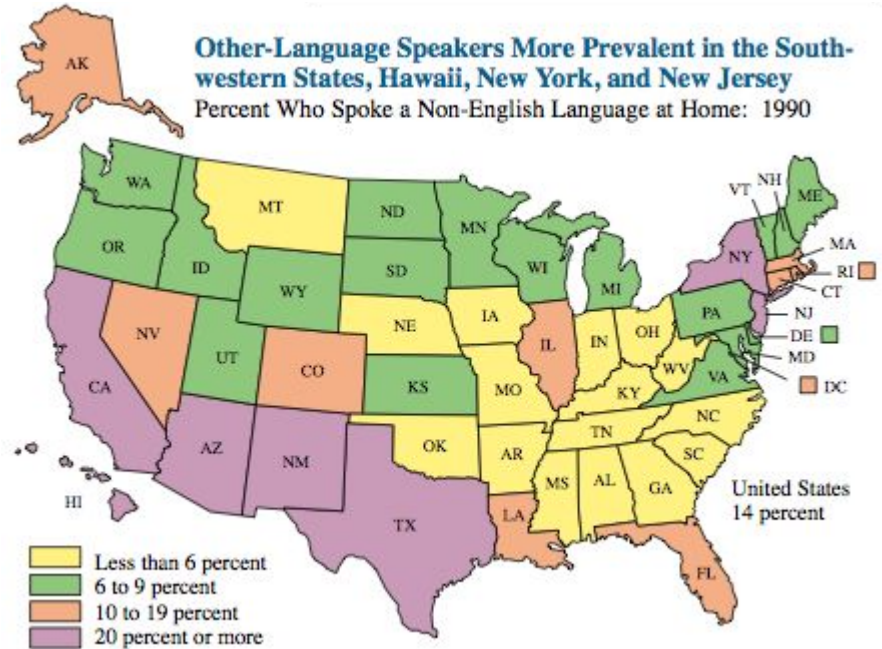


The Status of English in the U.S. and Around the World

Curzan pp. 467-474

English in the U.S.

- English often considered to have prestige, historically, other languages marginalized
 - Ex. Ben Franklin
 - German extremely relevant
- Many states have legislation making English the official language, others have “English-plus” amendments
 - Some states bilingual, others guarantee rights for certain languages
 - Dependent on languages used in area



Cases and Debates

- Several instances of court cases over language rights for languages other than English (LOTE)
- Arizona - all government employees had to conduct business in English from 1988-2006, four Navajo restaurant employees fired for not speaking English
- Texas - judge ordered a mother to speak only English to her child, otherwise would be “child abuse”
- Nebraska - father warned he would lose custody of his child if he used “the Hispanic language” with him
- Arizona and California have banned bilingual education

English Around the World

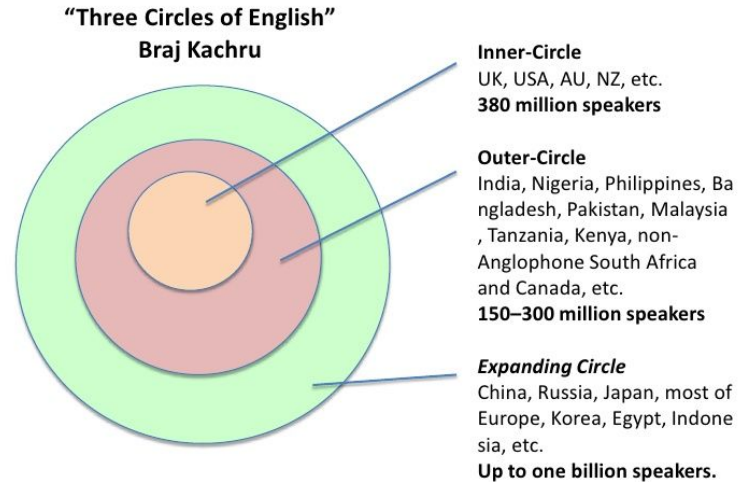


- Widespread use of English largely due to British imperialism and colonization
- Spread rapidly, no precedent for this
- Lingua franca - “common language,” English is this in some parts of the world (ex. Asia)
- English is a global language:
 - A priority in education
 - The first language of many people
 - An official language and used in media and education
 - 4 billion people speak at least some English, 1.5 billion are competent or fluent



Types of English Speakers

- “Inner circle” or L1: English is dominant language and culture
- “Outer circle” or L2: English is an official language or important, often have history of colonialism
- “Expanding circle” or L3: English commonly taught, considered to be an important language



Relevance

- English is a global language mainly because of its history
- Also useful is its adaptability, often borrows words
- Some facts about English given by the book:
 - Between 70 and 90 percent of academic publications are in English
 - In the 1990s, over 95 percent of the top music groups sang in English
 - About 80 percent of the information stored electronically is in English
- English is a privileged language
- Statistics not stable, rivaled by Spanish and Portuguese
- Minority languages growing too, the internet a large factor