The case against the 'native speaker'

CARMEN ACEVEDO BUTCHER

Do we need fairer names for speakers of English?

[A discussion of current popular early 3rd-millennium definitions attached to the phrase *native speaker* (meaning 'someone born and raised speaking correct English'), including an examination of global changes which suggest that a profoundly changed and changing world requires radically new linguistic terms.]

IT IS ARGUED that the current semantics of superiority attached to *native speaker* are a continuation of *native*'s long and checkered history, and that, although this phrase is currently in the linguistic ascendant, its history of slavery, colonialism, manifest destiny, and apartheid necessitates the acceptance of new globally-minded terms by linguists in general and teachers of English as an international language (EIL) in particular. The phonological terms *MES*, *BES*, *NBES*, *L1*, and *L2* used by Jennifer Jenkins (2000) are discussed in this context, and, slightly modified, are suggested for use in a wider linguistics arena.

'Ever-whirling' world change and linguistic terms

Nowhere is it more evident that history is told by the victors than in the short but semantically loaded phrase *native speaker*. What is less than helpful in linguistics and especially in the researching, writing, and teaching of World Englishes today is the last manifestation of an old world order of British colonialism and American imperialism. When I was a Fulbright scholar in London and hearing British English spoken for the first time *in situ*, I complimented a young Herefordshire man on his wonderful accent, and he replied to my Southern drawl with a twinkle in his eye, 'My dear, I have no accent. It is the rest of the world that has an accent, not I.'

What we have grown accustomed to calling 'native speakers of English' are accustomed to enjoying this sort of superiority complex, whether tongue-in-cheek or, more often, not. But, as Edmund Spenser writes in the *Mutability Cantos* (concluding *The Faerie Queene*), the dominant earthly force is not humanity and its self-important schedule but the 'ever-whirling wheele /Of Change' (ll. 1-2). Caught in this change, the modern world has difficulties seeing and accepting it. Recent headlines in Edinburgh's *Evening News* include, '"Big Blue" goes red as IBM sells PC arm to Chinese group' (8 Dec 04). In an interview by BBC World News,

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Professor Chenggang Xu of the London School of Economics described this $1.75 billion IBM-Lenovo deal as especially important from a 'psychological' or 'symbolic' perspective (9 Dec 04). The deal will thrust China's Lenovo into third spot behind American PC makers Dell and Hewlett-Packard, and there may be further changes to the world order: Lenovo's CEO Yang Yuanqing said, 'We are looking at the possibility of listing on the Nasdaq or the NYSE,' which would be a first.

Add to this the global economic phenomenon known as *outsourcing* that has put India and other countries so much in the news lately and has contributed to the twenty-first-century 'jobless recovery' in America, then consider news from the Congressional Budget Office and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), estimating that America's federal debt will grow to between $5.4 trillion and $9 trillion by 2013, with between $305 billion and $473 billion paid in interest payments that year (2004). Additionally, America's trade deficit grew to an all-time high of $55.5 billion (€41.7 billion) in October 2004 as imports surged to the highest levels on record.

When digested, this news makes it easy to see why the American dream of progress, home ownership, and steady employment has become elusive, more like a fantasy. Meanwhile, a *New York Times* article reads: 'Almost overnight, South America has driven a historic global shift in food production that is turning the largely untapped frontier heartland of the continent into the world's new breadbasket' (12 Dec 04). In other words, Lucas Do Rio Verde, Brazil, a place few Europeans and even fewer Americans have heard of, has begun (the article notes) to challenge the United States and Europe in their 'traditional dominance' of the global farm trade. In an October 2004 visit, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell described Brazil as 'an agricultural superpower'. *Superpower* is a word most often associated with the United States, but here is the first American Secretary of State for the third millennium using that term in association with a South American country that appears infrequently in the US headlines.

Also rarely in the news are the changing global demographics recorded by censuses predicting that by 2050 whites will be the minority race in the United States (as they already are in such locales as California, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia), Hispanics will be the dominant ethnicity, and the fastest growing demographic in America will be Asian (26 Mar 04). Also, the changes precipitated in the modern world and on the English languages by the Internet and by that tragedy in America known simply as *9/11* are certainly acknowledged as profound. The search-engine Google's ambitious six-year plan to convert some fifteen million books into digital files in partnership with the New York Public Library and Harvard, Stanford, and Oxford universities elicited this observation from *The New York Times* editorial: 'It will take even longer to understand the cultural implications of admitting everyone with Internet access to the contents of the world's great research libraries' (2004).

