

# LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 11 : 3 March 2011

ISSN 1930-2940

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## Standard English as a 'Fiat Code' and the Dwindling Faith behind It

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### Abstract

This article reviews the causes of the 'dwindling faith' behind the American and British varieties of English by drawing a comparison between 'fiat money' and these two native varieties of English which are referred to as 'fiat codes' by the present authors.

'Fiat money' is the money whose value comes entirely from the faith its users choose to put in it believing that they can exchange the money for the things and services they may need in future. What is vital for the survival of fiat money is the continued faith of its users. If this customer faith is not maintained for one reason or another, 'fiat money' loses its strength.

American and British varieties of English are likened to 'fiat money' and are called 'fiat codes' in that they have the same two characteristics fiat money has.

The worldwide recognition of British and American English was not because of their intrinsic linguistic superiority over other languages in the world; the recognition originated from *the faith of the people who had chosen to use them* as varieties of a language of international communication *with the belief that they could solve their communication problems* in a world which has become increasingly dependent on international communications.

Since the custodians of the these two varieties of English have failed to heed the reality of the language learning situations in the world and have insisted on the promotion of their own native varieties of English, they are witnessing the loss of faith on the part of

the learners of English in general and that of many applied linguists in particular who have begun to promote the non-native varieties of English and demote the formerly unrivaled British and American Englishes.

In this paper five major discrepancies between the views of the native speakers and those held by the learners and ELT experts about the status of the American and British varieties of English are mentioned as the major causes of this dwindling faith.

**Key words:** Fiat code, Standard English, Language and Culture Inseparability, American English, British English, Faith-based Language

## **1. Introduction: Faith-based Money, Faith-based Language**

In our faith-based economy, the value of the dollar is not tied to any real, solid thing [...]. The dollar is fiat money, supported by nothing more than the faith that those that accept it in payment have in it, with the belief that they can, in turn, exchange it for the goods and services that they want to purchase. Sharon L. Secor (October 22, 2007)

The readers of this article might be initially perplexed by the phrase “**Fiat code**” and the quotation above which sound displaced from their proper context of finance and economics. But they are, we hope, instrumental in helping us have the readers look at the status of the British and American varieties of English from a new perspective. The above paragraph, though unrelated to the field of language and linguistic studies, has some key phrases which are at the heart of our discussion.

Neither of the two things compared in this paper, the US dollar and the British and American varieties of English, has an intrinsic superiority over any other currency and language around the world.

The first thing, according to the above quotation, is a ‘fiat money’. And fiat money, according to Deardorff’s (2000) *Glossary of International Economics*, is “a money whose usefulness results, not from any intrinsic value or guarantee that it can be converted into gold or another currency, but only from a government’s order (fiat) that it must be accepted as a means of payment”.

The opening quotation incorporates a couple of features of dollar as a fiat money: The first feature is the fiat nature of the dollar: According to Secor (2007), “*The dollar is fiat money, supported by nothing more than the faith that those that accept it in payment have in it*” [emphasis added], which means the dollar has no intrinsic value and that what has made it a powerful currency is the faith of the people who have come to accept it as payment. This, in turn, implies that, for dollar to remain powerful and flourishing, it is in a dire need of the faith of the people who have, for one reason or another, chosen to use it as currency. The second feature concerns the utility of the dollar. People have adopted dollar “*with the belief that they can, in turn, exchange it for the goods and services that they want to purchase*” [emphasis added] (Secor 2007). The key to maintaining the faith dollar has enjoyed to date is the confidence dollar users have in the belief that they can satisfy their miscellaneous needs with this token; the strength and

the status of the dollar is proportionate to the strength of the faith behind it. We do not think anyone finds this fact difficult to understand.

The second thing is the British and American varieties of English whose status is compared with fiat money in this paper. Although there are a number of native varieties of English used in Kachru's (1985) 'inner circle' countries, the British and American varieties have been much more widely used and promoted as varieties of a second or foreign language than the other native varieties and accordingly the faith of their international learners can be better compared with the faith of dollar users.

## 2. "Fiat Money" and "Fiat Code"

Having introduced the concept of 'fiat money', we would like to draw an analogy between the US dollar and the British and American English and call the latter "**fiat codes**" as the British and American English, like all the other native varieties of English, have exactly the same two important characteristics mentioned for fiat money: These two varieties of English, we assume, are analogous to the US dollar as far as their fiat nature is concerned and can accordingly be called "**fiat codes**" in the sense that they have no intrinsic linguistic supremacy over other languages in the world, and are supported by nothing more than the faith that those who have accepted them as communication tools have put in them.

