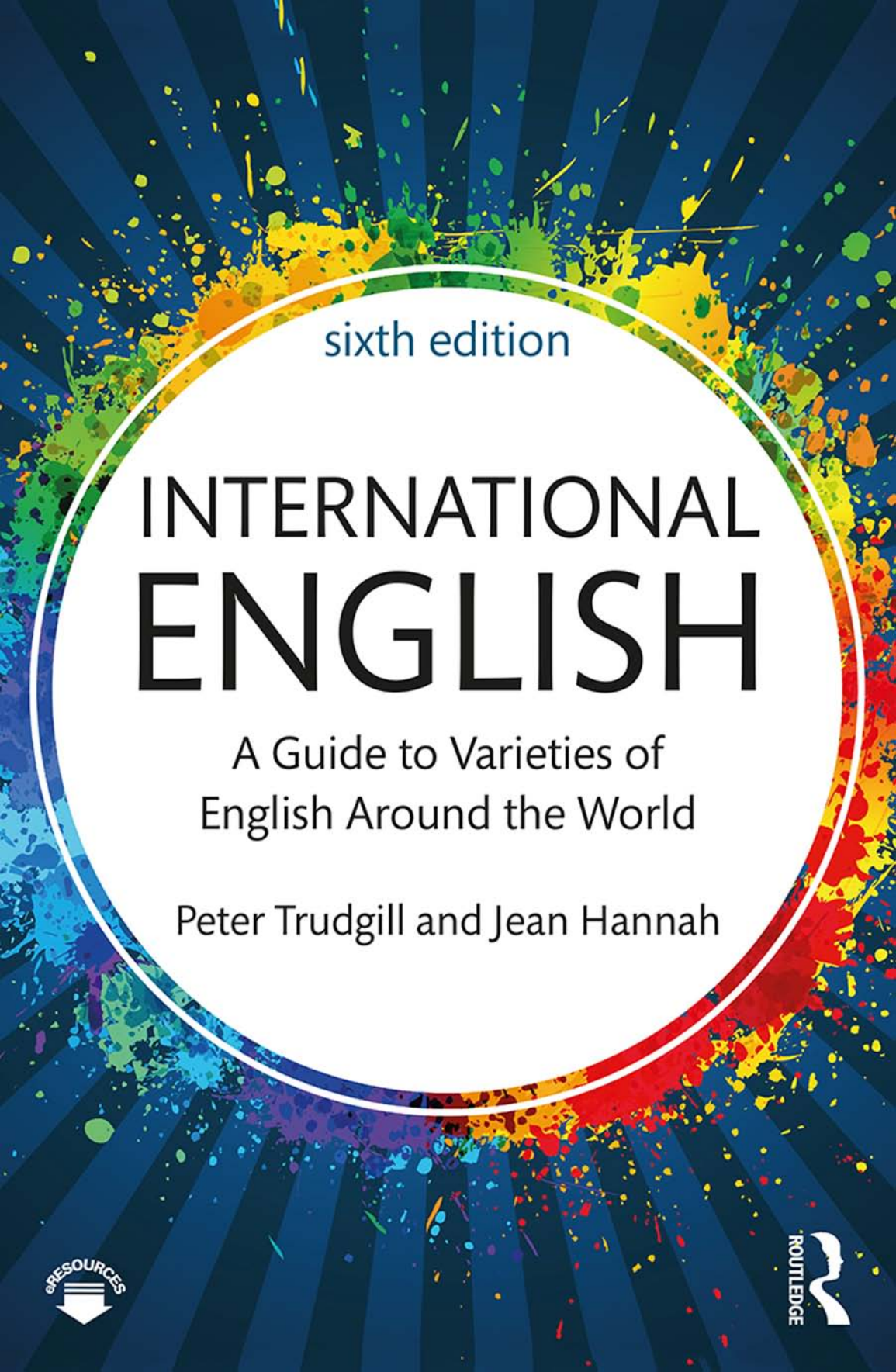
sixth edition
INTERNATIONAL
ENGLISH
A Guide to Varieties of
English Around the World
Peter Trudgill and Jean Hannah
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International English