This present, progressively more interdependent global world requires positive, inclusive terms for language, like *the Englishes*, used to acknowledge that *the English language* no longer exists as such. Instead, we have *Philippine English, Hong Kong English, South African English, Canadian English, Welsh English, Korean English, Irish English, Singaporean English, New Zealand English, Scottish English, Japanese English, International English, Liberian English, BBC English, Malaysian English, German English, Yorkshire English, Ebonics, Jamaican English, Lancashire English, Australian English, Hawaiian English, Indian English, American English*, and so forth and so on, ad dialectal infinitum (cf. Nicholls, 2003).

'Native speaker' in the linguistic ascendant

Attitudes to language historically lag behind contemporary events, however, and the current use of *native speaker* is a prime example. In a fall 2004 posting by Korea University (KU) for the position of an Assistant Professor of English in Phonology, the advertisement listed as a requirement that the applicant be a native speaker of English. Korea University, along with Seoul National and Yonsei one of Korea's top three universities, and under the leadership of President Yoon-Dae Euh, has recently begun an initiative called *Global KU Project*, aimed at increasing Korea University's international presence through concrete steps like**:** establishing KU campuses in Canada (at the University of British Columbia), in England (at Royal Holloway, University of London), in Australia (at Griffith University), and in Japan (at Waseda University); conducting International

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Summer Campus programs on the KU campus in Seoul; and increasing to 30% the content courses taught in English. This last goal has resulted in KU's targeting the hiring of 'foreign' professors (2004).

As can be seen in this Korea University job posting, the phrase *native speaker* has great cachet and, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, is in the linguistic ascendant. A survey of the contemporary use of this phrase reveals that *native speaker*, following Noam Chomsky, denotes an inviolate linguistic standard against which any 'deviation' is deemed erroneous. *Konglish* (an English I prefer to call by its professional linguistic name, *Korean English*) is often defined in the negative, as that which does not exist in the communicative repertoire of 'native English-speakers', and is consequently a term of depreciation. A popular online 'Konglish' lexicon, Leon's *EFL Planet*, announces that '[s]ome *native English teachers* [meaning, 'expert English teachers'] have offered minor contributions [to this site] from listening to their students' (2004). This site has a category called 'Fabricated Phrases', defined as 'English phrases that do not exist in *native English-speakers*' lexicons'. Stronger still, *EFL Planet* describes as 'verbicide' what I consider dialectal differences in Korean English: more on this point below.

Recently *The Korea Times* ran an article strikingly titled in the imperative 'Clean Your Own House First'. In it, Jeffrey Miller describes his frustration with 'Come to Korea' websites riddled by English grammatical errors and typos: 'What I can never understand for the life of me is when there are so many *native* English teachers in Korea, why their services are not in more demand for cleaning up these errors' (9 Nov 04). The *Kent Konglish Workbook* makes the same juxtaposition of the superior 'native speaker' to the language learner whose efforts are viewed as 'wrong' and in need of correction. The website for this workbook advertises that it 'focuses on helping Korean EFL/ESL students overcome their use of Konglish through self-study', and the workbook can be ordered along with '*native-speaker* audio packs' (2004). Finally, an article in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, touting the opening (8 Dec 04) in Seoul of an 'English village' dedicated to giving 'full [English] immersion' to Korean students reminds its global audience that '[s]peaking English with a *native* accent is widely prized in South Korea' (2004). Although it is not specified, I suppose 'native' here means with the old-school British RP (Received Pronunciation) accent, despite the fact that the RP accent is spoken today by less than 3% of the population in England. Or maybe it refers to the GA (General American) accent spoken by roughly a third of Americans (or, one might say, roughly spoken by a few Americans). This may be a benign enough looking assumption in terms of the old colonial or imperialistic world order but not the new international one.

This view is not, however, unchallenged. Donald B. Snow's *More Than a Native Speaker: An Introduction for Volunteers Teaching English Abroad* (1996) is representative of the notion that being a 'native speaker' is not enough to make one a good teacher of the English language. For example, no one could argue that George W. Bush would make a good EFL teacher in China. The list of 'Bushisms' speaks against the suggestion, as when President Bush declared recently in a speech at the signing ceremony for a $417 billion defense spending bill: 'Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we' (5 Aug 04). More recently, the *New York Times* op-ed writer, Bob Herbert, drew attention in his column, 'Fiddling as Iraq Burns', to this presidential native speaker's having characterized the invasion of Iraq as a 'catastrophic success' (17 Dec 04).

'Native speaker' is also used in a wider context to refer to languages other than English, similarly suggesting a 'perfect' standard. The online service Lingup 'helps you practice your language skills by connecting you to *native speakers* and by providing you with all the necessary communication tools' (2004). Its homepage shouts out in orange and black, 'Practice with *native speakers* and improve your language skills! /Already more than 50 foreign languages available. JOIN NOW!' Also, as part of the intensifying 'global studies' demand in American institutions of higher education, Albion College in Michigan has established a '*Native Speaker* Program', enlisting the services of twenty-something university students from French, Spanish, or German-speaking countries (2004). These 'native speakers' are afforded special status, as the Albion website announces: '*Native speakers* are … vital … [in t]heir role in the Language Department… *Native Speakers* hold a special position of respect at Albion College.'