Although some scholars like Jespersen (1905, p. 234) tried to attach an intrinsic superiority to English by saying "...it must be a source of gratification to mankind that the tongue spoken by two of the greatest powers of the world is so noble, so rich, so pliant, so expressive and so interesting", linguistically speaking, few scholars venture to claim that any one language is superior to others in terms of its linguistic properties.

David Crystal (1987, p. 6) discussed this under the rubric of 'The equality of Languages', by stating that "all languages are arguably equal in the sense that there is nothing intrinsically limiting, demanding, or handicapping about any of them".

The status of English as a language of commerce, politics, science and technology is attributable not to its inherent advantages over other languages but to the faith hundreds of millions of people from around the world and tens of world governments have put in it. Kachru (1986, p. 135) contended "language does not create power for itself; the agents of linguistic power are its promoters, and its users, who develop a power base for it". As it is true of the people who use the fiat dollar, non-native speakers of British and American English adopted this language with the belief that they could use them to satisfy their communicative needs.

Therefore, the use of English as a foreign or second language is entirely inspired by its perceived utility. If the custodians of these native varieties fail to understand the fact that they should take care of the diverse needs and motivation of the people whose faith is the stock in trade of English as a language of international communication, they will surely lose these people's confidence and faith. Once this faith is gone, so are the status of these varieties of English and the multitude of advantages associated with their use a few of which are "to make a market for teachers (or 'experts') from one's own country, to seek foreign students from a particular region of the world" (Kachru 1986, 134).

### **3. The Dwindling Faith behind the Fiat Code**

Having drawn this analogy, we can now argue that the custodians of the British and American varieties of English have failed to sustain the valuable faith behind their fiat codes by basing, whether purposefully or inadvertently, their understanding of the diverse needs of the non-native speakers of English on premises that do not hold true.

We are of the opinion that there are large discrepancies between the American and British native speakers' understanding of the English learning situations in the world and the realities of those situations and that these serious discrepancies have made these two varieties of English incapable of addressing the diverse needs of their learners and have accordingly made them lose an important amount of faith their learners originally had in these varieties of English.

#### **3.1. The First Discrepancy: Views about the Learners' Motivation**

##### **3.1.1. Native Speakers' View: Everybody Has Integrative Motivation**

The practice of language teaching in the native speaker-run ELT industry has been premised on the unstated assumption "that someone who wants to learn English as a second or a foreign language does so in order to be able to communicate with the so-called native speakers of English. He or she wants to be able to order a pint of beer in a London pub or hail a taxi on the southern end of Manhattan" (Rajagopalan, 2004, p.114).

The fact that native speakers and their norms of communicative competence were set as the ideal point for the non-native learners of the English language to achieve implies that the proponents of this view had taken it for granted that all the learners of the English language had "a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group" (Lambert, 1974, p.98).

In other words, it was assumed that the learners of the English language unanimously thought very highly of the speakers of the native varieties of English, adored their culture and lifestyles and had a strong aspiration to become familiar with or even assimilate into the society in which the language was used natively. Only by assuming such integrative or assimilative motivation on the part of learners of English can the observed insistence on the emulation of the native speaker norms make sense.

##### **3.1.2. Many Learners' and Experts' Views: Not Everybody has Integrative Motivation**

Contrary to the previously popular assumption that "someone who wants to learn English as a second or foreign language does so in order to be able to communicate with the so-called native speakers of English" (Rajagopalan, 2004, p. 114), it is currently believed that "more and more people across the globe will be using the language for communication between non-English speakers than for linguistic encounters involving at least one native speaker" (ibid, p.115). "Many learners themselves do not aspire to approximating to the - already *per definitionem* - unattainable NS competence (mostly not considering the effort worthwhile), especially

where they have no intention of becoming part of the L<sub>2</sub> community” (House & Kasper 2000, p.115). Rather “[t]hey use English according to their individual and institutional needs and keep it separate from their local cultural beliefs and practices” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p.539). Smith (1983) refers to this point very lucidly: “A Japanese doesn’t need an appreciation of a British lifestyle in order to use English in his business dealings with a Malaysian” (p.7).

Honna’s (2005) assertion also highlights the fallacious nature of the assumption that holds people learn English to intermingle with its native speakers. “[F]rom a Japanese point of view, English is not the language for us to use only with Americans, the British, or any other native speakers of English. Rather, English is the language for us to use with Chinese, Koreans, Bruneians, Thais, Malaysians, Singaporeans, and other Asians”.

