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Special Issue on The Futures of English, Editor Professor Regenia Gagnier

The Futures of English: Introduction from the UK

Regenia Gagnier[1,2]

[1]University of Exeter, Exeter, UK

[2]Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Correspondence
Regenia Gagnier.
Email: r.gagnier@exeter.ac.uk

Abstract

- Will students raised on social media still read English literature?
- What is the role of English/American literature in the PRC, India, Australasia, the USA?
- What is the role of English language in relation to other global and local languages?
- What is the role of decolonising efforts?
- How do our respective state apparatuses affect language and literature teaching?

Part I 'International Perspectives on English Language and Literature' summarises the global spread of English since the eighteenth century and outlines the concerns of the special issue: the global futures of English language and literature in information society in Africa, Australia, India, the PRC, Europe and the UK, and the USA; the role of decolonising efforts; and the role of our respective state apparatuses in higher education policy. Part II, 'English Studies in Britain Today', discusses the findings of the recent (June 2023) British Academy report *English Studies Provision in UK Higher Education*, including the decline in literary studies among students and the rise of Creative Writing in part in response to political-economic rhetoric. Part III, 'Global and World Englishes', returns to global and transnational practices beyond Britain and Europe to argue for more inclusive, decolonising practices around world literatures. We might take the lived histories of global and world Englishes to transcend both romantic revolutionary and far-right exclusionary

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nationalisms in literary and language studies in favour of more cosmopolitan, multilingual, and convivial approaches.

KEYWORDS
communication and media studies, cosmopolitanism, culture, global circulation project, history, imperial, colonial and post-colonial history, internet and new media, language, literature, nationalism, politics, transnationalism, twentieth-century and contemporary literature

1 | INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

English Studies emerged in Britain as an honours degree in 1859 at the University of London, but it had been preceded in India in the 1830s by the Raj's programme to create an Anglicised native elite. In India, they taught Shakespeare, Milton, Johnson, Richardson, Goldsmith, Gray, Addison, and Pope, among others. In Britain, aided by the spectacular growth of both philology and professional reviewing of literary works in the press through the nineteenth century, the degree was well established by the early twentieth century as focussed on particular texts and authors. From mid-century, text- and author-based close-reading was challenged by Marxist, feminist, structuralist, poststructuralist, and postcolonial theoretical approaches, and from the 1960s Creative Writing courses began to appear (*British Academy Report* 2023 Foreword pp. 3–6; see also Guillory, 2022). Today, popular pathways through the degree include world literatures in English, ecocriticism and environmentalism, digital humanities, and medical humanities.

These fluctuations in the discipline are simultaneous with the explosion of English as a global and world language, both discipline and language imbricated in geopolitical forces. I use the term *global English* primarily to refer to hegemonic processes driven by first colonial and then neoliberal expansion and *world Englishes* for more inclusive, bottom-up processes that linguists call translanguaging or multilingualisms, such as MLE (Multicultural London English). Jette Hansen Edwards also uses the term *glocal*, for a global language with local characteristics, such as English in Hong Kong (Hansen Edwards, 2023). Rosemary Salomone's *The Rise of English: Global Politics and the Power of Language* (2022) provides useful statistics: in terms of global numbers, the first language learned at home is (1) Mandarin Chinese, (2) Spanish, (3) English, (4) Hindi. But English's 1.13B speakers worldwide is greater than Mandarin's 1.11B and English dominates the Internet with 1.19B users as compared to Chinese 888M, Spanish 363M, and Arabic 237M (Salomone, p.13, 2022) (see also Baker, 2002). The adult market in English learners is estimated to be worth US$61B. There are 1.4B learners worldwide, with 400,000,000 English learners in the PRC alone (Salomone 343).