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The divisive history of 'native speaker'

In order to better understand the outmoded utility of this phrase, *native speaker*, its checkered history must be explored. If the entries in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for *native* as a noun are surveyed, it quickly becomes apparent that this word is a divider, not a unifier. Equally clear is that it is virtually impossible to use this word without dragging up its unconscionable semantic baggage. Spanning the last four centuries, over fifty percent of the recorded uses for *native* are listed by the *OED* as 'offensive', 'depreciative', and/or otherwise condescending. Beginning in the early sixteenth century and continuing to the present, twenty-five percent of the uses denote 'belonging' or 'not belonging' and smack of colonialism and/or nationalism. *Native* belongs to the language of exclusion that applies, as we will see, even to marine mollusks. As Jennifer Jenkins points out in *The Phonology of English as an International Language*, 'In the days of empire, the *natives* were the indigenous populations and the term itself implied uncivilized, primitive, barbaric, even cannibalistic' (2000, 229). In other words, from the seventeenth century on, *natives* designated those peoples conquered, ruled, and looked down on by the British empire. The natives were the vanquished.

Slavery

Native's etymology provides a chilling backdrop to its over seven-hundred-year-old heritage. Deriving from the Latin *nativus*, 'innate, produced by birth', *native*'s earliest recorded English definition can be recognized as one that denotes the most extreme state of subjugation a human can experience. The 1381 definition is 'a person born in [feudal or other] bondage; a person born to servants, tenants, etc., and inheriting their status'. *Native*'s dark semantic foundation is that it was born into slavery. In the world of kings, lords, wealth, and land versus serfs, *native* begins on the short end of the escheat stick: 'Bondage by birth' was the most common definition throughout the 1300s and into the 1400s, and seven percent of the historical entries for *native* denote this.

Considering these three semantic categories of disrespect, exclusion, and enslavement, over 80% of the *OED*'s recorded uses for *native* are inhumane or somehow degrading to a fellow human being. The irony in the 1381 *OED* reference (above) is also worth noting. Taken from the third of four nineteenth-century volumes (*The Douglas Book*) describing the prominent Earls of Douglas, this fourteenth-century *OED* reference falls in the time of James, the 2nd Earl of Douglas (*c.* 1358–1388), the famous Scot who in 1388 captured the flag of the English Earl of Northumberland, Hotspur Percy, at a battle near Newcastle. This 2nd Earl of Douglas died fighting the English over yet another territorial dispute not long after (1885, 29).

The Scottish and English border wars

As custom has it, afterwards these bloody Scottish-English skirmishes were celebrated (as it were) in the heroic ballad of Chevy Chase, popular for over 200 years (*c.* 1430–*c.* 1640). In *Defense of Poetry*, Sir Philip Sidney confesses a hankering for such heroic verse with bloody affairs he terms 'honorable enterprises'; this sixteenth-century cupbearer for Queen Elizabeth lived during England's acquisition of world power (and was himself involved in preparing England's defence against the Spanish). Sidney writes in his defence of poetry, 'I must confess my own barbarity, for I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I didn't find my heart moved more than with a trumpet.' Sidney is applauding stanzas like this one:

> Ah, God! It was a grief to see
> And such a misery to hear
> Men crying, lying in their gore,
> All scattered here and there. (1966)

From the very beginning, then, *native* denoted the crime of congenital slavery and was found in conjunction with all that is wrong with the world: bloody border battles between wealthy, privileged men, and, later, the glorification of nationalistic impulses.

The University of Michigan's online *Middle English Dictionary* substantiates this earliest, Medieval definition for *natif* (adj., also *native*, pl. *natifs*): '(c) bond; born in servitude or serfdom; as noun: a bondsman, serf; natifman, serf; natifman to – attached (to a monastery) as a serf' (2004). The *OED* shows that this definition held through the successive centuries, and in the eighteenth century *Phillips's New World of Words* states, 'There being three sorts of Servants, viz. *Natives*, Bondmen, and Villains' (1706). The nineteenth century *OED* entry

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reads, 'It is obvious that … the *native* so emancipated laboured under other disqualifications' (1878).

