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# Contact, Asia, and the Rethinking of Englishes in Multilingual Ecologies

Lisa Lim and Umberto Ansaldo

## 1. Rethinking Contact in World Englishes

What warrants this call for a rethinking of contact issues in Englishes in multilingual ecologies? The English language has, after all, been explicitly recognized as being contact-derived<sup>1</sup>—already from its very beginnings, that is, from the emergence of Old English from the contact of the Germanic dialects; and in the shaping of the language varieties on the British Isles, as a result of contact between Germanic, Celtic, and Romance languages, to give the present-day standardized and non-standardized English dialects (Filppula 2008; Davis 2010; Venneman 2011). Such contact has been foregrounded recently in collections such as that of Schreier and Hundt (2013), and in Onysko (2016), who argues that language contact be considered an underlying mechanism for all Englishes.

Even more so then, the statement that world Englishes, as the collection of English varieties around the world, and World Englishes, as the field of research, collectively owe their existence to language contact hardly needs mention nowadays. The evolution of Englishes in the non-settler, exploitation colonies in Asia, in particular, has been viewed as the epitome of language contact dynamics (e.g., Lim and Ansaldo 2012; Lim 2020; Ansaldo and Lim 2020)—because of the range of typologies of the indigenous languages in multilingual ecologies, which make for radically diverse Englishes, as well as because of language policies which have afforded the spread and penetration and thus evolution of the new varieties. The significance of a language contact analysis of Englishes in multilingual ecologies for the theorization of World Englishes is however sometimes understated. In this chapter, in distilling several of these contributions, we call for a revisiting of several dimensions in research.

In much of our approach to this issue, we have highlighted the importance of valuing the ecology within which different languages operate. Ecology is a broad—and potentially vague—notation. We use it to summarize all those aspects that are in danger of being forgotten when one takes an essentialist view of language as one, isolated, discrete set of linguistic features. That view is to us incompatible from a contact linguistics approach, which recognizes the importance of multiple dimensions in the evolution of any language. Most important among these are:

- i) The historical context
- ii) The typological context
- iii) The sociolinguistic context

In what follows, we consider the role these dimensions play in World Englishes research, given the multilingual ecologies within which New Englishes emerge, by outlining an agenda for rethinking some of the historical circumstances in the evolution of Englishes, rethinking assumptions that may be held regarding the possible typologies of Englishes, and rethinking the language practices of the communities of speakers/users of Englishes. In our discussions, we draw parallels with other contact scenarios to underscore how the dynamics and outcomes in world Englishes align with general patterns of contact and evolution. In so doing, we call for greater attention not just to the significance of the multilingual ecology in investigating world Englishes, but also to the positioning of World Englishes scholarship more broadly within language contact, for a more unified theorizing in the discipline.

## 2. Rethinking History

The historical spread of the English language via the first and second diasporas in the establishment of settlement, trade and exploitation colonies is a story that is widely known and has been well recounted in many sources (see, e.g., Schneider 2007; Hickey 2020; Schreier et al. 2020). In this section, we leave aside the usual account of contact between the English-speaking and indigenous language communities during Britain's trade and colonization ventures from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, and instead highlight circumstances which receive far less attention, including the role of specific communities who were early adopters of English in the colonies, and ecologies pre-dating and separate from that of British colonization, involving contact between other Asian and European parties, notably the Portuguese.

### 2.1 Lesser-known Players

It has long been recognized that, in the exploitation colonies, the English language was largely introduced through formal channels of English-medium education. The significant historic event that is usually noted in this connection is Macaulay's Minute on Education, promulgated in India in 1835, in which Lord Macaulay, President of the Committee of Public Instruction, Calcutta, India, advocated the central place of English in education because "English is better worth knowing than Sanscrit [Sanskrit] or Arabic; [as] the natives are desirous to be taught English . . . we must . . . do our best to form a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect."<sup>2</sup> Absolute primacy was consequently given to teaching English and teaching in English, and within 50 years, by the late 1800s, a majority of Indian primary schools were English-medium institutions (Kachru 1994: 507). This policy was also extended

to British Malaya (i.e., present-day Malaysia and Singapore), where, in the latter, it has been said that it was “exclusively through the schools that English spread” (Bloom 1986: 348), as well as to Hong Kong. There the first English-medium schools were set up in the nineteenth century, accessible to an elite minority during colonial rule, though enrolment gradually increased over the decades as the population recognized the value of such a resource.

