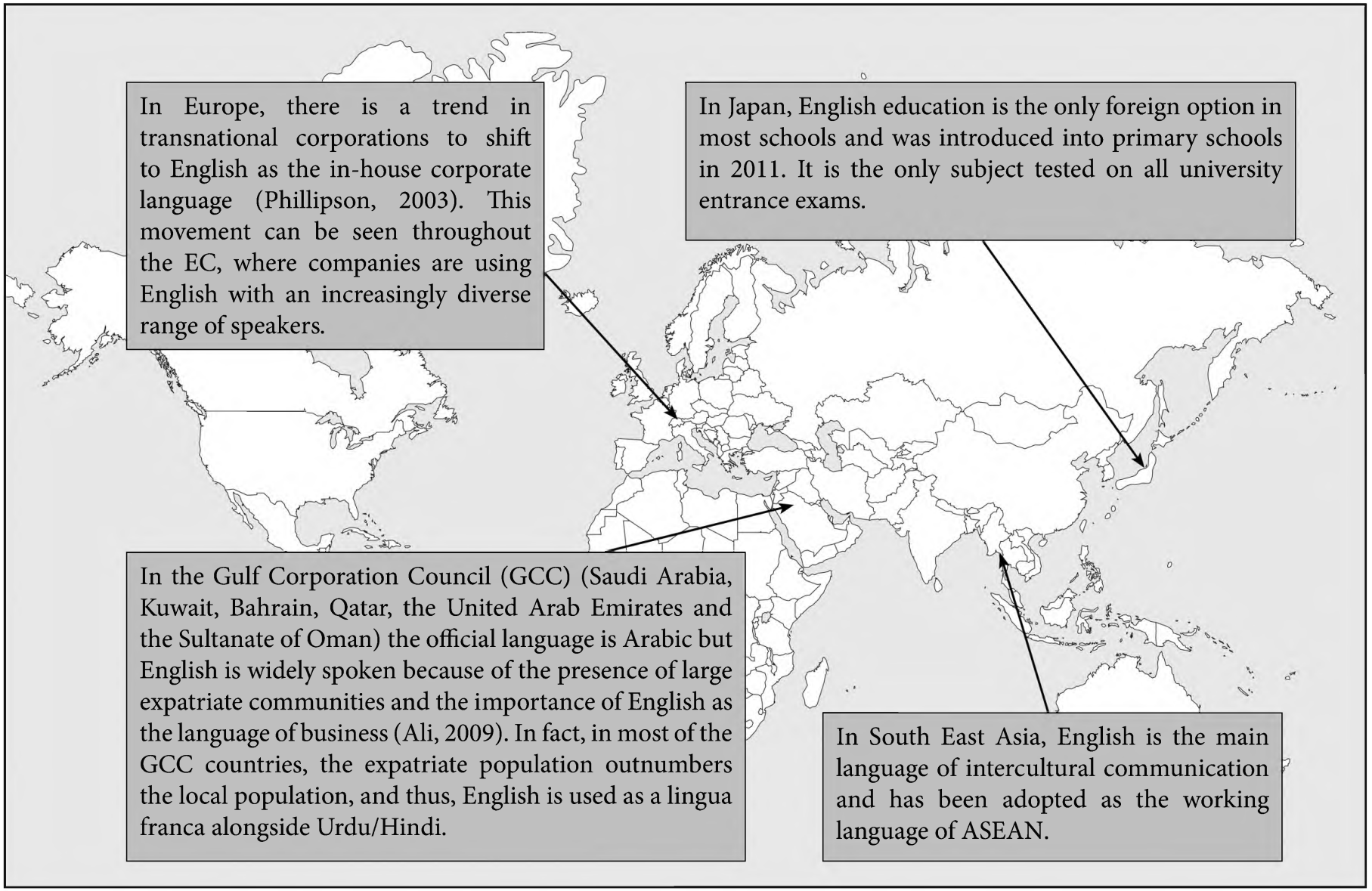

Figure 1.7 English use around the globe

variety of official and unofficial roles in both international and internal communication (Bruthiaux, 2003). And in places such as Singapore speakers may speak English as a first language or, perhaps, grow up bilingual or multilingual. On the other hand, despite their colonial history, Bangladesh and Hong Kong tend to limit English internally for commercial, legal, and educational functions. South Africa meets all of the criteria for the Inner Circle, but English is only a native language for a minority of the population (Bruthiaux, 2003). Thus, the model conceals the fact that many Inner Circle/ENL territories are not homogeneous and are not 'ENL only', strictly speaking.