Colonialism

The *OED* lists the year 1603 as the first recorded use of *native* to describe 'a member of an indigenous ethnic group, freq. with a suggestion of inferior status, culture, etc., and hence (esp. in modern usage) considered *offensive,*' as seen in the following entry from Giovanni Botero's *Travellers Breviat: or an Historicall Description of the most famous Kingdomes in the World*: 'He committed no lesse an error in suffering the *Natiues* to keepe their possessions and to inhabit all their townes,' and in 1631 the British colonizer of Virginia, John Smith, wrote in his final work, *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New England*, 'More [land] to spare than all the *natives* of those Countries can use and culturate.' In 1725 Daniel Defoe linked the word specifically with war, 'The Stories of their Engagements, when they have had any Scuffle either with *Natives*, or European Enemies.' A reference for 1777 further associates *native* with the vanquished: 'Columbus … continued to interrogate all the *natives*.'

A work as recent as 1896, *Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia, being a narrative of events in Matabeleland*, records this bit of unconscious but nevertheless articulate condescension: 'No one could have recognized … in the quiet, submissive native … the arrogant savage of old times,' and it is followed hard after in the 1950 *Rhodesian Adventure* by this complete dismissal of indigenes' humanity, 'There was nothing here when the pioneers came. Save bushveld and natives and wild animals.' Another expression of the supposed second-rate nature of the *native* (this time referring to 'a member of the indigenous Indian or Inuit peoples of North America') is found in the 1910 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which places 'white civilization' as the world standard for good living: 'The natives have adopted many customs of white civilization.'

Apartheid

The *OED* notes that *native* was also used to distinguish 'any of the black peoples of South Africa … from a person who is white or of mixed descent' and that it was later used as 'the official racial designation under the policy of apartheid during the mid-twentieth century'. It lists this entry for 1826: '31 Dec., Baptized five Adult *Natives*, on their profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.' In this example, the 'uncouth, unsaved "native"' is forcefully contrasted with and also denigrated by the conquering nation's perceived superior qualities and religion. Apartheid, of course, was the institutionalization of racial discrimination and as such hardly possessed the upper hand morally over the so-labeled *natives*, another dark historical moment for this word semantically, over 400 years after its first recorded use to denote 'a person born in bondage'.

An entry for 1930 from Leonard J. Barnes's *Caliban in Africa* is more specific in placing *native* squarely on the side of the disenfranchised: 'Any danger of white political supremacy [in South Africa] being jeopardized by native numbers is still remote… . The current alarms … are the work of benighted politicians who suppose baashood to be best nourished on fear and hatred of the native' (94). This same twentieth-century English journalist and social activist also wrote, 'So he [the South African white] and the native he holds captive go spinning down the stream fatally, madly spinning together along the rapids above the great cataract, both yoked to one omnipotent hour' (1939).

The word's association with bloodshed and war is deepened in this 1948 context: 'Most of the assaults reported were by natives against Europeans' (from Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*), while the old link with slavery is made as recently as 1990 in the riveting *My Traitor's Heart: A South African Exile Returns to Face His Country, His Tribe, and His Conscience*, written by Rian Malan, the scion of a well-known Afrikaner family, who describes the slave labour his family had helped establish: 'Natives cooked my meals, polished my shoes, made my bed, mowed the lawn, trimmed the hedge, and dug holes at my father's direction' (30).

More colonialism

In both the United Kingdom and the United States, *native* was also used during the periods of colonialism and slavery to denote 'a black person of African origin or descent'. Dickens writes in *Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son* (1848, p.89), 'At length the Major being released from his fit, went one Saturday growling down to Brighton, with the native behind

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him.' In this nineteenth-century novel exposing pride's inhumanity (as seen in Dombey's exceptionally unfeeling relationships with others, his penchant for treating people – even his own children – as pawns, as well as his overall failure to desire community), *native* assumes its lowest context and most depersonalized meaning yet. The *native* is that non-person who, as fortune's hostage, must do Major Joe Bagstock's bidding, be it spying on Dombey by communicating with Miss Tox's maid or walking silently behind this flatterer to whom proud, unfatherly Dombey ultimately falls victim.

Other nineteenth- and even twentieth-century examples of this category feature negative adjectives modifying *native* depreciatively (the expanded italics in the following examples are authorial emphasis): 'The girl … was … really much superior to the rest of the *odious natives* in their neighborhood' (1800); '*Natives*, *silly* people generally; the *untravelled* population of any town, wrapt up in incipient simplicity are natives' (1823); 'Merely temporal people, who are just as *narrow-minded* and *dull* as … merely local people – the *natives* of a neighbourhood' (1877); and 'The house, Odum Harborage, corrupted to Odum Garborage by *irreverent natives*, was a notable mishmash even for Long Island' (1975).