From Singapore to Scotland, Canada to the Channel Islands, Namibia to New Zealand and beyond, *International English* takes you on a fascinating journey through the varieties of English spoken around the world. Comparisons across the varieties provide a comprehensive guide to differences in phonetics, phonology, grammar and vocabulary, making this a useful resource for teachers of English as a foreign language and linguistics students alike. This sixth edition has been thoroughly updated to include the following:

- new sections on the Death of RP, Estuary English, Multicultural London English, the Dublin accent and Fijian English;
- updated material on RP phonology, New Zealand English phonology, Australian English lexis, North American English lexis and the Northern Cities Chain Shift;
- revised and updated references and bibliography.

This textbook comes with free-to-download MP3 files at www.routledge.com/9781138233690, which demonstrate the different varieties featured in the book – ideal for use in class, at home or on the move. *International English* remains a key and indispensable resource for teachers and students, and is essential reading for anyone studying varieties of English in a global context.

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Contents

Note on the sixth edition

One of us is British and the other American, so we have always had ready access to information about the English of these two countries. Aware of our relative lack of immediate experience of the English of the other native English-speaking regions of the world, we have also over the years managed to travel to Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and the Caribbean in order to investigate for ourselves the varieties of English spoken in these places. At the time of writing, of the major varieties of mother tongue English around the world, only our section on South African English is not based on our own observations. We have also carried out research in the Bahamas and Bermuda (see Chapter 6). The sections on Indian and Singaporean English are also based on research *in situ*. We have also visited Fiji, and a discussion of the English spoken there has been added to this new edition.

We have also updated the book by noting further movement of American English vocabulary into other varieties and by expanding and updating the bibliography with a selection of the important publications which have been produced around the English-speaking world in the last several years.

The subject of this book continues to be Standard English as it is found in its different varieties around the world. However, since the first edition, we have increasingly responded to requests from readers to include more information about the majority, nonstandard varieties of English spoken in different parts of the world as well, to the extent that for this new sixth edition we have changed the subtitle of the book.

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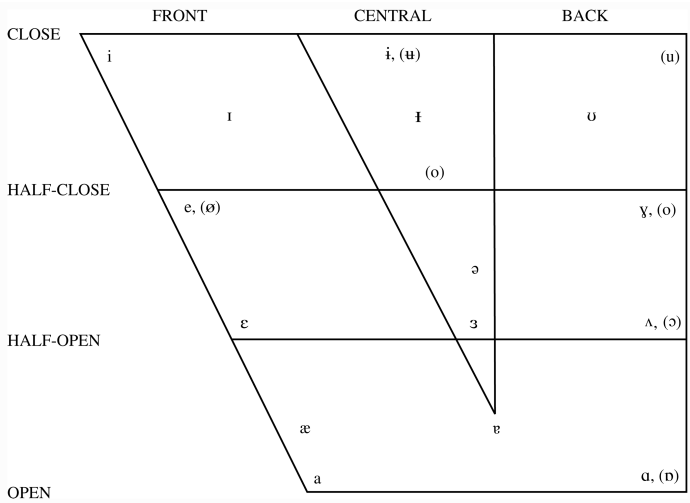
Symbols



General symbols

[ ] – phonetic transcription (indicates actual pronunciation)
/ / – phonemic transcription
~ – 'alternates with'
* – indicates ungrammatical sentence
? – indicates sentence of questionable grammaticality

English vowel symbols

A vowel can be described by its position on two dimensions: *open* versus *close* and *front* versus *back*. This position corresponds roughly to the position in the mouth of the highest point of the tongue in the production of that vowel. Presence of lip-rounding is indicated by parentheses on the diagram opposite.