It is in such a domain that we find the first group deserving of further attention. In these territories, English-medium mission schools comprised headmasters or headmistresses and senior staff from Britain (while in the Philippines teachers were American), and the presence of regional and dialectal variation of British English as input has certainly been acknowledged, for example, recognizing Irish priests and nuns in the mission schools. What is worth noting for our purposes is the fact that many teachers were from more local bases: some of the earliest teachers of English—as well as clerks in the civil service—in Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Hong Kong were South Asians, employees in the British-administered government from India or Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) (Platt and Weber 1980: 23; Gupta 1994: 44; Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008: 19). And in Singapore, until the early 1920s, the largest single racial group of teachers was in fact the Eurasians, followed by roughly equal numbers of Europeans (comprising a majority of English, Irish, and Scottish; Gupta 1994: 43) and South Asians. The contribution of these more Asian Englishes as input varieties, especially in the formal school system, warrants further attention in the study of the evolution of Englishes in the region.

Another group of peoples who deserve serious consideration are those communities in Singapore and Malaysia who very early on acquired English as their dominant language. These tended to be the non-European elite to whom the English-medium schools primarily catered. One such community were the Straits-born Chinese or Peranakans, who shifted from their vernacular Baba Malay to (Peranakan) English (Lim 2010a: 24–5, 2010b). The fact that they were early adopters of English in the region is not for mere token mention: such a position resulted in their having significant influence on the emerging New Englishes in other communities of the territory, with the dominance that they wielded through their English-language capital being reinforced by other factors, such as political and social prominence in society (for elaboration, see Lim 2010b, 2016). Evidence can be found in a study of the role of the Peranakans in the development of Singapore English (SgE) prosody (Lim 2010b, 2011, 2016). Now, the prosody of all other New Englishes and learner English varieties with tone language vernaculars have H (High) tones located on accented syllables; in contrast, SgE prosody has H tones located word- and phrase-finally. This apparent exception can be accounted for: Peranakan English (PerE) prosody displays a pattern of prominence (usually in terms of higher pitch) of the penultimate and/or final syllable of the word and/or phrase—a pattern which is found across numerous Malay/Indonesian varieties including their own vernacular Baba Malay. In the ecology paradigm, the Peranakans, as early adopters of English, and politically and socially dominant in the context of the time, would be clearly recognized as a founder population in the ecology—which would account for why PerE had such a persistent influence on the evolving SgE.

The other significant early-English-adopting community in Singapore were the Eurasians, originally from Malacca, who shifted from their heritage language Kristang, or Malacca Creole Portuguese, to (Eurasian) English (Gupta 1994: 43; Lim 2010a: 25–6; Wee 2010). In addition to their presence as teachers, the community was also prominent in the theatre scene (Wong 2019). Elsewhere, groups such as Christian Malayalis from Kerala in India and Tamils from Jaffna in Sri Lanka were English-educated and worked in the civil and educational services. These early English adopters in the region would have had significant influence on the emerging New Englishes in other communities of the territory—as demonstrated in the case of the Peranakans and Singapore English above—and further thinking and research in this direction would inform our understanding in this regard. More generally, this highlights the significance of considering lesser-known varieties of English (Schreier et al. 2010) in investigations of influence on world Englishes.

## 2.2 Lesser-known Chains

In most accounts of language contact in the evolution of world Englishes, attention is given to the outcome of contact of substrate languages with the English language introduced in the situations of settler, trade, or exploitation colonization. A significant context that has often been overlooked comprises contact occurring before the era of British colonization, typically involving a chain of contact—that is, where a feature is initially transmitted from one language into another, and only later into a language of the European colonizer, usually Portuguese in the first instance (they being the earliest), and thence into English. As recently highlighted (Lim 2020), a substantial proportion of lexicon, such as *congee*, *godown*, *shroff*, *catty*, and *tael*, for example, are characteristic of Asian Englishes, but their origins do not always stem directly from contact between the English language in the territories and the language(s) of the local peoples, but are in fact a few times removed. The following illustrations are drawn from Lim (2020).

A word such as *shroff*, for example, is one which is no longer used in modern English—but is still in currency in two Asian Englishes (Lim 2017a). Indian English still uses *shroff* with its original meaning. In colonial writings on India dating back to the early 1600s, it refers to a local, i.e., Asian, banker or money changer in the British East Indies. In Hong Kong, a *shroff* in 1872 was a police court official to whom monies were paid, but the word underwent semantic narrowing, and in contemporary Hong Kong English (also Sri Lankan English and, previously, Singapore English) it refers to a cashier, cashier's office or payment booth, in government offices, hospitals or, especially, carparks. The word's origins ultimately lie in Arabic *فَارَص* *šarrāf* 'money-changer', entering Persian as *šarrāf*, and Gujarati as *šaraf*, in the large-scale Perso-Arabic influence on the language during the mid-thirteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries of Persian Muslim rule—the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire—in the Indian subcontinent. It thence also entered Portuguese, during their long occupation of India from mid-sixteenth century, as *xaraffo*, referring to customs officers and money-changers, also giving *xarafaggio*, i.e., *shroffage*—the *xaraffo*'s commission as noted in a 1585 colonial report from Goa. With Indo-Portuguese as the lingua franca not only

between the Portuguese and locals, but also widely adopted by subsequent European travelers and colonizers, including the British, numerous words would have been introduced into Anglo-Indian English, subsequently entering British English, including *sharaf*, via this Portuguese contact language variety.