Jimmy Buffett and 'The Natives Are Restless'

This sort of prejudice lingers in the phrase *the natives are restless*, which can be intended, as the *OED* notes, in a *humorous* fashion to mean 'trouble is brewing; there is discontent or dissatisfaction', but is, the *OED* immediately clarifies, '[n]ow used to convey any collective hostility or disgruntlement, *[and] the phrase is sometimes associated with supposed attitudes of colonial or imperial rule*.' The first recorded entry for this phrase is in the title of a popular jazz song played by Marty Paich and the Jazz City Workshop in the 1950s. As recorded in a 2004 Jimmy Buffett cover of this song, the often-changing but always offensive lyrics jar the modern ear with their colonial *Weltanschauung*:

Let me tell you 'bout my neighborhood

If you're visiting tonight
You better stay out of the shadows
Stay in the bright, bright light
Don't take fright, the natives are restless tonight

They're not particularly interested in me or you
They're just looking for some meat
They can put in their stew
Don't take fright, the natives are restless tonight

And they say...
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba
hey hey
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba
hey hey

It's best to stay upstairs
With the Good Book alone
'Cause when the drums start burnin'
You better leave your sermons at home
Don't take fright, the natives are restless
tonight

And they say...
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba
hey hey
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba
hey hey

You might consider yourself lucky
Just to be alive
'Cause it's a full moon tonight
And it's right for a conquering tribe.
Don't take fright, the natives are restless tonight

And they say...
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba
hey hey
Hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey
hoom baba hoom baba hoom baba hey hey

In the 1967 *Issues of National Security*, the phrase appears in a more serious context: 'Interesting differences have developed in the style of military assistance offered to the developing nations. The British … approach is characteristically a cool, "the natives are restless tonight" pragmatism.'

Negative hyphenation and superior oysters

Native is also used in hyphenated words to impart a sense of shoddy workmanship; it is a synonym for *jerry-built*, as noted in these examples spanning the twentieth century and entering the twenty-first: 'The older natives seem to keep these houses for show, using in preference little *native-built* hovels behind' (*Journal of Anthropological Institute*, 1901) and 'Gause … set out in a *native-built* boat with

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a dilapidated diesel engine' (*Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 11 Nov 01).

While over eighty percent of the entries for the nominative case of *native* are negative towards humans, only four percent of the historical entries are used for praise that does not in some way directly demean or exclude another person or country, although this sense does divide oyster from oyster in a transference of colonial language, as seen in the definition, 'An oyster wholly or partly reared in British waters, now typically in artificial beds; *esp.* the common European oyster, *Ostrea edulis*. Also: an oyster of a *superior* quality [emphasis by the author].' Examples: 'In the London market oysters are divided into two great classes – "*natives*" and "commons"' (1879); 'Such a thing as putting seconds [inferior oysters] on native shells is not entirely unknown' (1891); '"*Natives*" are those [oysters] supposed to have passed the whole of their lives in the beds about the mouth of the Thames and Medway' (1945); and '*Natives* sell at three times the price of Pacific oysters' (1995). How Pacific oysters feel about this discrimination is not known.

That leaves 14% of the entries that could be considered 'neutral'. In these cases, *native* is used to refer to indigenous plants or animals, as in 'The marmout is chiefly a *native* of the Alps', from Oliver Goldsmith's 1774 *A History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, or even to astrological signs, such as 'Gemini, Sagittarius *natives* seem constantly to turn up in your life', in the *Tucson Citizen* (Arizona, 20 Sep 79). And even this semantic category can be used to signal that one group is judged inferior and therefore 'out' while another is held up as superior and therefore 'in', especially when *native* is used adjectivally, as in: 'The *greatest* and *most luxuriant* Species in most Genera of Plants are *Native* of the Mountains,' found in a 1692 John Ray (1628–1705) sermon with the title, *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* (aptly enough for a later argument in this paper on linear versus circular thinking, another of Ray's sermons was titled 'On the Chaos, Deluge, and Dissolution of the World').

Manifest destiny

The adjectival uses of *native* mirror the nominative ones. A closer look at an *OED* entry dated 1859 reveals the *us*-versus-*them* mentality engendered by *native* as modifier, found multiple times in an inaugural address written by the polymath George P. Marsh, a philologist, early environmentalist, businessman, lawyer, and politician. He wrote *The Origin and History of the English Language, and of the Early Literature It Embodies* (1862), as well as *Man and Nature: Or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*. He also served as a Vermont Congressman and Ambassador to Italy. In 'An Apology for the Study of English' (1 Nov 1858), one of a series of lectures Marsh delivered at Columbia, he makes the case that English philology must become a serious subject at American universities.