### **3.2. The Second Discrepancy: Views about the Ownership of English**

#### **3.2.1. Native Speakers’ View: English Belongs to the Native Speakers**

“English was regarded as the property of the English-speaking world” (Richards, 2009, p.6), and the native speakers of English were claiming ownership of the language and kept insisting that the only legitimate variety of English is the one spoken by the native speakers in Inner Circle countries and made it imperative that “ ‘non-standard’ features be eradicated from the speech of learners” (Modiano, 2009, p. 209) and the teaching of English be distanced from the norms of what they viewed as ‘non-standard’ varieties.

Widdowson (2003) tried to make the logic behind the efforts of the native speakers of English to safeguard their native variety more easily understandable for us by comparing it with the efforts of Coca-Cola or Champagne Companies to keep their brands from being tarnished by lower quality products that may attempt to forge their brands. Widdowson (2003) made an analogy between the reasons for taking out the patent to a ‘profitable formula’ and a comparable patent to a language. “One reason for taking out a patent is to retain exclusive rights to a profitable formula and prevent other people from exploiting it to their own commercial advantage” (p. 36).

Claiming the ownership of English benefits the claimants. “It is clearly in the interest of the British to suggest they have the patent on proper English because it is good for business” (ibid). Only by making the world believe that they had the patent to this internationally used language, that they were plausibly worried about their language getting tarnished by non-native varieties, and that they were entitled to safeguard it against contamination and abuse, could the native speakers insist on one or two legitimate varieties of English, say, the American and British native varieties.

This attitude can safely be interpreted as the native speakers’ lack of attention to the real needs of their learners, most of whom did not need and were not able to emulate the native speakers as perfectly as the native speakers expected them to.

### **3.2.2. Many Learners' and Experts' view: English Belongs to All Who Use It**

By way of comparison, if people have US dollars in their hands, they surely spend it to satisfy their own needs and cannot be forced to spend it as wished by the Americans. Learners of English, too, learn the language to use it in a way that satisfies their needs.

If people who have dollars at their disposal are the owners of dollars and can choose to spend it the way they like, learners of English are also owners of the language they have learned and can use it according to their real needs. Subsequently the “ real communicative behavior ought to be redefined in relation to the reality of English as an International Language, entailing not only the uses of English that are real for its native speakers in English-speaking countries, but also the uses of English that are real for its nonnative speakers in communities served by languages other than English” (Alptekin, 2002 p. 61).

#### **3.2.2.1 A Variety of Circles**

One undeniably influential figure who significantly enhanced this line of thinking was the India-born US linguist Braj Kachru (1985) who is acknowledged to be the founder of what has now come to be known as ‘World Englishes’. ‘World Englishes’ advocating the legitimacy of non-native varieties of English found a stable footing in the field and led to the recognition and institutionalization of the rights of the users of these nonnative varieties who were previously required to adapt their use of English to norms which did not reflect the reality of their communicative needs.

Kachru used the phrase “inner circle” to refer to countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Canada where English is used as a native language. Round the inner circle, in Kachru’s (1985) model, come the ‘outer circle’ countries like India, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria where English is not a native language but plays an important part in these nations’ institutions. The outermost circle, the expanding circle, includes those countries in which English is neither a native language nor is it an official language but has some uses as a foreign language.

The implication of recognizing these three circles is that the native speakers of English are not the only owners of the language and the insistence on their ownership and the emulation of their variety would be unreal and would not serve the diverse purposes for which many people in the world learn English.

### **3.3. The Third Discrepancy: Views about the Neutrality of English**

#### **3.3.1. Native Speakers' View: English is Noble and Blameless**

Portraying English as a harmless and noble language was a necessary precondition for its spread and acceptance in the world. For to be able to persuade people to buy a product or apply for a service, one needs to create the assurance in them that the product is safe, that its use is not associated with any short-term or long-term hazards and that there are no hidden or concealed elements in it that the consumers may be wary of.



The proponents of the British and American varieties of English with their general prescription of Standard English did their best to convince the world that English is not biased in favour of any religion, political system or ideology and can bestow blessing on all its learners. This is clearly stated in Ronald Wardhaugh's (1987, p. 15) sentence who contends English is "...tied to no particular social, political, economic or religious systems, or to specific racial or cultural group".