Similarly, if one considers the word *congee* (Lim 2017b), one associates this clearly with Asia, in particular, East Asia—“congee houses” are ubiquitous across Hong Kong, for example. A staple dish found across Asia, depending on its local traditions, it is a preparation of rice (though there are versions using other grains or legumes) boiled in water (though some versions use milk or coconut milk), using grains that may be long or short, whole or broken, which is served plain and accompanied by side dishes (ranging from salted duck egg or seafood, to pickled vegetables, to braised meat) or is cooked together with ingredients (such as chicken, or preserved egg, or herbs), with as many names in Asian languages as varieties. As a dish, it is documented in ancient East and South Asian texts: the earliest reference to the dish is in the Zhou Dynasty (first century BCE). It is also mentioned in the Chinese *Record of Rites* (c. first century CE), and is also noted in India in Pliny’s seventh century CE writings. As a word in English, *congee* has its origins in Tamil *kanji* (also Telugu and Kannada *gañji*, Malayalam *kañni*, Urdu *ganji*), from *kanji* ‘boilings’, referring to the water in which rice has been boiled. The word was encountered by the Portuguese in their colonies, and first documented in Portuguese as *canje* in *Colóquios dos simples e drogas da Índia* by physician and botanist Garcia de Orta in 1563, the earliest treatise on the medicinal and economic plants of India. And it was via Portuguese that the word entered English: early English documentation is found in the 1698 *A New Account of East-India and Persia*, and the 1800 English translation (from the German translation of the original Italian) of *A Voyage to the East Indies*, based on the Carmelite missionary Paolino da San Bartolomeo’s 1796 observations in India, which describes “Cagni, boiled rice water, which the Europeans call Cangi.”

As these examples—just two of many—illustrate, such rethinking brings us to more nuanced consideration of the contact of communities and languages beyond and before the usual groups of English-speaking and indigenous peoples, and afford a richer, fuller appreciation of contact histories in world Englishes.

### 3. Rethinking Typology

A number of factors have been identified as relevant for the consideration of the evolution of world Englishes. Historical and political events, sociolinguistic determinants, and identity constructions are certainly recognized as important parameters (Lim and Gisborne 2009: 124), which may well define different phases or eras of an ecology—these would affect the dynamics of contact and the structural features that emerge in the evolving English differently at different points in time (see e.g., Schneider 2007 for a model for Postcolonial Englishes; Lim 2007, 2010a for Singapore English; Gonzales 2017 for Hokaglish). Factors which have been identified as more primary in the contact dynamics involve the variety/ies of the English lexifier that entered the local context; the nature of transmission of English to the local

population; and the local, i.e., indigenous/ local languages of the community in which the New English emerges (Hickey 2005: 506; Lim and Gisborne 2009).<sup>3</sup>

Ansaldo (2009) further underlines the importance of situating any contact linguistic analysis within a 'typological matrix', that is, as comprehensive a picture as possible of the linguistic diversity in which languages come into contact and undergo change. This is in line with an ecological approach to language change, as pioneered in Croft (2000) and Mufwene (2001), in which linguistic features from different varieties enter a competition and selection process that defines the contact dynamics. In such an approach then, the outcomes of contact are not constrained to what might be considered features of 'English', but can result in any kind of restructuring, as long as the typological matrix allows for it.

In what follows, we illustrate this with two features of New Englishes: tone and particles, features often used as the poster child for contact in Asian ecologies (see, e.g., Lim and Ansaldo 2012; Lim 2020; Ansaldo and Lim 2020), precisely because they are most instructive, demonstrating as they do how features of the New Englishes can evolve to be as rich and radical as the typologies of the substrates.

### **3.1 Tone**

The acquisition of the feature of tone has long been recognized in the fields of historical linguistics, contact linguistics, and creole studies.

Suprasegmental features, including tone, are documented as being susceptible to being acquired in contact situations (Curnow 2001): tone is often acquired in a non-tonal language by borrowing or imitation due to the presence of tone in the broader linguistic environment (Gussenhoven 2004: 42–3), such as in Middle Korean due to the prestigious status of Chinese in society then (Ramsay 2001). Tone is thus noted to be an areal feature, occurring in genetically unrelated languages spoken by geographically contiguous speech communities, as in Africa and Southeast Asia (Nettle 1998; Svantesson 2001).