From 1780 to 1930 English speakers rocketed from 12 to 200 million through language migration and settlements in Australasia, Canada, South Africa, and the United States of America. The impact, first, of colonial domination through violence and resource extraction, and, second, of the British industrial revolution from the 18th through the 19th centuries ensured that forms of transport (steamship, rail), communications (press, telegraph, telephone), other forms of technology, science, and empire would extend English's reach as a global language (see Crystal, 2003: 2009 edition). By the early twentieth century, the English of the postwar USA emerged as the chief auxiliary language of world organisations (from the League of Nations to the UN), and massive investment in advertising, media, cinema, radio, tourism, Seaspeak and Police speak (international maritime and security communication networks), and the Internet further extended the reach of specifically American English. Up to one third of the global population today have English competence. Since 2000, global or corporate English has grown as the leading language of trade and finance, and it is interdependent with multilingual world Englishes on the streets.

English is especially interesting in that it functions in such diverse capacities: as linguistic capital and auxiliary in corporate and neoliberal economic processes; as a mixed language in multilingual provincialising, decolonising and cosmopolitan environments; as an official or national language; as a neutral language between another former

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colonialist and an indigenous or regional language; as a regional language; as a medium of instruction (MoI). We have national literatures in English but also national literatures in multilingual countries for which English translation is typical.

For example, in South Africa, where I drafted this essay, Black Africans comprise 80.7% of the population and only 9.6% of the population speak English as a first language. Yet English has been the official language of South Africa since the second Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902, and throughout the twentieth century there was conflict between British and Afrikaans. The latter brought in apartheid; in 1994 Nelson Mandela became President during the first democratic election. Now official languages include English and Afrikaans with nine African languages: isiNdebele, Sepedi, isiXhosa, Tshivenda, Setswana, Sesotho, isiZulu, SiSwati, Xitsonga. Seventy-five percent of the population speak one or more of the African languages, with 13.5% speaking Afrikaans. Yet English is the language of government, and many young Blacks opt for English over what they consider to be the former oppressor's language, Afrikaans.

The dominance of English in South Africa is a consequence of colonialism and a symptom of global capitalism. In a field-defining collection (Gibson & Reilly, 2022) on African multilingualism throughout the Continent, we find that some 40% of the global population do not have access to education in a language they speak or understand. Yet all contributors to the distinguished volume agree that the mother tongue in early years education is the best foundation. For example, Imazighen, also known as Amazigh or Berber people, are the indigenous people of North Africa. They have been continuously invaded by other groups, which has contributed consistently to alterations in the linguistic profile of the region. In the case of Algeria, the successive invasions included the Phoenicians who arrived in 860 BCE, the Romans in 2 BCE, the Vandals in 429 CE, the Romanised Byzantines in 533CE, the Arabs in the seventh century and later in the 11th, the Spanish (1505–1791), the Ottomans (1529–1830), and the French (1830–1962). While Arabic, linked with Islamisation, has gained salience as the language of nationalism and unity, French continues to dominate the political and economic scene and the job market with a significant challenge from English among younger generations, who now often see French as the coloniser's language and English as neutral between French and Arabic. And the Berber Tamazight languages are linked with regionalism (Rouabah, 21–40 in Gibson and Reilly).

One of my collaborators, Dr Asma Char in Algeria, points out that in July 2022:

> Celebrating 60 years of independence from French colonialism, Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune announced that the country would be turning away from teaching French and would adopt English as a second language in public primary schools immediately, with a start of implementation of this new policy in the academic year 2022–2023. The teaching and learning of both French and English now start in grade 3 in primary schools, which, from my own observation, is causing a high level of confusion among pupils and their parents. While pupils are still trying to learn reading and writing in Arabic, they are expected simultaneously to learn two more languages that significantly differ from their mother tongue. Many pupils are confusing English and French alphabets and words and struggling to keep up with both languages, although many of them are also excited about learning these languages. However, younger generations in Algeria are generally very enthusiastic about learning English, and, as in India, they see it as a very important skill to possess. In the South (Sahara region where I am from), English is also regarded as a way of resisting continued marginalisation from the central government in the North. French language proficiency has always been less widespread in the South, and learning English and reading fiction in English (including by popular contemporary authors like Colleen Hoover and J. K. Rowling, for instance) are now seen as a defiance strategy against the longstanding imposition of the French language.
>
> (Personal communication)

Elsewhere in Africa, Malawi has 18 languages with English the de facto official or national language. Malawi's 2013 policy states that English should be the only language used in education (Law Commission 2013). Ghana has 79 indigenous languages, of which nine are government-sponsored: Akan, Dagaare, Dangme, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, Gonja, Kasem, and Nzema; with English as the official language (Reilly et al. in Gibson and Reilly 69–95). The

