

Technology (2): Texting



Smaller screens + smaller keypads → more abbreviated language (e.g. 2day, CUI8r, RUOk?, ASAP)



Technology (3): Netspeak future(s)

- New words created and inserted in everyday English vocabulary (e.g. selfie);
- Compounds:
 1. Repetition (e.g. mouse, mousepad; web, webcam);
 2. Cyber- & hyper-;
 3. At (@);
 4. Blends (e.g. internaut);
 5. Replacing a word-element by a similar sound item (e.g. 'dot');
 6. Acronyms (e.g. HTML, FAQ, URL, TTFN)
- Graphology (different use of capital letters; e.g. capitals in emails or text messages)
- Spelling (American more common than British; e.g. plural in -z)
- Minimal punctuation



'Standard' English

- It's a social convention (3-5% of the English population – almost 2 mln people: Standard British English);
- Process of 'standardization': selection, codification (its use has been described in grammar books and dictionaries) and stabilization;
- The role of the Royal Court in London (pre-standard English) → mixed dialect, since people who spoke it were from different areas of the south of England around London;
- Grammatical peculiarities:
 1. No distinction between the forms of 'do' when it is auxiliary or main verb;
 2. No double negative (no negative concord);
 3. Irregular reflexive pronouns (e.g. 'myself' from the adj., 'himself' from the pronoun)
 4. Past tense of 'to be' distinguished 'was' from 'were';
 5. In many forms, Standard English distinguishes between past tense and past participle.

World Standard English

- Language which is universally intelligible;
- USA first world country;
- Plain English → trend in contemporary language (official) above all for companies (UK's Golden Bull awards for the organizations that produce the clearest documents; Double-speak award in the USA);
- Plain English involves economy, health and safety;
- Plain English *vademecum* (some points are from Orwell's *Politics and the English Language*, 1947):
 1. Short words, sentences and paragraphs
 2. Concrete words
 3. Avoid passive voice
 4. Never use a metaphor
 5. Cut a word if not necessary
 6. Never use a foreign word/phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if there's a plain English equivalent



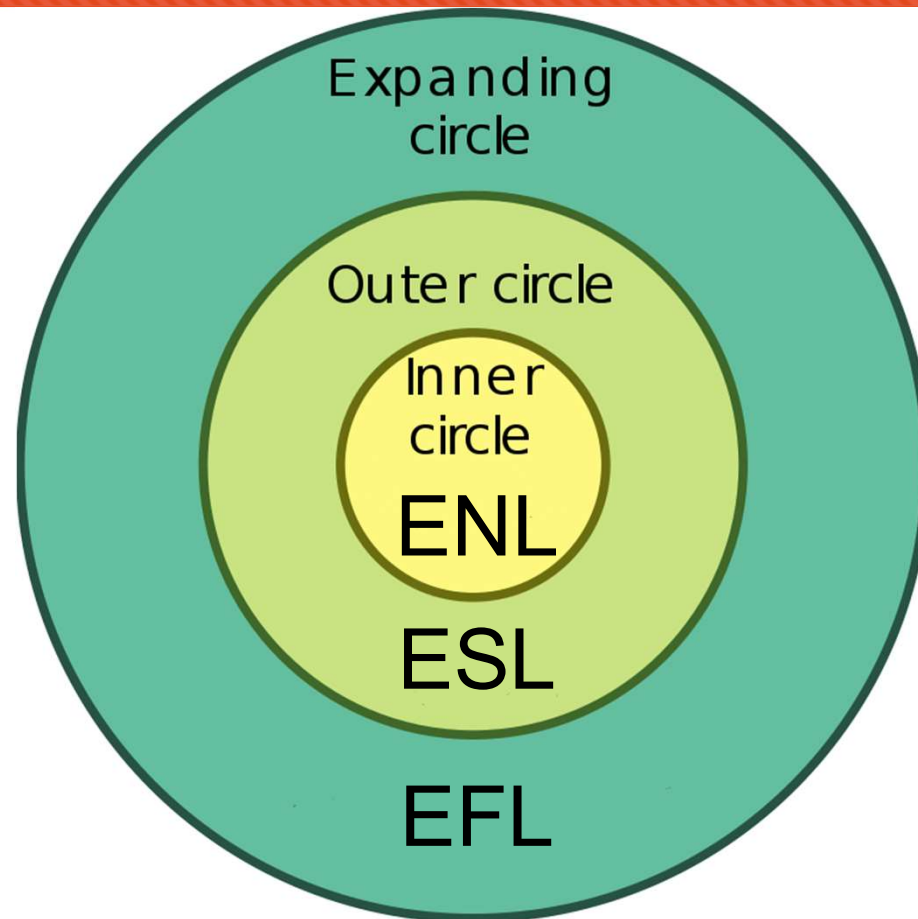
Current situation of the English language