The acceptance of this assumption by the learners of English was a fundamental prerequisite for them to put their trust in it and begin to learn it with wholehearted enthusiasm.

### 3.3.2. Many Learners' and Experts' View: English Has an Imperialistic Agenda

Any community embracing English is likely to experience a deep sense of frustration and anger owing to the futility of a situation where any gains from that embrace always seem to be offset by the losses. (Lysandrou and Lysandrou, 2003, p. 98)

Although many attempts had been made to convince the learners of English that learning the British and American varieties of English and emulating their native speakers would not be associated with any hazards, a large number of ELT scholars and learners of English opine that the native varieties of English have an imperialistic agenda of westernizing the world, promoting American and British ways of life and marginalizing the local identities of its learners. Cooke's (1988) 'Trojan Horse' metaphor reveals the nature of the concern many people have about the initial harmless-looking arrival of English in their countries with its hidden long-term detrimental influences on the linguistic and cultural identities of its host communities. The native speaking teachers of English who teach EFL/ESL books replete with western cultural norms are assumed to have an unstated mission hidden beneath their all too familiar responsibility of teaching the English language.

Among foreign languages, English serves as a highway along which not only neutral messages but also thought, ideology, and social attitudes are transferred. English thus serves as a vehicle of what Phillipson (1992) called linguistic imperialism. (*Neustupný and Někvapil, 2003, pp.155-6*)

With the spread of English worldwide in the past century or so, a new avenue of Christian missions has surfaced and given the Western church access to countries which would otherwise be closed to missionary efforts. The Christian Church has taken advantage of this opportunity, and Christian English teachers are being sent as missionaries all around the world. (Kresge, 2008, p.3)

This negative attitude which was caused by the native speakers' attempts to promote British and American ways of life through ELT at the expense of the cultural identities of the learners of English made the learners feel that they were learning English without

being able to use it for the purpose of introducing their local identities and therefore lost their faith in the utility of British and American fiat codes.

### **3.4. Fourth Discrepancy: Views about the Role of Native Speakers**

#### **3.4.1. Native Speakers' View: The Native Speaker is the Criterion and the Goal**

The native speakers always regarded themselves as perfectly competent users of the English language who had the status of a criterion and a goal for the non-native learners of this language. They had nothing to acquire or learn to become fit for communication with those who were still learning the language. It was the learner who had to learn new language forms, new cultural beliefs, new ways of life and walk in the one-way road of language learning that would eventually lead him/her to the ideal native speaker norms. This was how the native speakers of English showed their willingness to remain the ideal goals for the nonnative learners and practically refrained from assuming the role of a responsible interlocutor.

#### **3.4.2. Many Learners' and Experts' View: Native Speakers are at Best Occasional Interlocutors**

Many experts and ordinary learners of English are of the opinion that so far there has been "a monologic and not a dialogic communication between the West and the rest of the world" (Kazmi, 1997, p.52) and that from now on the learners of English as a foreign/second language should not be made to shoulder all the communication burden because "[c]ommunication means dialogue, which suggests that not only speaking but also listening, which in turn implies treating the other as an equal." (ibid) They have also become aware that the ideal, unattainable image of the native speaker should change into the more earthly image of a responsible, cooperative, non-hegemonic interlocutor and then the misplaced focus of attention should be shifted from the native speaker to the language learner because "[l]anguage teaching would benefit by paying attention to the L2 user rather than concentrating primarily on the native speaker" (Cook, 1999, p. 185).

### **3.5. The Fifth Discrepancy: Views about Culture and Language Relationship**

#### **3.5.1. Native Speakers' View: Culture and Language are Siamese Twins**

Siamese or conjoined twins are two people who are born with their bodies joined to each other whose separation may lead to the death of either or both of them. Our use of this metaphor is meant to show how the teaching of the English language within its Western cultural context was traditionally justified. English and its associated western culture were said to be inextricably intertwined exactly the same way the Siamese Twins are said to be inseparable. "A language is part of a culture and a culture is part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate them without losing the significance of either language or culture" (Brown 1994, p.165).

Viewed from this perspective, the teaching of English would necessarily involve the teaching of the cultural norms of the western world from which English originates. "If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning" (Politzer 1959, pp.100-101).

Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

170

11 : 3 March 2011

Seyed Ahmad Kasaian, Ph.D. Candidate and Rangaswamy Subbakrishna, Ph.D.  
Standard English as a 'Fiat Code' and the Dwindling Faith behind It



Teaching English divorced from its western cultural context was deemed to be artificial and inefficient. “Language use reflects culture and it is impossible to disassociate the two in any real sense” (Flairclough, 1992, p.6). And culture was primarily taught in order to “help the learner gain an understanding of the native speaker’s perspective” (Stern, 1992, p. 216).