Several creole language varieties are recognized as having tone, acquired from their tone-language substrates, as a result of contact situations involving European accent languages and African tone languages. One example is Saramaccan, an Atlantic maroon creole spoken mostly in Surinam, generally classified as an English-based creole (though its lexicon shows substantial Portuguese influence), with Gbe and Kikongo as substrates, where there is evidence for a split lexicon, in which the majority of its words are marked for pitch accent, with an important minority marked for true tone (Good 2004a/b, 2006). Papiamentu spoken in the Netherlands Antilles, with superstrates of Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch, and West African Kwa and Gbe languages as substrates, shows use of both contrastive stress and contrastive tonal features which operate independently from stress (Kouwenberg 2004; Rivera-Castillo and Pickering 2004; Remijsen and van Heuven 2005). Pichi, also known as Fernando Po Creole English, an Atlantic English-lexicon Creole spoken on the island of Bioko, Equatorial Guinea, which is an offshoot of Krio from Sierra Leone, and shares many characteristics with its West African sister language Aku from Gambia, as well as Nigerian, Cameroonian and Ghanaian Pidgin, has also been documented as having a mixed prosodic system

which employs both pitch-accent and tone (Yakpo 2009). The Austronesian language Ma'ya is also documented as a hybrid system involving both contrastive stress and tone, a result of contact with tonal Papuan languages (Remijsen 2001).

It is somewhat surprising that only very recently has there been some attention and systematic investigation in the field of World Englishes in this regard.<sup>4</sup> Work on Nigerian English has described it as a mixed prosodic system that stands “between” an intonation/ stress language and a tone language (Gut 2005), with its pitch inventory described as reduced compared to British English, and the domain of pitch appearing to be the word, with high pitch triggered by stress, thus resembling a pitch accent language. Work on New Englishes which have emerged in ecologies where Sinitic languages are dominant has also demonstrated the emergence of (lexically based) tone. In Hong Kong, Cantonese has always been dominant through colonial rule and after the handover in 1997 to today, while in Singapore, Hokkien was prominent as the Chinese intra-ethnic lingua franca and a widely used interethnic lingua franca in colonial and early independence eras, with Mandarin gaining importance as one of the nation's four official languages, and Cantonese seeing a resurgence in the late 1980s and 1990s, due to Cantonese popular culture and significant immigration from Hong Kong (see details in Lim 2010a). In short, both ecologies have tone in their majority and dominant languages, making tone salient in the feature pool. As anticipated, the effect of this is that both HKE and SgE both exhibit (Sinitic-type) tone, at the level of the word and phrase (Lim 2009a, 2011). In HKE, stress and intonation is a process of transforming the system into one based on tones, by assigning (lexical) tone to syllables for word stress (Luke 2000; Wee 2008).<sup>5</sup> In SgE, the patterning of the H and L tones is further tempered by other systems in the ecology: in this case, the right-edge prominence of Malay varieties and Peranakan English, as already mentioned in Section 2, position the prominent H tones at word- and phrase-final position.

- |     |                                |            |                      |
|-----|--------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| (1) | in'tend                        | LH         | (HKE, Wee 2008: 488) |
|     | 'origin, 'photograph           | HLL        |                      |
|     | o'riginal                      | LHLL       |                      |
| (2) | I saw the manager this morning | LHHHHHHHL! | (HKE, Luke 2008)     |
| (3) | 'manage, 'teacher              | MH         | (SgE, Wee 2008: 490) |
|     | in'tend, a'round               | LH         |                      |
|     | 'origin, bi'lingual            | LMH        |                      |
|     | o'riginal, se'curity           | LMMH       |                      |
| (4) | I think happier                | LHLLM      | (SgE, Lim 2004: 44)  |

A call for revisiting English prosody was made by Lim (2009a, 2011) in the light of such findings, as well as, *inter alia*, considerations for the study of Asian Englishes with a keen eye on typology and ecology.



### 3.2 Particles

Another area which provides a strong impetus for a consideration of typology in research on world Englishes comprise the use of particles. Particles have been established as a discourse-prominent feature, and are consequently very easily transferred in contact-induced change (Matras 2000). They comprise a prominent feature of many languages in Asia, found in languages such as Cantonese, Hokkien, Mandarin, Malay, Tagalog, and Hindi, and are used widely in those languages to communicate pragmatic functions of various types (see Lim 2007; Lim and Borlongan 2011). Once again, it does not come as a surprise that, as a consequence of contact, where substrate typologies include particles in their grammars, particles figure as a characteristic feature in the New Englishes (Lim and Ansaldo 2012; Lim 2020).