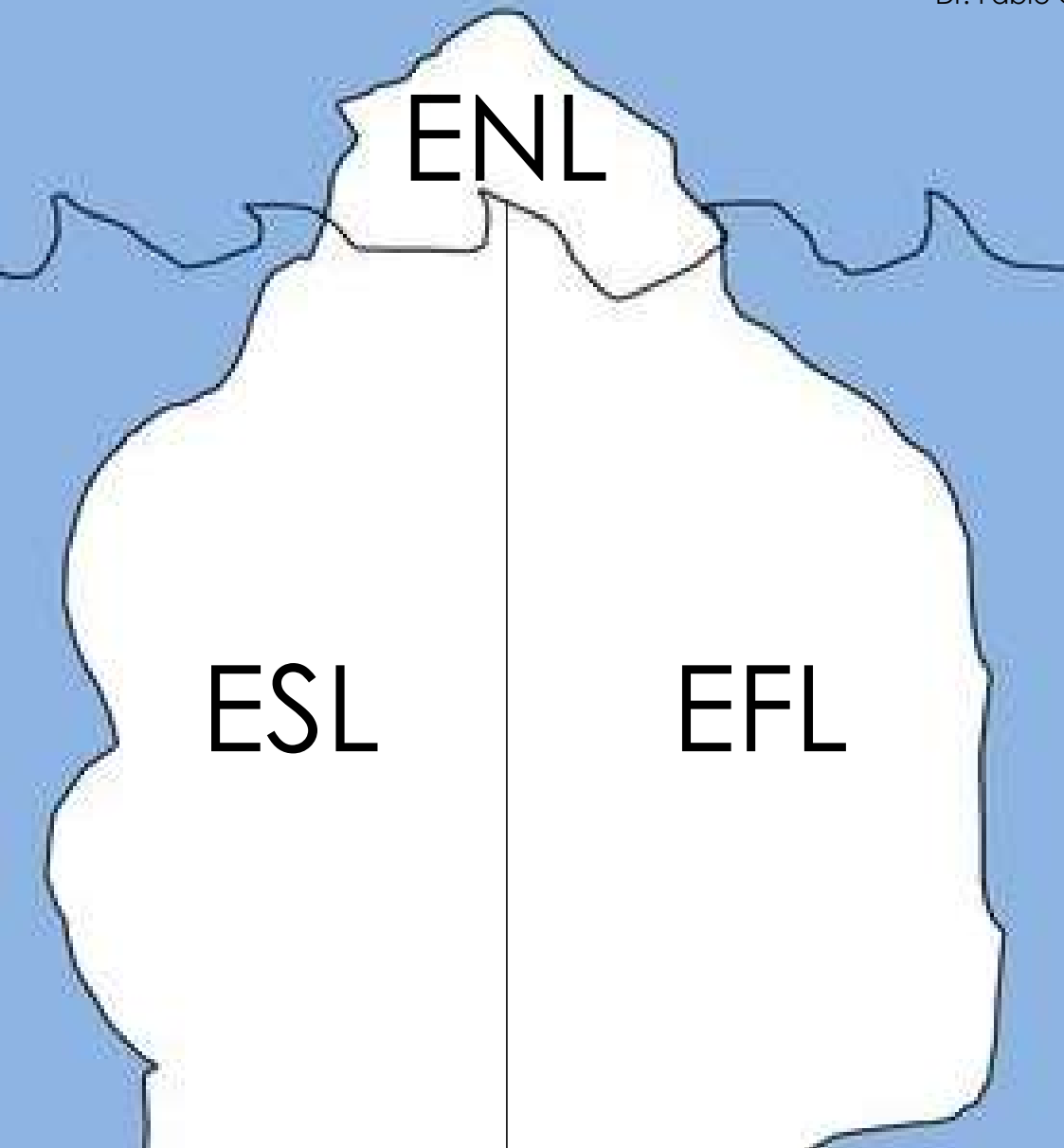
Kachru's 3-circle model of World Englishes (1992):