Diacritics

˕	more open
˖	more back
˔	more close
˗	more front
ː	long
ˑ	half-long
ˈ	stress

English consonant phonemes

/p/	as	*p*	in	*peat*
/t/	as	*t*	in	*treat*
/tʃ/	as	*ch*	in	*cheat*
/k/	as	*k*	in	*kite*
/b/	as	*b*	in	*bite*
/d/	as	*d*	in	*date*
/dʒ/	as	*j*	in	*jute*
/g/	as	*g*	in	*gate*
/f/	as	*f*	in	*fate*
/θ/	as	*th*	in	*thought*
/s/	as	*s*	in	*site*
/ʃ/	as	*sh*	in	*sheet*
/h/	as	*h*	in	*hate*
/v/	as	*v*	in	*vote*
/ð/	as	*th*	in	*that*
/z/	as	*z*	in	*zoo*
/ʒ/	as	*s*	in	*vision*
/l/	as	*l*	in	*late*
/r/	as	*r*	in	*rate*
/w/	as	*w*	in	*wait*
/j/	as	*y*	in	*yet*
/m/	as	*m*	in	*meet*
/n/	as	*n*	in	*neat*
/ŋ/	as	*ng*	in	*long*

Other consonant symbols

[ʔ]	glottal stop
[ɬ]	velarized or ‘dark’ *l*, as in RP *all*
[ɬ]	voiceless lateral fricative
[ɹ]	post-alveolar frictionless continuant, as *r* in RP *right*

[ɾ]	alveolar flap, *r* in Spanish *pero*
[ç]	voiceless palatal fricative
[x]	voiceless velar fricative, as *ch* in German *nacht*
[ɸ]	voiceless bilabial fricative
[ʍ]	voiceless *w*
[d̥]	voiced alveolar flap
C̪	dental consonant
C̣	retroflex consonant
Cʰ	aspirated consonant
C̩	syllabic consonant

Chapter 1

Standard English in the world

The main subject of this book is *Standard English*. Standard English is the kind of English that this book is written in. There is nothing surprising about this – books, newspapers, magazines and nearly everything else that appears in print in the English-speaking world are written in Standard English. So we have not chosen to write this book in Standard English because we think it is better than other varieties of English, or because it is more expressive or clearer or logical than other varieties – it isn't. There is quite simply a social convention, which our publisher is keen for us to maintain, that books are not written in any variety of English other than Standard English.

This type of English is called 'standard' because it has undergone standardization, which means that it has been subjected to a process through which it has been selected, codified and stabilized in a way that other varieties have not.

In the case of certain other languages, 'selected' might mean that an official decision was made at some point for one particular dialect of a language to receive the standardization treatment, as opposed to any of the others. This is not what happened with English. Standard English acquired its status much more gradually and in a more organic way. The ancestor of modern Standard English developed in and around the Royal Court in London amongst the aristocracy and ruling elite. Because the elite were concentrated in London, this pre-Standard English was a dialect of a predominantly London-area type. But because it was associated with a group of people who were of mixed geographical origins and who were unusually mobile and well travelled, this court dialect also showed signs, from the very earliest records that we have, of being a mixed dialect. For example, the language of the Proclamation of Henry III, a text written as early as 1258, shows a blending of Midland and southern features. And the form of language which eventually emerged over the centuries as the preferred way of writing amongst the governing classes had features which were not only south-eastern in origin but also southern and Midland, particularly East Midland. And of course, the dialect was from the very beginning an upper social class dialect which was not associated with the common workers and peasants.

So no committees were involved in deciding which dialect of English was to be standardized. The upper classes quite naturally wrote in their own dialect and

then were in a position to impose this way of writing on society at large. This was rather widely accepted because the variety was associated with power and status, and had considerable prestige. Even today, although Standard English is the kind of English in which all native speakers learn to read and write, most people do not actually speak it – Standard English is probably not the native dialect of more than about 15 per cent of the population of England. And, reflecting Standard English's social origins, most of that 15 per cent will be concentrated towards the top end of the social scale so that Standard English is still quite clearly a social dialect – something which is true to a greater or lesser extent of all the English-speaking countries.

As far as codification is concerned, this refers to the fact that Standard English is the variety whose grammar has been described and given public recognition in grammar books and dictionaries, with its norms being widely considered to be 'correct' and constituting 'good usage'. Dictionaries also present norms for spelling. Stabilization means that this type of codification has the effect of ensuring that the variety takes on a relatively uniform and somewhat stable form. However, this uniformity and stability are only relative. The Standard English used in different parts of the native English-speaking world differs noticeably from one place to another, and it is these differences that form the subject matter of this book.