Hindi's particles *yaar* and *na* (5, 6) are documented in Indian English, noted to be used in IndE by speakers regardless of mother tongue, i.e., not constrained to Hindi mother tongue speakers (Lange 2009). Many of Tagalog's 18 enclitic particles occur frequently in Philippine English, with findings from the Philippine component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-PH) attesting to consistent usage of particles (in decreasing order of frequency) such as *na*, which signals a relatively new or altered situation, *pa*, which denotes a relatively old or continuing situation (7), and *ba*, a question marker obligatory in formulaic yes-no questions (8) (Lim and Borlongan 2011). And Cantonese's rich set of particles appear prominently in Englishes with Cantonese in their ecology, such as HKE (9, 10).

(5) You'll you must be really having good patience *yaar* (IndE, Lange 2009: 216)

(6) Sunday will be more convenient *na* (IndE, Lange 2009: 213)

(7) We have an idea *na* of who we'll get yeah pero we're waiting *pa* for the approval. (Lim and Borlongan 2011: 68)

'We already have an idea of who we'll get yeah but we're still waiting for the approval.'

(8) You find this fulfilling *ba* (Lim and Borlongan 2011: 62)

'Do you find this fulfilling?'

(9) may be LG1 [Lower Ground 1st Floor] is much better *wor*. . . noisy *ma*. . . at G/F. . . also u seem used to study there *ma* (HKE, James 2001)

(10) K: How are you *a33*?<sup>6</sup> (HKE, Multilingual Hong Kong Corpus, K. Chen p.c.)

It hardly needs to be emphasized how particles—from Asian language typologies—are clearly robust features of those New Englishes (Lim and Ansaldo 2012), with their widespread occurrence across several Englishes easily accountable by an appeal to typology. Moreover, particles have been increasingly noted in more formal contexts,

suggesting that they are obtaining wider sociolinguistic currency. Given this ubiquity, in addition to their easy transfer in language contact situations, particles have been identified as comprising one of the features most likely to spread not only from the substrates to the New Englishes, but, subsequently, also horizontally across such Englishes (Lim and Ansaldo 2012). Such horizontal spread and the potential of particles to be an areal feature of Asian Englishes is certainly a direction of interest for World Englishes research.

One additional observation bears noting, illustrated in the case of SgE (a comprehensive account is found in Lim 2007), namely, that the particles are a clear demonstration of how a category in New Englishes can have origins in different substrates. Two well established SgE particles are the *lah* and *ah* particles (11, 12), with *lah* as a SgE particle included in the *Oxford English Dictionary* almost two decades ago; these particles are also common in Malaysian English. These two particles are noted as having emerged early in the development of SgE, with their origins shown to lie in Malay and/or Hokkien (Platt 1987; Gupta 1992; Lim 2007), languages prominent in Singapore's ecology during that era. In addition, there is a second, larger set of particles—*hor*, *leh*, *lor*, *ma*, and *meh* (13, 14)—which emerged in SgE in a later period (Lim 2007): notably, these stemmed from a different source, viz. Cantonese, shown to have had prominence in Singapore's ecology in the latter part of the twentieth century.

(11) I don't know *lah*, I very blur *lah*. (SgE, Lim 2004: 46)

'I don't know, I'm very confused.'

(12) Then you got to do those papers again *ah*? (SgE, Lim 2004: 46)

(13) My parents old fashion *a21*? Then your parents *le55*? (SgE, Lim 2007: 451)

'Are you saying that my parents are old-fashioned? Then what about your parents?'

(14) No *la21*! He's using Pirelli, you don't know *me55*? (SgE, Lim 2007: 451)

'No, he has Pirelli tyres; didn't you know that?' [incredulously]

In short, attention to ecology, or rather, specific eras of an ecology, and the typological matrix of the time, clearly affords us a more nuanced investigation.

#### 4. Rethinking Usage

The Asian contexts introduced in the previous section are clearly highly multilingual and typologically diverse ecologies, in which the outcomes of language contact, as demonstrated above, even if "diverging" from a traditional typology of "English," are accountable through ecology and typology, and entirely expected. In this section, we discuss two areas of multilingual practice which warrant attention in research in World Englishes.

#### 4.1 Mixed Codes

The World Englishes paradigm has traditionally couched its research in terms of discrete, usually national, or regional, varieties of English—e.g., the “dialectology and sociolinguistics of English-speaking communities” (EWW 2020), “Englishes in their cultural, global, linguistics and social contexts” (*World Englishes* n.d.). Where the multilingual ecology is given consideration, it is usually positioned in terms of the substrate languages’ influence on the nativized variety of English, and instances of co-occurrence of any additional language(s) alongside English have traditionally been considered codeswitching or mixing. The various corpora of the International Corpus of English (ICE), which are widely used in world Englishes research, are built by research teams “preparing electronic corpora of their own national or regional variety of English” (*ICE Project* 2016), each comprising a million words of spoken and written English, but which, crucially, tend to exclude data which involve other languages. Such approaches tend to erase the multilingual language practices that are, in fact, a widespread reality in many world Englishes communities. Indeed, as has been pointed out by scholars such as Canagarajah (2009), hybrid varieties, mixed codes or plurilingual practices have been natural and embraced in regions such as South Asia since pre-colonial times.