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government-sponsored languages in addition to English are used as media of instruction at the lower grade classes 1–3, and from grade 4 onwards the government-sponsored languages become subjects of study and English becomes the MoI (Reilly et al. in Gibson and Reilly, p. 70). Zambia has 73 indigenous languages, with seven national ('regional official') languages, with English as official (Kula and Mwansa in Gibson and Reilly, pp. 97–124). Botswana has 25–30 languages with English as the official language and Setswana as de facto national lingua franca for unity and identity (Bagwasi and Costley in Gibson and Reilly, pp. 125–140). Tanzania has 150 spoken languages with Swahili as the MoI in primary schools and English at secondary and tertiary levels (Mapunda and Gibson in Gibson and Reilly, pp. 141–168).

Considering such data and such histories, on behalf of IAUPE, the International Association of University Professors of English, I asked leaders of English Studies in their respective countries to address the following questions about the global futures of English:

- Will students raised on social media still read English literature?
- What is the role of English/American literature in the PRC, India, Australasia, the USA?
- What is the role of English language in relation to other global and local languages?
- What is the role of decolonising efforts?
- How do our respective state apparatuses affect language and literature teaching?

The respondents include outgoing and incoming Heads of departments at wealthy private universities (Shiv Nadar, University of Tulsa), public institutions like Australian Catholic University (and my own University of Exeter), and very large public institutions like Hunan Normal and Delhi Universities. The responses are fascinating in both their distinctiveness and their convergences. The growth of creative writing in Britain, Australia, and the US seems to point to a new emphasis on individual expression and subjective consciousness. Yet born-digital students' appetite for global communication and cosmopolitanism seems universal. Paul Giles writing from Australia references the recent pandemic with 'It makes no more sense to circumscribe literary scholarship within national boundaries than it would to contain medical research within national parameters'. Due to its history and largely through its openness to English language and literature, the PRC knows much more about the West than the West about China, probably to all our costs. China is taking the lead in IT-based learning, freely mixing machine translation with the expertise of professional translators. With advances in IT, including AI, virtual reality, and social networking, Wei Ruan, Director of the Centre of Western Studies at Hunan Normal, believes that foreign language learning may be obsolete in two or three decades but that English literary studies will continue in the PRC because, unlike in the West, there is no rhetoric of economic disadvantage in pursuing them at university. In the US, extensive decentralisation of education policy and funding, high student debt, and opposition to DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) policy appear as ideological battlegrounds, including recent legislation in Texas and Florida banning DEI support. Dennis Denisoff and Laura Stevens argue that critical thinking and DEI subjects are the antidote to totalitarian agenda and that they can foster a sense of cosmopolitan citizenry. In India/Bharat, the history of English's relation to regional languages; students' desire for English language proficiency in conjunction with tutors' literary training; and the politics and aesthetics of canon formation have given rise to an efflorescence of multilingualism and translation. Sambudha Sen also discusses the effects of government interference compromising the very diversity that had energised the universities in the recent past. If we are no longer educating elites but rather thinking citizens/subjects in technologically enhanced societies, then the global and cosmopolitan perspectives, expertise in language and communication, and cross-disciplinary dialogue typical of English Studies today must surely be worth fighting for.

2 | ENGLISH STUDIES IN BRITAIN TODAY

I shall return to the macro picture of global and world Englishes in part 3 of this Introduction. But first I summarise the micro scene of English studies in Britain today, for some of the trends we see in Britain, such as the decline in English

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literature BA degrees and growth in Creative Writing and postgraduate studies, are evident elsewhere. In June 2023, the British Academy published *English Studies Provision in UK Higher Education* (British Academy, 2023 https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/english-studies-provision-uk-higher-education/). The report cites the British Quality Assurance Agency benchmark that today in the UK English studies students learn 'to interpret and interrogate past and present cultures, to anticipate future cultural transformations, and to enhance their ability to understand themselves, other people and our shared world' (p. 19, citing *QAA Subject Benchmark Statement English* 15 February 2023). It also cited a 2022 piece that had resonated with many in the academic community, when the critic and cultural historian Joe Moran characterised the study of English as teaching students to 'handle stories with care, not just to accept without question their declared intentions and surface features' (p. 19 citing Moran, 2022). 'Those working in English studies in higher education recognise their disciplines as global, deeply interdisciplinary, and engaged with the world' (p. 19).