The teaching of the target culture was justified by the findings of schema theory, too: “If you do not have that background knowledge and those shared cultural values which enable speakers who are members of the same speech community to communicate easily with each other, then you will find problems in understanding discourse in the foreign language” (Brown, 1990, p.11). This last sentence clearly reveals the point that learners were thought to be learning English in order to be able to intermingle with the native speakers and accordingly needed to have the same background knowledge and shared cultural values that enabled the native speakers to communicate easily with each other.

### **3.5.2. Many Learners’ and Experts’ Views: English is Separable from the Western Culture**

The insistence on the assumption that language and culture are inextricably intertwined (Politzer 1959; Flairclough, 1992; Stern 1992; Brown 1994; Doyé 1996) has the air of suggesting that the separation of the two is as risky and detrimental as the separation of conjoined twins.

The main problem with this inseparability assumption is that it is undifferentiated in the sense that the proponents of this view have not made it clear what they exactly mean by culture and language. They have stopped short of making an unequivocal distinction between what Risager (2007, p. 12) calls “a generic and a differential understanding of language and culture” on the one hand and the context in which language is taught or used (first language, second language, foreign language) on the other.

According to the generic understanding of culture, “language and culture are under all circumstances inseparable: human language is always embedded in culture – no matter what form it assumes” (Risager 2007, 12). But “in a *differential* sense, the question that must always be asked is: what forms of culture actually appear together with precisely this language – and under what circumstances? This last assumption is further explained by the differential understanding of culture” (ibid, p.186). “In a differential sense, language and culture are both inseparable and separable” (ibid, p.187).

Whether we consider language and culture separable or not depends on the perspective from which we look at their relationship.

#### **3.5.2.1 Separability of language and culture from the Sociological Perspective**

From a sociological perspective, it is possible to see language as separable from its first language context.

When learners of English, for example, learn or acquire it as a second/foreign language and use it in contexts which are different from its first language context, English is used out of its original context and is a proof of its separability. When the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe (1975) asked, “Can English carry the weight of my African experience?” he was, in essence, referring to this separability of language and culture at the differential level from a sociological perspective and proved that this separation is possible by writing in English, instead of choosing to express his African experience in his native language.

Risager (2006, p.156) states that from a sociological view “it is quite common for language/languageculture/discourse to be separated from the first language context and, via migration or acquisition/learning, be transferred to a foreign- or second-language context and there undergo a process of change” and mentions Indian English as an example of changes that English has experienced.

As far as the relationship between language and culture from this perspective is concerned, it is a great fallacy to think and try to make the world think that English should necessarily be used to reflect the experience of its native speakers because accepting the inseparability of English language from its first language context implies that English will only serve the purpose of unidirectionally disseminating western values in the world without letting its learners use it to introduce their own cultural values.

If English cannot be a carrier of its learners’ cultural beliefs and if it can only reflect the western cultural values, then what is the point in learning it when one’s main goal is to introduce oneself and one’s ideology to the world through English?

Typically, people involved in communication want to express who they are and what kind of cultural background they represent, and as a result, an emphasis on target language is misplaced; what is needed more is for the learners to be able to develop the competence to talk about their own culture and cultural identity. (Akbari, 2008, p. 279)

A case in point is Saudi Arabia where “learning English is seen as a religious duty because it is useful for the teaching of Islam to non-Arabs (Al-Abed Al Haq and Smadi 1996, p. 477). If culture is “the software of the mind” (Hofstede 2004), it is natural that the internationally diverse EFL educators refuse to allow a foreign software to be imposed on the minds of their learners of English and westernize them through the gradual exposure to the cultural values of the west which in many cases clash with their foundational beliefs and ideologies.

The purpose of education, as it can be safely argued, is not to alienate the learners from the cultural roots of their motherland and if the people who use the language are affected by the English language, English values, English culture, and English ideology, they gradually develop an English “mental structure”. Phillipson (1992) highlights the unwanted hidden effects of English on its learners: “The current spread of English is oppressive because it imposes Western “mental structures” on the minds of the learners” (p.166). And this is what many individuals, governments and educational policy makers around the world do not want to surrender to.

Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

11 : 3 March 2011

Seyed Ahmad Kasaian, Ph.D. Candidate and Rangaswamy Subbakrishna, Ph.D.  
Standard English as a ‘Fiat Code’ and the Dwindling Faith behind It

Those who find the separability of language and culture from a sociological view convincing see the insistence on the inseparability of language and culture as the conspiracy of the westerners to make their language a vehicle for selling their ideologies to the learners of English the world over.

### **3.5.2.2 Separability of Language and Culture from a Psychological Perspective**

From a psychological perspective, in a single individual, language and culture are inseparable from his/her life context (Risager 2007). This can be an issue that makes sense when we are dealing with a “person who speaks the language as a first language or early second language” (ibid, p.115).

However, as far as the teaching of English as a late second language and more importantly as a foreign language is concerned, how can we talk about the inseparability of English language and the western culture in the minds of these learners? For a language learner whose life context has little or no link with the cultural context within which English is said to be embedded, the assumption of inseparability of the English language from its western cultural context is absurd.

Since Teaching English as a Foreign language (EFL) necessarily happens outside its native cultural context where English is confined within the four walls of a classroom and is mainly taught by nonnative teachers and learned by nonnative learners, the condition for the inseparability of English from its native cultural context does not hold good.

Therefore, the inseparability of language and culture from a psychological perspective is more relevant to the learning of a first language or an early second language. The inseparability of the western culture from English for a western acquirer of English as his/her mother tongue should not be overgeneralized to foreign language learning situations.

### **3.5.2.3 Separability of Language and Culture from a System-oriented Perspective**

From a system-oriented perspective, language and culture are assumed to be inseparable because preserving threatened languages and the achievement of certain political goals necessitate highlighting the link between language and culture. “[T]he construction of the imagined linguistic community is linked to the construction of an analogously imagined cultural community. This community is mostly thought of as national” (p.177).

The plausibility of this view can be maintained if and only if one is considering the case of a community or national language that is to be linked with a corresponding cultural community and is more relevant to a language in its capacity as a first or standard language. For a language like English which has transcended the defined geographical limits of nations, areas and communities that originally hosted this language and can no longer be associated with the cultural communities in one single area, this type of inseparability is fallacious, too.

#### 4. Conclusions

If we reconsider the ‘fiat’ nature of English and the importance of its utility and neutrality in maintaining the faith of its international learners, we can understand why the native varieties of English in general and the British and American varieties in particular are losing the precious faith of many of their learners. The custodians of the native varieties of English have not addressed, whether purposefully or unintentionally, the diverse needs of the international learners of English whose faith is the stock in trade of English teaching industry. To put it in a nutshell, the dwindling faith behind the British and American varieties of English are caused by a) the native speakers’ inclination to think that the majority of the learners of English want to assimilate into the native speakers’ community, b) their insistence on their ownership of English which would enable them to reap the benefits of ownership, c) their insistence on the teaching of the western culture through English under the pretext of inseparability of culture and language, d) their undue promotion of the native speakers by depicting them as goals and criteria rather than responsible and cooperative interlocutors, and e) their efforts to use the capacity of English language to promulgate their western ways of life at the expense of marginalizing the learners’ native cultures.

The faith of the learners of English who outnumber the native speakers is diminishing rapidly and this dwindling faith is not difficult to detect. ELT literature is replete with phrases and sentences that look at ‘native speaker phenomenon’ and the so called ‘Standard English’ as things of the past, the most radical of which is the title of a book by Paikeday (1985): “The native speaker is dead!”

Had the British and Americans speakers of English realized the ‘fiat nature’ of the English language and been more considerate towards the diverse needs of its learners, they could have continued to enjoy the multiple benefits of being the unrivaled custodians of the English language. But phrases like ‘World Englishes’ (Kachru 1985) ‘Linguistic Imperialism’ (Robert Philipson 1992), ‘Cultural Imperialism’ (Tomlinson 1991) and ‘English as a Global Language’ (David Crystal, 1997), ‘The Native Speaker is Dead’ (Paikeday, 1985) are indicative of the dwindling faith behind the British and American varieties of English. The ‘World Englishes’ phenomenon has caused huge cracks in the formerly sturdy structure of the Standard English exactly the way Euro weakened the status of the US dollar.

One important point to be borne in mind is that English as a language of international communication is a fiat code which is supported by nothing more than the faith of the people who choose to use it in communication. Any variety of English that ignores the faith of its learners by violating the conditions of neutrality and utility is doomed to lose the precious faith of its learners.

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11 : 3 March 2011

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