In the 1990s, such practices did start being recognized not as switching between languages but as single hybrid codes in their own right. Canagarajah (1995) provides a striking analysis of the emergence of a plurilingual English, also referred to as “Englishized Tamil,” in Jaffna, northeast Sri Lanka. The code is an outcome of strong social pressure amongst Tamils against excessive use of English, but where the speaking of Tamil on its own could be considered excessively formal. Crucially, this is noted to be the unmarked everyday code, even used in what would be considered formal domains, as in the interview between a senior professor (P) and a junior lecturer (L), illustrated in (15).

(15)

1 P: So you have done a masters in sociology? What is your area of research?

2 L: **Naan** sociology of religion-**ilai taan** interested. **enTai** thesis topic **vantu** the rise of local deities in the Jaffna peninsula.

‘**It is in** the sociology of religion **that I am** interested. **My** thesis topic **was** the rise of local deities in the Jaffna peninsula.’

3 P: Did this involve a field work?

4 L: **oom, oru** ethnographic study-**aai taan itay ceitanaan**. **kiTTattaTTa** four years-**aai** field work **ceitanaan**.

‘**Yes, I did this as an** ethnographic study. **I did** field work **for roughly** four years.’

5 P: **appa kooTa** qualitative research **taan ceiyiraniir**?

‘**So you do mostly** qualitative research?’

Similarly, Li Wei (1998) argues that the mixed code of second-generation bilinguals, such as the *Cantonese-English* code used by younger generation British-born Chinese in

the north of England, originally from Ap Chau, a small island near Hong Kong, illustrated in (16), does not constitute switching, but is in itself a distinctive linguistic mode.

(16)

A: *Yeo hou do yeo* contact  
 have very many have contact  
 ‘We have many contacts’

G: We always have opportunities *heu xig kei ta dei fong gaowui*  
 keep in contact will know that other place church  
*di yen. Ngodei xixi dou*  
 POSS person. we time always  
 ‘We always have opportunities to get to know people from other churches. We always keep in contact.’

Thereafter, through the 2000s, similar mixed codes have received increased attention in World Englishes scholarship. The mixed code encompassing English and Tagalog, known as Taglish, is documented as being extensively used by urban Filipinos comfortable in both languages (Bautista and Gonzales 2006: 137). A tight and fluid mix involving English, Mandarin, and Hokkien is described as being commonly used by ethnically Chinese Singaporeans, illustrated in (17) (here only the English idiomatic gloss is provided: *Hokkien*, *Mandarin*, English, *Sinitic particles*; from Lim 2009b: 60).<sup>7</sup> Significantly, these are viewed not only as single codes in their own right (Lim 2009b; Lim and Ansaldo 2012), or as one manifestation of a New English (Lim 2009b): in the case of Taglish, illustrated in (18), such a code is reported to be the usual code amongst Filipinos, with ‘pure’ [*sic*]—i.e., what is considered unmixed—*Tagalog* or English seldom heard (McFarland 2008: 144).

(17)

Mei: Seng *a21*, time to get a job *ho24*? Pa and Irene spend all their savings on you already *le21*. Are you waiting for Pa to buy *Toto* [*the lottery*] and get it all back *me55*?

Pa: You say other people for what? You are just a secretary.

Irene: *Aiya*, never mind, never mind. Anyway Seng already has a job interview on Monday.

Pa: *Wah*, real or not?

Seng: I arranged the meeting through email. Now American degrees *all in demand*.

CB: *Wah*, congratulations, man.

Seng: Thanks.

Ma: **What did they just say?**

Mei: *Seng said that on Monday . . .*

Pa: Now you've come back, you can't play the fool anymore, okay? *What if you end up selling insurance like this guy? **Don't make me lose face!***

(18) Then they ask me, *ano pa daw* capabilities *ko* in singing. . . I did not told them. . . *gusto ko sila mag* find out.

'Then they ask me, what other capabilities I have in singing. . . I did not tell them. . . I wanted them to find out for themselves'

Most recently, such a mixed code has been observed in domains where it was not previously found, such as newspaper reports, as illustrated in an article for Yahoo! News Philippines (Tordesillas 2013) shown in (19).

(19) Never have I felt so *kawawa* reading the statements of Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin justifying his plan to allow American and Japanese military access to military facilities in the Philippines to deter China's aggressive moves in the South China Sea.