The British Academy take regular 'deep dives' into the health of its disciplines throughout the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The *English Provision* report 'aimed to dig under the headlines and assemble a comprehensive evidence base' (p. 90) of the discipline's undergraduate, postgraduate taught, research students, and their graduate employment outcomes. It also covers academic staff or faculty in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, domicile as well as intellectual orientations and developments in research. Characteristically thorough, the BA report concludes that English graduates in language and literature and Creative Writing develop eight of the top 10 skills declared as essential for 2025 by the World Economic Forum, including advanced critical thinking and communication skills, problem solving, comfort with ambiguity, creativity and self-expression.

The report comprises 100 pages of facts, figures, and graphs, but the key findings are that currently English literature is the most popular undergraduate degree within English studies, with 38% of English Studies students enroled in literature programmes. Creative Writing is the most popular postgraduate subject in English Studies, with 49% of English postgraduates in Creative Writing. Since 2012, we have seen an increase of 8% in postgraduate research students. In terms of employment, 57% of English first degree leavers were in professional or 'associate professional' roles within 15 months of graduation, with 70% of MAs, and 84% of doctoral awards. Notably, the majority of these called their employment 'meaningful' and 'fitting with future plans' (p. 88). The student body are 75% female, 24% male, 1% other for English students.

Ten years ago, English A levels were the most popular A level subjects in the UK. In 2022, English dropped out of the top 10, probably due to the overt promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) subjects by instrumental conservative governments whose ideology is that only the latter increase productivity (hence 'low-value' degrees in the Humanities).[1] This ideology has been consistently debunked (see Understanding the career paths of AHSS graduates in the UK and their contribution to the economy by The British Academy https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/understanding-career-paths-ahss-graduates-uk-contribution-economy/#:~:text=The%20analysis%20shows%20that%20graduates,also%20enjoying%20more%20varied%20careers; Study the Humanities https://www.studythehumanities.org/; The Humanities Indicators https://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators; Humanities Works http://humanitiesworks.org/; Dear English Major http://www.dearenglishmajor.com/; 4Humanities https://4humanities.org/; Humanities for all https://humanitiesforall.org/). Yet the corrections are probably ignored because responsible studies also indicate that educated students, as in the USA, are much less likely to vote conservative (https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2023/05/02/new-polling-shows-over-eight-in-10-students-expect-to-vote-at-the-next-general-election-that-nearly-half-of-students-support-labour-and-7-conservative-but-that-students-are-split/, Hillman, 2023). During 2012–2019 the number of first degree English Studies undergraduates fell by 20%, though they increased in Scotland, with a devolved government, by 12% (see also Garcia et al., 2022). The number of STEM students rose by 3.5% compared to 2019, while humanities fell by 3.3%. English literature was the 6th most popular subject in 2017 and 12th in 2022.

The 2023 subject benchmark for English notes that during their degree English students learn to:

- Read closely, analytically and critically, developing an understanding of literary form and historical and linguistic contexts;

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- Understand verbal creativity, including aesthetic features of literary and cultural texts;
- Analyse texts and discourses, with an ability to respond to the affective and rhetorical power of language;
- Reflect critically upon acts of reading and writing;
- Develop independent, imaginative and persuasive interpretations of literary, critical, linguistic or creative material;
- Articulate a critical understanding of complex texts and ideas, and of their historical relations;
- Communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both speech and writing. (p. 20 citing QAA, *Subject Benchmark Statement English: Version for Consultation*, p. 3. [15 February 2023].)

English Language students and researchers investigate and analyse spoken, written and multimodal communication and culture and explore the 'origins and historical development of English, its regional and national expressions, its contemporary global circulation and potential future forms' (pp. 19–20). The sudden and noticeable growth of Creative Writing seems to indicate a new interest in self-expression and creativity, often in the context of critical theory. Examples include auto-fiction and creative nonfiction, mixing personal experience with fact or fiction in what critical theorists call the self-clarification of the struggles and wishes of the age.