First, however, to give some idea of how Standard English differs from other nonstandard dialects of the language, we can point out that because of its history and special status, Standard English has a number of grammatical peculiarities which distinguish it from most other varieties. These include the following:

1 Standard English does not distinguish between the past tense forms of the auxiliary verb *to do* and those of the main verb *to do*. The past tense form in Standard English is *did* in both cases: *You did it, did you?* But in most nonstandard dialects, all over the English-speaking world, *did* is the past tense of the auxiliary, but the main verb has the past tense form *done: You done it, did you?*
2 Standard English does not have the grammatical feature which is called negative concord. In most nonstandard varieties, negative forms agree grammatically with one another throughout a clause as in *I couldn't find none nowhere*, where all the words that can take a negative form do so. In Standard English, grammatical agreement or concord of this type does not occur: *I couldn't find any anywhere*.
3 Standard English has an irregular way of forming reflexive pronouns, with some forms based on the possessive pronouns *myself*, *yourself*, *ourselves*, *yourselves* and others based on the object pronouns *himself, themselves*. Many nonstandard dialects have a regular system using possessive forms throughout – i.e. *myself*, *yourself*, *hisself*, *ourselves*, *yourselves*, *theirselves*.
4 Standard English has irregular past forms of the verb *to be*, distinguishing between singular and plural, something which does not happen with other verbs: *I was*, *he was* but *we were*, *they were*. Most nonstandard dialects have

the same form for singular and plural: *I was*, *she was*, *we was*, *you was*, *they was*; or *I were*, *he were*, *we were*, *you were*, *they were*.

5 For many irregular verbs, Standard English redundantly distinguishes between past tense and perfect verb forms by using distinct past tense and past participle forms, as well as the auxiliary verb *have: I have seen him*; *I could have gone* versus *I saw him*; *I went*. Many other dialects have no distinction between the past tense and past participle forms, and rely on the presence versus absence of *have* alone: *I have seen him*; *I could have went* versus *I seen him*; *I went*.

It is important to stress that the codification and distinctiveness of Standard English do not extend beyond grammar to any other areas of language usage. There is no necessary connection, for instance, between the opposition between standard and nonstandard, and the opposition between formal and informal. Varieties of language viewed from the point of view of relative formality are known technically as *styles* – formal styles are employed in social situations which are formal, and informal styles are employed in informal situations. Stylistic differences in English are mostly conveyed by choice of words, as we can see if we think about the differences between the following three sentences:

Father was exceedingly fatigued subsequent to his extensive peregrination.
Dad was very tired after his lengthy journey.
The old man was bloody knackered after his long trip.

Some of the words here, such as *was* and *his*, are stylistically neutral; others range from the ridiculously formal *peregrination* through very formal *fatigued* to intermediate *tired* to informal *trip* to very informal (British) *knackered* and tabooed informal *bloody*. But our point here is that the sentence

The old man was bloody knackered after his long trip

is clearly and unambiguously Standard English. Speakers and writers of Standard English have a full range of styles open to them, just as speakers of other varieties do, and they can swear and use slang just like anybody else. Equally,

Father were very tired after his lengthy journey

is a sentence in a nonstandard variety of English (from the north of England, perhaps), as we can see from the nonstandard verb form *were*, but it is couched in a rather formal style. Speakers can be informal in Standard English just as they can be formal in nonstandard dialects.

Similarly, there is no connection between Standard English and technical vocabulary. In sociolinguistics, the term *register* refers to a variety of language which is related to topic, subject matter or activity, such as the register of mathematics,

the register of medicine or the register of football. And we can certainly acquire and use technical registers without using Standard English, just as we can employ non-technical registers while speaking or writing Standard English. There is no necessary connection between the two. The sentence

There was two eskers what we saw in them U-shaped valleys

is a nonstandard English sentence written in the technical register of physical geography. The sentence

Smith crossed the ball into the box from the byline and Jones just missed with his header

is a Standard English sentence in the register of football (soccer).