His argument largely consists of trumpeting the superiority of English culture and language: he subtly reminds his audience that England took over where the Romans left off, and he compares English to mother's milk for the soul. Marsh hammers out this message by using *native* twice in the first two sentences:

> The severe Roman bestowed upon the language of his *native* land the appellation of *patrius sermo*, the paternal speech; but we, deriving from the domesticity of Saxon life a truer and tenderer appreciation of the best and purest source of linguistic instruction, more happily name our home-born English the mother tongue. The tones of the *native* language are the medium through which the affections and the intellect are first addressed, and they are to the heart and the head of infancy what the nutriment drawn from the maternal breast is to the physical frame. (59)

Marsh's use of *native* throughout his address suggests that he sees it as an inherent, superior good: for example, he refers to the '*native* philology' of English (63), '*native* English' (65), '*native* scholarship' (71), '*native* tongue' (77), and '*native* soil' (88). He understood that because America's 'native' tongue is English, 'we require a more comprehensive knowledge of our own tongue than any other people' (76); furthermore, his writing is a precise example of Manifest Destiny because Marsh believes that in the study of the works of 'old English writers … we [Americans] find, not only the most forcible forms of expression, but a marvelous affluence of the mighty thoughts, out of which has grown the action that has made England and her children the wonder and the envy of the world' (70–1). He adds this paean to London and its in-every-way-best 'Christian tongue':

> The British capital is at the geographical centre of the terrestrious portion of the globe, and

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> while other great cities represent individual nationalities, or restricted and temporary aims, the lasting, cardinal interests of universal humanity have their brightest point of radiation in the city of London. The language of England is spoken by greater numbers than any other Christian speech, and it is the vehicle of a wider, purer, more beneficent moral action than any other existing tongue. Its prevalence is everywhere marked by social order, by civil and religious liberty, by general intelligence and progressive knowledge, by enlightened and comprehensive charity; and it is remarkable that, while some younger languages and younger races are decaying and gradually disappearing from this natal soil, the English speech and the descendants of those who first employed it, are making hourly conquests of new territory, and have already established their posts within hailing distance throughout the circuit of the habitable globe. (86)

That *native* is used ten times in this very nineteenth-century address shows its ability to denote perceived superiority and to exclude, making it dangerous and divisive and hardly the diction for the inclusive contexts required by a global community.

This review of *native*'s historical profile reveals that it has been used over the centuries to describe the enslavement, denigration, and segregation of 'other' people and countries. The adjectival entries for *native* also reflect this unenlightened semantic bias. When a word with this sort of divisive, demeaning history turns up in the phrase *native speaker*, all kinds of negative associations attach themselves to its use and threaten to further divide person from person and country from country. The repression of minorities to create and sustain a national identity must surely be considered a part of the old world order, worth remembering only to ensure that we take a new course in the third millennium, a course where everyone belongs.

New terms, new attitudes, and the 'obsoletion' (both *obsolescence* and *deletion*) of *Native Speaker*

I am not alone, then, in thinking that a new paradigm is needed, and Jenkins makes a cogent phonological argument for new terms, new pedagogy, and a new attitude among teachers of English as an international language (EIL). The examples at the beginning of this essay show that 'native speakers' are much in demand these days. While peaceful global exchanges in the world of academics are to be encouraged and applauded, these should surely always be done in a spirit of mutual respect and humility. The use of *native speaker* is not useful in this context because its one-sided use points to the lingering and totally unsustainable superiority complex of those countries where English was first spoken. *Native speaker* does not foster good international relations. Note, for example, that *native speaker* is popularly used to refer to an English-speaking person but not to a *native speaker* of, say, Korean or Chinese, an indication, perhaps, of how few monolingual English speakers attempt to learn to converse in an Asian tongue.

Monolingual English speaker (MES) and bilingual English speaker (BES)

Jenkins advocates cultivating progressive democratic attitudes towards the teaching of the pronunciation of EIL (2000:4). This will require the obsoletion of parochial terms like *native speaker* and *non-native speaker*, which refuse equal rights to all who wish to speak an English (cf. Jenkins, 2000:11). More helpful terms are needed, not only in the field of phonology, but throughout linguistics. Jenkins suggests (2000:9) *monolingual English speaker (MES)* instead of *native speaker (of English)* and *bilingual English speaker (BES)* for people like my Sogang University student Sinae, who communicates fluently in both Korean and English. She also points out that because second-language speakers now outnumber those for whom English is the mother tongue, the terms 'L1 speaker' and 'L2 speaker' might be useful and hopefully 'more neutral … [o]n those occasions where it is necessary to distinguish between those bilinguals for whom English is a first-learned language and those for whom it is a second (or third or fourth) language' (2000, 1, 10).

These new, more internationally sensitive terms effect a subtle but profound change in the linguistic landscape. Suddenly a Korean and an American are put on equal linguistic footing. Sinae, born and raised in Korea, is placed in the same category as a Fulbright Lecturer born in North America's Melbourne, Florida, and raised in an English-only-speaking home in Georgia and Alabama, a *native speaker* who did not leave American soil until the age

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of twenty-one, to go abroad on a Rotary Scholarship to Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg where she could further her German studies and become more comfortable communicating in German. Under this novel terminology, I am no longer considered the '"superior" native speaker', but a fellow BES with my Korean student Sinae: English and German for me; Korean and English for her. We would then share a common linguistic space.