- ENL (English as a Native Language) – 400 mln speakers (about 250 mln Americans, the rest is made up of British, Irish, Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians, South Africans);
- ESL (English as a Second Language) – c. 400 mln, 70 countries (English is somehow recognised as an 'official' language). Especially in African and Asian countries where their native languages are 1) inadequate for communication and/or 2) it is completely arbitrary to choose one single language among the them (on the same footing). Population grows quickly;
- EFL (English as a Foreign Language) – c. 700 mln. The rest of the world learn English at school.

1.5 bln people speak English  **STANDARD**

Kachru's 3-circle model (1992)





Crystal's iceberg (1988)

The structure of the English language

1. Phonetics/phonology = pronunciation
 2. Morphology = structure of words
 3. Syntax = sentence patterns
 4. Lexis/lexicon and semantics = vocabulary
 5. Pragmatics = meaning in context
- } Morphosyntax=grammar

Phonetics vs phonology

- **Phonetics:** study of how sounds are produced, transmitted and perceived:
 1. **Articulatory:** how vocal organs are used to produce sounds;
 2. Acoustic: how air vibrates when sounds are produced;
 3. Auditory: how sounds are perceived and processed by the hearer.
- **Phonology:** study of the abstract categories that make up the sound system of a language (single sounds, syllables, words)

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

- Phonetic/phonological transcription: visual representation of speech sounds through phonetic symbols. A set of phonetic symbols creates a phonetic alphabet;
- It is based on the phonographic relationship (correspondence between speech and writing), given the highly fluctuating spelling of English;
- IPA → alphabetic system of phonetic notation to standardize the representation of the sounds of any language;
- Square brackets [...] are used for phonetic transcriptions;
- Slashes /.../ are used for phonological transcriptions;
- Pointed brackets <> signal ordinary written letters;
- For example:
 - [k] represents a concrete sound, a sound produced by a speaker (phonetics);
 - /k/ represents an abstract speech sound, the sound how it should be pronounced (phonology);
 - <k> is the letter 'k' as in the word "kite" (spelling)

Which English?



- **Standard British English (UK)** – it is NOT **Received Pronunciation** any longer;
- **General American (US)**.



The phonemic chart

Dr. Fabio Ciambella

iː see	ɪ hɪs	ʊ pʊt	uː tuː
e tɛn	ə əɡo	ɜː hɜː	ɔː sɔː
æ hæt	ʌ bʌt	ɑː kɑː	ɒ hɒt

ɪə ɪə	eɪ seɪ	
ʊə pʊə	ɔɪ bɔɪ	əʊ səʊ
eə eə	aɪ baɪ	aʊ naʊ

p pɛn	b bʊk	t tiː	d deɪ	tʃ tʃaɪ	dʒ dʒæm	k keɪ	g ɡoʊ
f fɔː	v vɛri	θ θɪn	ð ðæt	s sʌn	z zoo	ʃ ʃeɪ	ʒ ʒiːʒən
m mæn	n noʊ	ŋ sɪŋ	h hæt	l lʊk	r rɛd	w wɑːnt	j jes