Canagarajah (2006a, p. 590) notes that 'diaspora communities have brought their Englishes physically to the neighbourhoods and doorsteps of American families' and elsewhere in migrant communities around the world. For example, 51 million Americans speak Spanish as their main language, according to the 2009 US Census Bureau American Community Survey. In the United Kingdom, many speakers speak Gaelic, Welsh, or one of several Asian languages as their first language. In fact, in 2013 Polish was reported to be the second most commonly spoken language in England, putting the 500,000 native Polish speakers ahead of Punjabi (273,000), Urdu (269,000), Bengali (221,000), and Gujarati (213,000), which account for 1 million speakers combined. A lot of the world is now bilingual, multilingual or translingual. Thus, the model ignores the co-existence of English with other languages in today's increasing globalized world.

THE MODEL ASSUMES A MONOLITHIC STANDARD

First, the model assesses proficiency using the Inner Circle as a **native-speaker yardstick** of measurement. Both Jenkins (2009, p. 20) and Bruthiaux (2003, p. 169) note the difficulty in using the model to define speakers in terms of their proficiency in English, and the lack of an attempt to differentiate between degrees of **communicative competence**. 'The fact that English is somebody's second or third language does not, in itself, imply that their competence is less than that of a **native speaker**' (Jenkins, 2009, p. 20). In this tripartite model, 'native-speakership' is defined by birthright and is assumed to be superior to a 'foreign' user, no matter how inept the native or adept the foreigner. In this sense, the tripartite model assumes a monolithic view of English, and English is seen as the property of the ENL speakers. This simplistic dichotomy between native and non-native speakers is controversial and is returned to in Chapter 9.

Kachru's (1985, p. 2) 'norm-providing' Inner Circle, 'norm-developing' Outer Circle, and 'norm-dependent' Expanding Circle has been criticized in light of the spread of English as a world language, where the native English speakers represent a minority. As Bruthiaux (2003, p. 162) points out, 'by over simplifying in this manner, the model offers an incomplete and potentially misleading representation of one of its major components.' The model also insufficiently represents variation within and across ENL countries, and gives the impression that Inner Circle/ENL/native English is a single variety of English, which Chapter 4 will illustrate is clearly not the case. Levels of variation within, and across, Kachru's three circles will be discussed in Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6.

THE MODEL DISTRIBUTES PIDGINS AND CREOLES ACROSS ALL THREE CATEGORIES

English-based pidgins and creoles do not fit into Kachru's model, as they may run across the three categories. Pidgins and creoles are also found in ENL settings (e.g. the

Caribbean), they are also used in several ESL settings, such as in West Africa. As will be explored further in Chapter 2, pidgins and creoles are problematic; some people call them varieties of English and others call them separate languages, particularly creoles, due to their distinctiveness. Thus, they do not fit neatly into this simple three-way categorization.

SUMMARY OF CRITICISMS

Despite having an inclusionary political agenda in an attempt to have the 'New' Englishes acknowledged as varieties of English, the three circle model is, in effect, exclusionary. Canagarajah (1999a, p. 180), for example, states that, in Kachru's

> attempt to systematise the periphery variants, he has to standardise the language himself, leaving out many eccentric, hybrid forms of local Englishes as too unsystematic. In this, the Kachruvian paradigm follows the logic of prescriptive and elitist tendencies of the center linguists.

Kachru's model 'is a twentieth-century construct that has outlived its usefulness' (Bruthiaux, 2003, p. 161). English speakers do not fit nicely into one of the three circles and globalization, and its associated increased interconnectedness, has had a tremendous influence on how people communicate today, particularly true of ELF which does not fit neatly into the model at all. As Bruthiaux (2003, p. 175) states, 'much is to be gained by focusing less on where speakers of English come from and more on what they do – or don't do – with the language.'

Despite these problems, the three circle model has been very influential in raising awareness of varieties of English. The term *expanding*, for example, implies a process of growth. It also raises awareness of the notion of variety and opens up possibilities for research. The model is used with World Englishes scholars to challenge the predominance of native English and the Inner Circle, and to raise awareness of variations in English and issues of ownership, discussed more fully in Section 2d. Despite its limitations, 'This model has, thus, instilled increasing self-confidence in localized varieties of English and strongly influenced language teaching and applied linguistics in countries of Asia and Africa in particular' (Schneider, 2011, p. 32).

A note on alternative models



A number of alternative models have been proposed, including Görlach's Circle of International English (Görlach, 1990), and Modiano's Centripetal Circles of International English (Modiano, 1999a) and English as an International Language (EIL) (Modiano, 1999b), shown in Figures 1.8 and 1.9 respectively. Further information on Görlach's model in relation to other models can be found in Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008), but this model has not been discussed at length here due to the authors' assessment that it succumbs to the same criticism as McArthur's Circle of World English. A more detailed discussion of Modiano's model is outlined on this book's companion website.