English provides 22% of humanities degrees, and English graduates are essential to Britain's education sector at primary (11% of first degree graduates within 5 years of degree) and secondary levels (9% of same). Within the top seven sectors called 'professional and associate professional', English degree holders also contribute to publishing (5%), Higher Education (4%), management consultancy (3%), computer programing (3%), and advertising (3%) (p. 86). At this point in history, an English degree in Britain appears to provide a robust and meaningful degree for participants in the information economy. The essays in this special issue address this and other roles of English Studies internationally.

3 | GLOBAL AND WORLD ENGLISHES[2]

The notion of national languages, identifying a language with national unity, is a very modern idea, only about three centuries old and arising with the formation of modern nation-states. Before the eighteenth century CE, most people were bi- or multilingual, mixing whatever linguistic resources they needed in their lifeworlds. India today has 1.4B citizens with 415 languages and dialects, 22 of which are recognised in the Constitution for legal use, including English. 1858–1947 the English of the Raj developed into the language of government and education (Singer, 2012). In 1956, after Independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, hoping to establish a modern, secular, socialist state, divided states along linguistic lines, exhorting them to learn each other's languages to promote unity. This had the opposite effect of decreasing multilingualism, but Nehru also emphasised that English facilitated communication across the multilingual nation and between India and the external world (see below).

Today, one spokesperson among the Dalitbahujans, meaning broken or oppressed majority, argues that English can assist in liberation from caste: 'English's accessibility to the oppressed is creating a new philosophy.… In future it can become a big instrument of liberation of the Dalitbahujans and women. It translates the new global ideas within no time and the organic intellectuals who could read and write in that global language would be in a better position to handle these ideas with much more confidence than those who cannot' (Ilaiah, 2010 loc. 3278 and see also Khilnani, 1997 loc. 545–547). Dalit scholar D. Shyam Babu writes, 'English is no longer just a language—it's a skill. Without it you remain an unskilled labourer' (Salomone, p. 249).

Today language as a unifying force of the nation-state or a matter of individual and group rights remains contested in most regions, although recently the campaign of the latter has shifted its rhetoric from civil rights to economics and competition, more in line with neoliberal ideology everywhere: it is as good for US Americans to speak other languages for their markets abroad as it is for international learners to advance themselves through access to English (see Salomone, pp. 335–354). And twenty-first-century national governments plus corporate sponsors have

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overseen language policy, with international firms often adopting English as a 'neutral company language' as a matter of perceived financial advantage.

Lenovo (PRC), Samsung (South Korea), Honda (Japan), Audi and Lufthansa (Germany), Nokia (Finland), Heineken (Netherlands), Electrolux (Sweden), and Renault (France) have English as their 'neutral company language' (Salomone, p. 347 and see Phillipson, 2008, 2009). Salomone cites Rakuten, Japan's largest online retailer, who shifted to global English thus:

> In 2010, the company's celebrity CEO, Hiroshi Mikitani, announced that from that day forward, workers at all levels would gradually move toward English. All meetings, presentations, training sessions, documents, and emails would be in English. The following day, all cafeteria menus and elevator signs switched from Japanese to English. Rakuten sent some of its employees to the United States or the United Kingdom for English immersion classes. Others attended multi-week language programs in the Philippines. Most of the 7100 workers attended onsite language training during the workday. Within two years they would have to score above 650 on the 990-point Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) or risk being demoted or dismissed. In the meantime, the company would monitor their progress through test scores and monthly reports from managers. The company had set a goal to become the premier internet services provider, not just in Japan but also in the world.
>
> (Salomone, p. 348)