[Entire article in English]

*Ano ba naman tayo?*

As noted in Lim (2020), in recent sociolinguistic scholarship, the fluidity of language boundaries, premised on the possibility that language is never normative but instead always negotiable, has been amply recognized in the translanguaging turn (see, e.g., Cummins 2008; García 2009; Blommaert 2010; Creese and Blackledge 2010; Baker 2011; García and Li Wei 2014; Lee and Jenks 2016). Even while translanguaging scholarship and the World Englishes paradigm, with its discrete varieties, may at traditional face value seem to be positioned at odds with each other (Lim 2020: 83), the time is more than overdue for World Englishes research to explore what the translanguaging approach can offer, in order to better appreciate the increasing assemblages and entanglements involved. To that end, research such as Canagarajah (2013) and the collection by Jenks and Lee (2020) certainly comprise an important step in the right direction in the field.

## 4.2 New Media

Another context of great current interest transcends regions and varieties and is found in computer-mediated communication (CMC). It is particularly significant where World Englishes research is concerned because of the flexibility and creativity of expression that the platform affords, which, crucially, allows for the articulation of multilingual repertoires, notably in situations involving an emergent English and languages using different orthographic traditions, and, consequently, novel

contact dynamics, as recent scholarship has highlighted (Lim 2015; Lim and Ansaldo 2016).

In CMC, while advances have certainly been made and continue to be made in developing keyboards for various scripts, such as Chinese characters or Devanagari script, users very often prefer to use a Latin-based keyboard, and/or English, due to the constraints of the keyboard or the comparative efficacy compared to using character keystrokes. Thus, young Hongkongers, for instance, who are normally Cantonese-dominant in non-CMC domains, overwhelmingly find English easier as an input (74.3%) than Chinese (25.7%), and report a significant preference for using English, or English and Cantonese (60.6%), rather than Chinese (Lin 2005). In other words, CMC promotes significantly greater English usage than what there would normally be for a community dominant in another language—this has two major consequences in the evolution of New Englishes.

In the first place, because CMC platforms comprise a site quite distinct from the community's usual communicative practices, where there is more widespread use of English than in non-CMC contexts, there is more frequent mixing of codes—for Hongkongers, English is used to a greater extent in CMC, alongside Cantonese—and this naturally affords the conditions for language contact dynamics and the evolution of the English variety. In the online chat of young Hongkongers, illustrated in (20, 21) (from Wong 2009),<sup>8</sup> a number of linguistic practices, the outcome of contact, are noted. Common Cantonese phrases are used in Romanized form, such as *mafan* 'troublesome' for 麻煩 *maa4faan4* (20, turn 5), and morpheme-for-morpheme translation or relexification, such as *gum is you dun ask* (21, turn 3), and *or. . . gum you continue lo* (21, turn 5).

(20)

1R: head ask for resume??

'the department head asked you for your resume?'

2R: how come ge

'how come [ge2]?'

3L: yes ar

'yes [aa3]'

3L: he said he ask all people la wor

'he said he had asked everyone for their resume already [aa3 wo5]'

4R: what for

'what is that for?'

5R: ma fan

'it's so troublesome'

6L: not my head

'he is not my supervisor'

7L: programmer head

'my supervisor is the head of the programming department'

(21)

1A: did u ask Wilson to pick you up in the train station?

2B: ah... not yet... hahaha

3A: gum is u dun ask. ...

咁係你唔問

gam2 hai6 nei5 ng4 man6

'then it's you who don't ask him to pick you up'

4A: dun say wt danger later ar...ghaa

唔好話咩危險一陣呀

ng4 hou2 waa6 me1 ngai4 him2 jat1 zan6 aa3

'don't say it is dangerous later (\*laugh)'

[...]

5A: or... gum u continue lo

哦咁你繼續囉

ngo4 gam2 nei5 gai3 zuk6 lo1

'ok... then you continue working on your assignment [lo1]'

One instance of restructuring is instructive for the evolution of a New English in CMC: the direct translation or calquing of the Cantonese expression 加油 *ga1yau4* 'add oil', into English 'add oil', by younger Cantonese-English bilingual Hongkongers. In its original Cantonese, 加油 *ga1yau4* is widely used as a general exhortation or cheer to persevere or to work hard, both in spoken Cantonese discourse and in CMC (22 and 23 respectively) (Lim 2015).

(22)

A: *Ngo chin gei yat sin tong kui lao yuen gao*

'I argued with him just a few days ago'

B: *Hah? Again? For what?*

A: You know, just like *zi chin gor d lor*

'You know, just like what happened before'

B: *Ai, kui d* temper really. .. **gayau ah!**

'Sigh, his temper is really bad. .. be strong!'

(23)

A: Doin *meh?*

'What are you doing?'

B: *Hea gun ah, u?*

'Just taking some rest, and you?'

A: Gonna finish some readings. Need slp earlier, tmr *faan gong*

'I'm going to finish some readings and need to sleep earlier. I need to work tomorrow.'