VOWELS

long sounds

short sounds

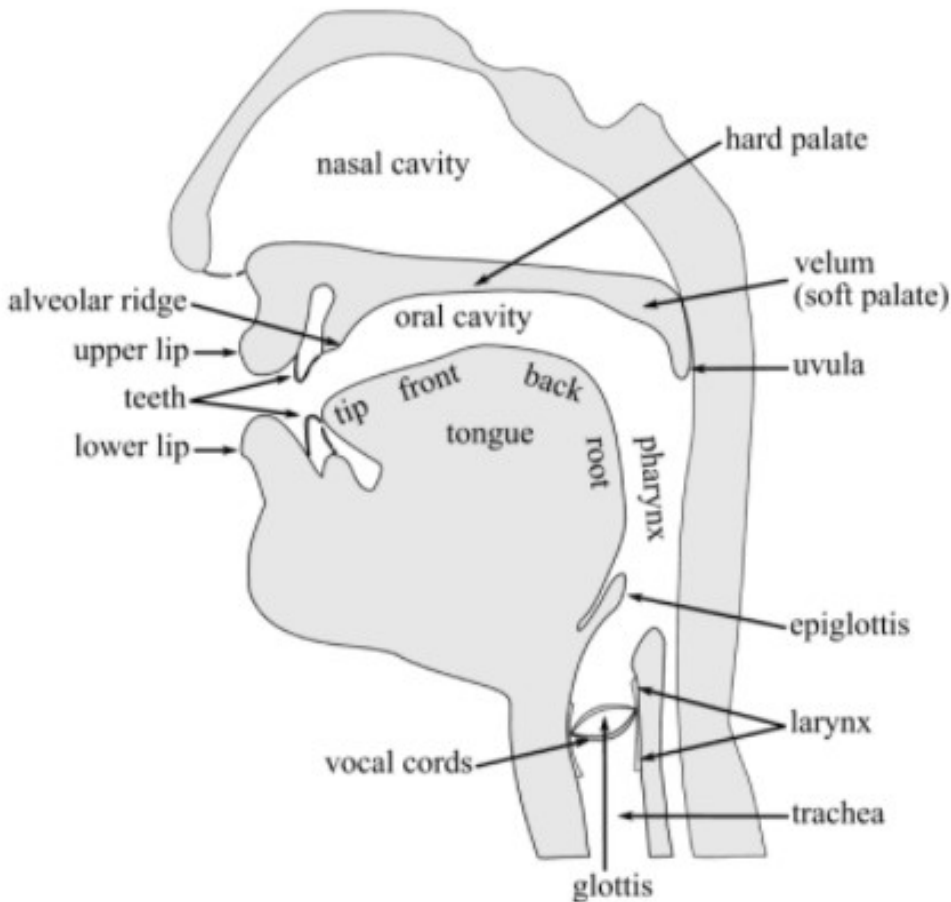
DIPHTHONGS

CONSONANTS

voiced consonants

unvoiced consonants

Producing sounds in English



- Pulmonic egressive airstream mechanism: the air is pushed out from the lungs, through the mouth and/or nose
- The space above the larynx is called the vocal tract;
- It is formed by two cavities: nasal and oral;
- The oral cavity includes the mouth and the pharynx;
- All the parts involved in sound production are called articulators (active, which can be moved, e.g. tongue, and passive, which cannot, e.g. teeth)

Consonant sounds: classification

- **Consonant:** obstruction of the air-stream in the pharynx or in the upper vocal tract;
- **VPM** label: classification of the consonants according to:
 1. **Voicing** – are vocal chords used?;
 2. **Place of articulation** (8 in English) – where the air is obstructed;
 3. **Manner of articulation** – nature of the air obstruction

Voicing	Place of articulation (8 in English)	Manner of articulation
Voiced; Voiceless	Bilabial (p, b, m); Labio-dental (f, v); (Inter)dental (θ, ð); Alveolar (t, d, s, z, n, l, r/ɹ); Postalveolar/palato-alveolar (ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ); Palatal (j); Velar (k, g, ŋ); Glottal (h)	Plosive or stop (p, t, k, b, d, g); Fricative (f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h); Affricate (tʃ, dʒ); Nasal (m, n, ŋ); Lateral or liquid (l); Approximant or glide (r/ɹ, j, w)

Places of articulation (8)

- **Bilabials:** lips are brought together;
- **Labio-dentals:** upper teeth touch;
- **(Inter-)dentals:** the tip of the tongue is between upper and lower teeth;
- **Alveolars:** tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge;
- **Palato-alveolars/postalveolars:** blade of the tongue touches the area between the alveolar ridge and the hard palate;
- **Palatals:** blade of the tongue touches the hard palate;
- **Velars:** back of the tongue touches the soft palate/velum;
- **Glottals:** the air passes through the vocal chords and it is narrowed