Standardization does not extend to pronunciation either. There is no such thing as a Standard English accent. Standard English has nothing to do with accent, and in principle, it can be spoken with any pronunciation. In this book, however, we do spend quite a lot of time talking about phonetics and phonology. We discuss only a small proportion of the English accents that are found in the world, concentrating on those accents which most frequently occur together with spoken Standard English. Although there is no connection in principle, as we just said, between the standard variety and any accent, in practice, some accents are more likely to be used by the sort of people who are most likely to speak (as opposed to write) Standard English: those of higher social status or educational level. Most of the variation between different varieties of English in the world are to be found at the level of pronunciation, and accents are therefore an important source of both interest and difficulty. For each variety that we discuss, therefore, we treat not only vocabulary and grammar but also pronunciation.

1.1 Models of English

There are three types of countries in the world in terms of their relationship to the English language. First, there are nation-states in which English is a *native* language (*ENL*) – where people have English as their mother tongue, as they do in Australia, Canada and Ireland. Varieties of English spoken in ENL countries are sometimes also referred to as 'Inner Circle' Englishes. Second, there are countries where English is a *foreign* language (*EFL*), as in Poland, China and Brazil – sometimes known as 'Expanding Circle' nations. These are places where people do not speak English natively and where, if they do speak English, they use it to speak to foreigners. And, third, there are places where English is a *second* language (*ESL*). In ESL or 'Outer Circle' countries such as India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya and Singapore, English is not typically spoken as a mother tongue, but it has some kind of governmental or other official status; it is used as a means of communication within the country, at least amongst the educated

classes, and it is widely employed in the education system, in the newspapers and in the media generally.

The distinction between ENL, EFL and ESL is by no means absolute. Some varieties of English, for instance, have an interesting recent history of transition from ESL to ENL status. The most obvious example is southern Irish English. As we point out in Chapter 5, until the nineteenth century, most of the people in much of Ireland were still native speakers of Irish Gaelic, a Celtic language. The process of language shift whereby most people gradually abandoned Gaelic means that today Irish people generally are native speakers of an English that has left behind some traces of Gaelic in modern English in central and southern Ireland (SIrEng). Features which would originally have been ESL features, resulting from English having been learnt by people whose native language was Gaelic, are now simply part of native-speaker English in Ireland. For this reason, we can call SIrEng a *shift variety*, meaning that it is the result of relatively recent language shift. There are many other such shift varieties of English where language shift from some other language has had an influence on the linguistic characteristics of the English in question – these include the English spoken in much of Wales, the Shetland Islands, the Scottish Highlands and the Channel Islands.

ESL Englishes are the subject of Chapter 8, but most of the rest of the book is taken up with accounts of ENL varieties. One of our reasons for doing this is that ENL varieties have typically quite naturally been used as models for people learning EFL, just as people learning, say, German would typically learn it directly or indirectly from native speakers of German. But because there are so many different varieties of ENL around the world, exposure to one of them does not necessarily equip foreign learners for coping other varieties when they encounter them. We hope that this book will be of some assistance with this problem.

Of the ENL varieties that are typically used as models in EFL teaching, there are two which have figured most prominently. Traditionally, schools and universities in Europe – and in many other parts of the world – have taught the variety of English which is often referred to as 'British English'. As far as grammar and vocabulary are concerned, this generally means Standard English as it is normally written and spoken by educated speakers in England and, with certain differences, in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. As far as pronunciation is concerned, it means something much more restrictive, for the RP ('Received Pronunciation') accent which is taught to foreigners is actually used by perhaps only 3–5 per cent of the population of England and by more or less nobody anywhere else. Like Standard English, the RP accent has its origins in the south-east of England, but it is currently a social accent associated with the BBC, the public schools in England and the members of the upper-middle and upper classes. It is true that it also has a history of having considerable prestige in the whole of the British Isles and British Commonwealth, but it is today an accent associated mostly with England. For this reason, in this book, we shall refer to the combination of British Standard English