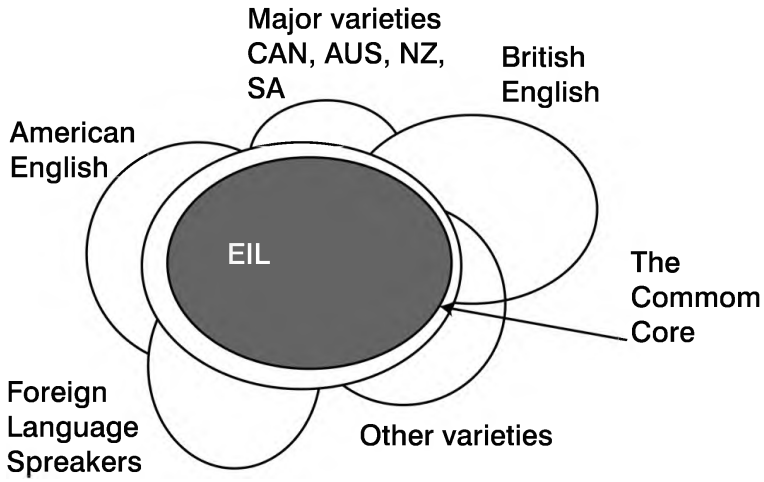

Figure 1.8 Modiano's Centripetal Circles of International English

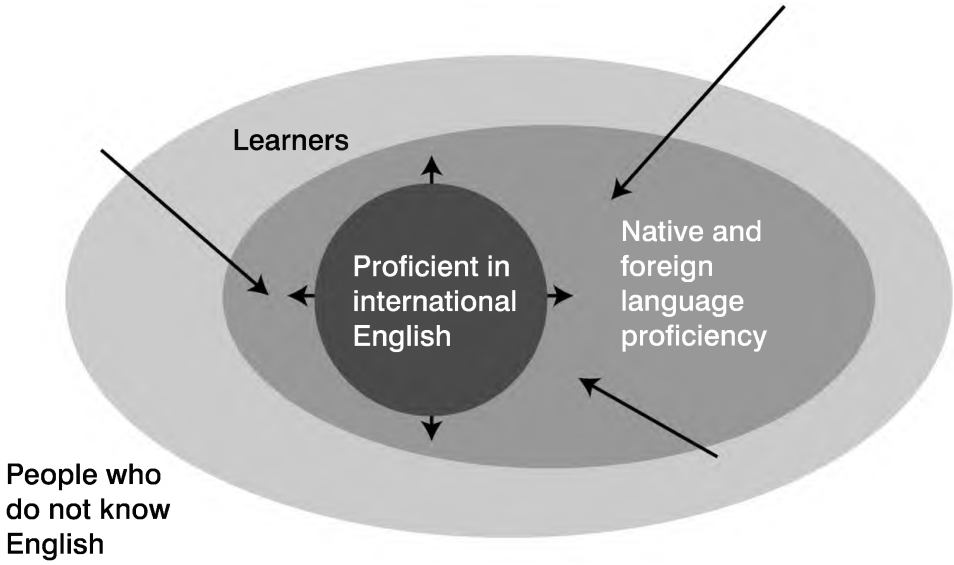

Figure 1.9 Modiano's English as an International Language (EIL)

Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the spread of English from its roots in the Germanic languages spoken by the Anglo-Saxons 1,500 years ago to the global lingua franca it is today. The historical overview of English has shown that the one consistent element of English over time is that it is not a monolithic entity, but one that adapts and changes according to its surroundings. English has changed dramatically over the last ten centuries, since its emergence from the Old Norse-influenced Anglo-Saxon languages of the first millennium. Furthermore, history has shown other huge influences by later languages, such as Norman French.

This chapter has also investigated the more recent history of English's emergence from British imperial influences to becoming the world's foremost language and a

global lingua franca. With the historical forces of mercantilism and the recent driving force of globalization, English has reached a position where it is spoken as a native, or second, language by more than 700 million people, and is a foreign language to more than one billion. Non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers, which has extraordinary implications for the ownership of English, a notion explored further in Chapter 2.

Due to the messy spread of English around the world via various channels, it has become increasingly difficult to categorize the world's speakers of English, as Section 1d has shown. While this book continues to use Kachru's Three Circle Model, the limitations of this model of categorization have been brought to the forefront. Difficulties of categorization and exceptions to these labels will be highlighted in further detail when the Englishes of the Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle are outlined in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively.

Further reading

On the history of the English language and its historical spread:

- McIntyre, D. (2009). *A History of English: A Resource Book for Students*. London: Routledge.

On the rise of English as a lingua franca:

- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

On evaluations of models of World Englishes:

- Bruthiaux, P. (2003). 'Squaring the circles: issues in modeling English worldwide.' *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), pp. 159–78. doi: 10.1111/1473–4192.00042

Closing activities

Chapter discussion questions

Section 1a

1 Discuss the influences of German, French, and Latin on the English language. In what ways have other languages influenced the development of the modern English language?
2 Do you see any parallels between the influence of the printing press and the influence of modern communication technologies?
3 Describe the history of the language in a context you are familiar with. What were the influences that affected how it is spoken and written today?