The above examples reflect how global English has developed since the British through the US American empires. The linguist David Crystal cites Bismarck, the first Chancellor of the German empire, when he was asked in 1898 what he considered to be the decisive factor in modern history. Bismarck replied, 'The fact that the North Americans speak English' (Crystal, p. 85). The critical perspective on this story might be called world Englishes, as it is articulated by linguists sympathetic to decolonising both empire and postcolonial neoliberalism and to provincialising English. Global English for such critics is a western agenda-setting combination of nationalist and corporate funding. Their view is that after colonialism as an explicit political order was destroyed, an ideology of modernity (progress, development, growth) has sat uneasily with continuing coloniality (poverty, misery, inequality, racism, sexism, exploitation of nature and the environment).[3] Within this view, the accumulation of English linguistic capital amounts to the dispossession of other linguistic capital and other speakers (Pennycook, 2017; Pennycook & Makoni, 2019). Rather than a triumphal global English, these critics promote decolonising cocktails of mixed languages in the lifeworld, English with local characteristics, translanguaging, metrolingualism (we shall refer to Afropolitans below), principled polycentrism, and resourceful multilingual speakers.

India's national academy, Sahitya Akademi, was established in 1954 amidst debates over national languages 'to foster and co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages and to promote through them all the cultural unity of the country' (Ministry of Education, 1971, cited in Singer 156). This introduces the problematic of a national literature in multilingual countries, in which a national literature is necessarily diverse and even promoted through translation (see Satpathy, 2017, 2023). The essays in this special issue seem to confirm that this is where English literature studies will go: world literatures in English and world literatures in translation. It is certainly clear that born-digital students today have an appetite for international literatures and global communications generally. Yet this may not be so different, a Chomskian might observe, from a British literature that already includes Welsh, Cornish, Scottish, and Northern Irish, much less Cockney (London), London Jamaican, Geordie (Newcastle), Scouse (Liverpool), Glaswegian, Estuary English, Brummie (Birmingham), and BBC or the King's English. MLE—originally a mixture of Jamaican patois, Cockney, and African intonations, incorporating elements of French Africa, Greek, and Turkish—is used by young Black British and increasingly by London youth at large (Owolade, 2023).[4] Or an American literature that includes California Valley Girls (Barbie speak), rural Appalachians, Southerners, New Yorkers, Bostonians, African Americans, Latinx, Cubans, Puerto Ricans. It may be, says a Chomskian, that all languages, not just national ones, are political rather than natural categories, and that there are only idiolects. (Noam Chomsky always quotes the Yiddish

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linguist Max Weinreich: 'A language is a dialect with an army and a navy'.) '[English] does help in our understanding each other, more especially the people from the North and the South', says the Report of the Official Language Commission 1956, minuting Nehru, 'it provides a link between us and the outside world, and it is of the utmost importance that we should maintain and recognise that link…And not try to cut ourselves off from it and isolate ourselves' (Singer, p. 153).

And environmentalists will know that language is not just an issue for humans. Jiang Rong's (né Lu Jiamin's) 2004 novel *Wolf Totem*, a story of environmental degradation, cultural nationalism, and rustication during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, was made into a film in 2015. The *French* director Jean-Jacques Annaud, famed for working with animals, was selected by the state-backed *China* Film Group even though his previous *Seven Years in Tibet* had been banned. The cast included 35 wolves trained by *Scottish* animal trainer Andrew Simpson in the steppes of Inner Mongolia, where filming took place. The film was originally released in *Mandarin*, and later released in *Mongolian*. Yet 'After filming, the wolves were ultimately relocated to *Canada* since they only understood commands in *English*' (Lin, 2014).

Tony Crowley's *War of Words: The Politics of Language in Ireland 1537–2004* (2005) documents the complexity of languages under colonisation, neocolonisation, and postcoloniality, when language is linked to identity, legitimacy, proprietorship, cultural struggle, and memory. English speakers were worried about going native with Irish/Gaelic; Protestants studied Irish. At various times Irish was described as foreign and English as familiar; at other times English was described as foreign and Irish as familiar. English was the language of the rational intellect, Irish the language of the immaterial soul; Irish the language of history, English the language of modern business; English a hybrid and impure language, Irish the pure language of Eden; English the language of poetry, Irish the language of philosophy; Irish a fetter on Irish hopes, English the language of better prospects; English the defence against the superstitions of paganism, Irish the guarantor of religious freedom; English the language which could be used to save the Catholic flock, Irish the key to the Protestant Reformation of Ireland; English the language of oppressive colonialism, Irish the language of the anticolonial struggle. 'It is a story', writes Crowley, 'whose contradictions are encapsulated by the contrasting thoughts of one young man, Joyce's Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*' (Crowley, 2005 loc. 124–131).