Cultural variations of L1s and L2s

One last topic must be considered here, but briefly in this essay focused on exploring the unsavory history of *native*. Colonializing L1 speakers of English have historically espoused a view of religion featuring an ideal God who exists outside humanity in an ideal world: he sent an ideal son to die for sinful humanity, and therefore perfection is something worth striving for; the English language of these early L1 speakers was, as Zuo Biao has put it, 'linearly arranged', hypotactic, and full of analysis (2001, 7). It was something you could 'get wrong', something you could fail at. This is a puritanical approach to language, where 'errors' like comma splices, fragments, fused sentences, split infinitives, and dangling modifiers are seen as signs of deep wrongness. Freshman Composition classes in America, for example, preach that these must be stamped out if one is to follow the narrow way to the blessed grace of 'error'-free – one could almost substitute *sinless* here – writing.

But the English language, now more usefully called the *Englishes*, no longer 'belong(s)' to those early users. As McArthur notes, 'English is the lingua franca that Asians now share with one another and the rest of the world. One should also add, however, that is now also manifestly an Asian language in its own right' (2002). Therefore, those of us who grew up singing the doxology and cringing to see our freshman college essays disfigured by shameful red correction marks are obliged by common courtesy to give our new linguistic neighbours a second look. These L2 speakers of the English languages (especially if they are, for example, Korean or Chinese) emphasize circularity over linearity, synthesis over analysis, relationships over schedules, 'meaning … over form, message over structure, and coherence over cohesion' (2001, 3, 6, 8). As Zuo Biao points out, 'The meaning of a sentence is understood mainly through context and language feel' (2001, 8). This mind understands the task at hand, the person relationship, and the process as being far more important than meeting a deadline.

An Asian, a Cuban, a Peruvian, an African, or a Turk is generally much more comfortable with the experience of creative, meaningful, even intelligent (what a Topekan or an Atlantan might call) chaos. This is what makes South Korea's ten million strong capital of Seoul so dynamic. *Chaos* is a negative word only to one who possesses a monochronic sense of time, which is in itself a symptom of the notion of a divine standard. It was, after all, 'chaos' that the Judeo-Christian God subdued and then made the world out of, as Genesis narrates. One look at my eight-year-old daughter's room gives the (enlightened) lie to this definition of *chaos*. When on one occasion I ordered my her (when she was six) to clean up her jumbled room or else, she shot back, 'But, Mommy, I like it just like this, 'cause then there are surprises.' She meant that under this pile or the other she might turn up something she had forgotten she had, or she might find there or somewhere else under something else something she never knew she owned; and to this day such 'surprises' still turn up in her tilting, shifting creative stacks.

Choosing the non-linear over the red-pen linguistic view

Such a non-linear view of the Englishes is more useful than the one with the red pen in its hand. Korean English (not 'Konglish') is a good example. Often the L1 mind has a right/wrong bias which proves unhelpful when for example Korean English is considered. Leon's EFL website lists *cider* under the 'Verbicide' category, as an example of one of the 'murderings' of standard English perpetrated by (his term) *Konglish*. It would be much more useful and far more interesting to view the Korean English use of *cider* as an intelligent new dialectal form. When I made my first trip to London some years ago, I sat in a strange café where everyone sounded (to my inexperienced ear) like a character from a P.G. Wodehouse novel, and I ordered a *lemonade*, by which I meant that comforting, tangy drink made of lemon juice that puckers, sugar, and water. What the Jeeves-swift waiter plonked down on the table

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at my elbow gave me semantic vertigo. First, it was not yellow, and, second, when I tasted it, it was carbonated, which is just not 'right' for 'lemonade.' Eventually it dawned on me that this yellow liquid was what a girl from Canton, Georgia, would call by the brand name *Sprite* or *7Up*, a citric soda with no lemon in it at all.

I had a similar experience when I came to Seoul to teach at Sogang University on the Fulbright Lectureship. If I wanted what an American calls 'Sprite', I learned that a little green can of *Chilsung Cider* was a good source of carbonated citric water. *Chilsung* means 'Seven Stars' in Korean, and *cider* denotes what *Sprite* does to the American or *lemonade* to the Brit. This is what languages do best. They adapt, they change, they grow. Would that we who speak them did likewise. The Korean English *cider*, then, is hardly an example of verbicide; it is a fine new dialectal creation for a soda.