B: Oh *hai wor, ho chur ah, gayau!*

'Oh right, you're so busy. Just hang in there!'

However, an interesting pattern emerges if we compare Cantonese 加油 with its English calque *add oil*, also used in CMC and spoken discourse, illustrated respectively in (24) (Wong 2009) and (25) (Lim 2015).

(24)

A: 7.00am ...

'I have to work at 7.00am'

A: very sh\*t le

'it's very bad [ne]'

B: ahaha ~~~ **add oil!**

'[laugh] work hard!'

B: Then goodnight and sweet dreams la

A: talk to you next time

(25)

A: Are you ready for tomorrow's Chinese test?

B: Not yet. Mom's forcing me to drink bedtime milk.

A: Then you should probably sleep too. **Add oil** for the test.

B: Yeah.



It is found (Lim 2015) that, with young Cantonese-English bilingual Hongkongers, Cantonese 加油 is used less regularly in CMC than in spoken communication, while the English calque *add oil* is reported as being used “quite often” whether texting in Cantonese, or in English or Cantonese-English, and, crucially, is used more than its original Cantonese expression. This is significant for World Englishes research: a CMC platform does enable language contact and prompt the development of HKE, in this case, in the use of particular HKE phrases, here calqued from Cantonese. An examination of microblogging sites such as Instagram, Twitter and Tumblr attest to this: a search for the hashtag #addoil turns up infinite numbers of posts.

There is a second and significant finding of such CMC research. More English-dominant bilinguals—e.g., Hongkongers who emigrated several years ago and then returned to Hong Kong, or Hongkongers of mixed parentage—exhibit a different pattern compared to the local Hongkongers: the English calque *add oil* is used significantly more often when speaking. In other words, this feature appears to have spread from CMC to non-CMC domains.

In effect, the increased use of English in the CMC domain comprises a drive in the direction of the community employing English in the bilingual mix to a greater extent, first in that domain, and then in others, which is the road to further nativization of a restructured New English in a contact context, and subsequent endonormative stabilization. CMC clearly serves as a vital platform and catalyst for the evolution of multilingual English varieties—favoring the use of English, promoting significantly more mixing with and calquing into English compared to spoken discourse, and prompting subsequent spread to other domains—and is identified as one of the forces in this knowledge economy that can drive the evolution of a new variety (Lim 2015). Continued attention to such a domain should prove rewarding in World Englishes research.

## 5. Concluding Thoughts

This chapter has highlighted several dimensions in which a rethinking leads us to more nuanced, enlightened, and forward-looking investigations in World Englishes research. In drawing parallels with other contact scenarios, such as those of creole language varieties, and with other approaches in other fields, such as translanguaging, we underscore how the dynamics and outcomes in world Englishes align with general patterns of language practices, contact, and evolution. In so doing, we call for greater attention not just to the significance of the multilingual ecology in investigating Englishes, but also to the positioning of World Englishes scholarship more broadly within language contact, and within sociolinguistics, for a more unified theorizing in the discipline.

## Notes

- 1 It has been widely noted that “[m]ost, if not all, languages have been influenced at one time or another by contact with others” (Winford 2003: 2), and that “language contact

- is everywhere: there is no evidence that any languages have developed in total isolation from other languages' (Thomason 2001: 8).
- 2 "Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835." See [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealc/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt\\_minute\\_education\\_1835.html](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealc/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html).
  - 3 As pointed out by Schneider (2007: 25), settlement and transmission types are clear-cut and important mostly for the early phases of settlement, but tend to become increasingly blurred with time in the increasing complexity in the development of society.
  - 4 Observations have of course been made by scholars for some decades, e.g., that Singapore English has been anecdotally described as if it "sounds like Chinese" (Bloom 1986: 430, citing Killingley 1968), and that in Hong Kong "the English intonation system is reinterpreted on the basis of the Cantonese tone system" (Luke and Richards 1982: 60).
  - 5 Here tone accents are used as in the sources for examples (1) to (4), where L = Low tone, M = Mid tone, and H = High tone.
  - 6 In several of the examples, tones are represented as pitch level numbers 1 to 5 where, in the Asianist tradition, the larger the number the higher the pitch; thus 33 in example (10) represents a mid level tone, and in examples (13) and (14), 21 and 55 represent respectively a low or low falling tone and a high level tone.
  - 7 Example (17) derives from the script of the award-winning Singapore film *Singapore Dreaming* (Woo, Goh and Wu 2006) whose dialogues are vouched for by Singaporeans as being completely authentic.
  - 8 In these examples, Cantonese tones, as represented in the Yale and Jyutping systems, are as follows: in open syllables, 1 high level or high falling, 2 medium rising, 3 medium level, 4 low falling or very low level, 5 low rising, 6 low level, and, for checked syllables, 7 high level, 8 medium level, and 9 low level.

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