Language and literature will always be adequate for the peoples and purposes to which they are gifted. Global (hegemonic) English will often function oppressively, while world Englishes will represent communities in action. English is technically a product of Roman, Scandinavian, German, and French invaders over the course of many centuries. The idea that there is a single thing 'English', which is associated with a national identity (presumably entailing that citizens/subjects in other countries who adopt English, even as a first language, are in some way imperfect copies) is, as we have said, a very recent product of nationalism. We might take the lived histories of Englishes to point to the end of both barbaric and romantic nationalisms and try a more convivial approach to English through translation and transnation. This is why I have argued elsewhere that at least in Britain we might cease to separate English departments from Modern Language departments and rather have one large grouping of Modern Languages and Literatures (Gagnier, 2018, p. 29). For good or ill, the futures of English language and literature will be adequate to the societies that use them. Whether they will be used for liberal tolerant or repressive exclusionary ends is, at least in part, down to us as educators.

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ORCID

Regenia Gagnier https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6351-5798

ENDNOTES

[1] The top 10 included Maths (most popular) then in descending order Psychology, Biology, Chemistry, Sociology, History, Art and Design, Business, Physics, Economics (Garcia et al., 2022).

[2] For more detailed development of the ideas in this section, see Gagnier (2018) and Gagnier (2023 forthcoming).

[3] On decoloniality, see (Bhambra, 2014; Hamm & Smandych, 2005; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Quijano, 2007). See also (Prashad, 2012; 2014 edition); (Martin, 2022).

[4] My favourite definition of Afropolitans is Taiye Tuakli-Wosornu's: 'Afropolitans—the newest generation of African emigrants coming soon, or collected already, at a law firm/chem lab/jazz lounge near you. You'll know us when you see us by our funny blend of London fashion, New York jargon, African ethics, and academic successes. Some of us are ethnic mixes, for example, Ghanaian/Jamaican, Nigerian/Swiss...American accent, European affect, African ethos. Most of us are multilingual: in addition to English and a Romance language or two, we understand some indigenous language(s) and speak a few urban vernaculars. There is at least one place on the Continent to which we tie our sense of self: be it a nation-state (Ethiopia), a city (Ibadan), or simply an Auntie's kitchen. Then there's the G8 city or two (or three) that we know like the backs of our hands, and the institutions (corporate, academic) that know us for our famed work ethic. We are Afropolitans—not citizens, but Africans' (Tuakli-Wosornu, 2006). Or, as Abena P. A. Busia, Ghana's Ambassador to Brazil and Editor, *Women Writing Africa* (2002-08 4 vols.), writes: 'I was born in Ghana and spoke both Twi (my father's language) and Ga (my mother's language) in my early years. ... I was schooled in English. We left for Holland. ... We constructed sentences containing English, Dutch, or Twi words at random. In 1962 when we left Holland for Mexico where father established the Institute of African Studies at El Colegio de Mexico, when we children wanted to speak "secretly" in public, we simply spoke Dutch to each other' (Busia in Milbauer and Sutton, eds., 2020, p. 154).

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Regenia Gagnier FBA FEA FRSA MAE https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/english/staff/gagnier/ is, with Prof Nan Zhang (University of Hong Kong), the Section Editor of the Global Circulation Project and former Editor in Chief (2009–2013) of *Literature Compass*. She holds the Established Chair in English Language and Literature at the University of Exeter and Senior Research Fellowship in Egenis, Centre for the Study of Life Sciences. Her monographs include *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (1986); *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain* (1991); *The Insatiability of Human Wants: Economics and Aesthetics in Market Society* (2000); *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization: on the Relationship of Part to Whole* (2010); *Literatures of Liberalization: Global Circulation and the Long Nineteenth Century* (2018). Gagnier is on the Editorial Boards of 22 scholarly journals and has supervised to completion 87 doctorates at Stanford and Exeter. Her specialism is the geopolitics and political economy of language and literature migration since the 19C.

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