A dynamic new Asian English lexicon has emerged and is emerging. When my British husband was taking an intensive Korean language course at Sogang University, he and a Japanese student were going through a conversational Korean exercise in preparation for an oral test. My husband asked his fellow student, 'Do you think we've practiced enough?' And she said only, 'Fighting!' which signifies something like 'Great!' His Korean language teacher often used this single word, 'Fighting!' as high praise in the classroom.

At Seoul Foreign School, elementary school children, especially the boys, tote see-through plastic bags filled with precious multicoloured *dotchis*, highly-prized flat plastic figures from games like Pokemon. At recess, one can always spot two elementary school children or larger circles of them crouched down on the playground, throwing dotchis. One dotchi is placed on the concrete area of the playground, and the opponent throws his or her dotchi against the stationary one; if he succeeds in turning over his adversary's dotchi, he gets to add that dotchi to his collection. A student looking to play dotchi will declare to a friend, 'I'll *verse* you.' The *verse* here does not indicate a line of poetry or a sentence from the Bible; it is an invitation to a dotchi duel. It seems to be an innovative back-formation from the Latin *versus* for 'against'.

These vibrant examples suggest that an intelligent, nonjudgmental attitude towards emerging World Englishes is needed today. My daughter and I were walking arm-in-arm down Sinchon Road when she spotted the following advertisement on a stationery store window:

Color 10,000
Block 8,000

The rest of the ad was in Hangul. Using her child's aptitude to gather meaning contextually (rather than requiring linear semiotics), she nudged me, and when I bent down, she whispered in my ear, 'Look, Mommy. That's supposed to be *Black*, isn't it?', chuckling softly. My eight-year-old spends much time learning to spell the truly confusing English language. L1 third graders weekly spend multiple class and homework hours grappling with it. I have often discussed with her the historical reasons for these spelling anomalies, and she is aware that language is an ever-shifting proposition. She is equally aware that divine clerics like Rector Robert Lowth bent themselves prescriptively on fixing the appearance of their 'native tongue', and in their misguided ossification 'bent' the language's orthography, contributing to the current unreliable spelling situation. That is why her chuckle over 'Block' had nothing in it of superiority, no disparagement, just the humour coming from a new way of looking at black-and-white photographic development, and we discussed that, if we had to write the same advertisement in Hangul, our copy would be far less communicative. How much so I learned later when I handed the Sogang Teaching Assistants my notes on this stationer's window and was told that this is actually an advertisement for computer cartridge refills, and nothing to do with photos.

Speaker versus communicator

I also want to briefly question the usefulness of the second half of that short toxic phrase, 'native *speaker*'. Historically, it can be said that *speaking* is the 'victorious' half of communication, the yang of the yin–yang principle (that which dominates). Words stressing this yang principle are best avoided in an international community. Communication, on the other hand, is usually much more than speaking. The root meaning of *communication* is not 'speaking,' but 'sharing': *communicate*, *communion*, *commune*, and *community* share roots in the Latin *communis* ('common'). *Common*, in turn, is defined by *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* as 'belonging to, open to, or affecting, the whole community or the public.' For good or for ill,

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this is the position 'English' finds itself in at the moment, and that is why more international-friendly terms must be adopted for all matters pertaining to the instruction and discussion of the Englishes. Perhaps even Jenkins's *MES* and *BES* might evolve into *MEC* (Monolingual English Communicator) and *BEC* (Bilingual English Communicator).

Conclusion

Melvyn Bragg points out that when those upstart colonial Americans started speaking the King's English, '[t]he British feared that 'their' English had been taken from them; that its new owners were not looking after it as it deserved; and a deeper fear that they [the Americans] were at the cutting edge now: it was not the British who propelled the adventure' (2003:286). John Algeo recommends a good way to avoid such cliquish thinking, and his comments on the future of the Englishes feature what I feel is the only sanctionable use of the phrase *native speaker*, to denote 'someone who has spoken a certain language since early childhood'. Algeo reminds us that the variety of the Englishes may be enjoyed:

> Common-core or World English is primarily written rather than spoken, but there has to be a spoken mode of it as well, because it must be used orally in meetings, over the airwaves, etc. But the existence of a standard general common-core English does not prevent Americans from sounding like Americans or Brits from sounding like Brits (or Georgians from sounding like Georgians or Tynesiders from sounding like Tynesiders, etc.). It will not prevent Korean speakers of Korean English from sounding like what they are, nor should it. National and regional varieties of English can exist happily side by side with common-core English. And each will influence the other, but neither need, nor can be, replaced by the other. Common-core English is closer to standard US and UK English than to any other variety simply because the US and UK outnumber all other native speakers of English. Over time, that can change and may very well do so. But that's the way the world is. It changes. And rather than bemoan the change, we should emulate Hopkins and exult in its 'pied beauty' (2004). ■

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