

John Benjamins Publishing Company



This is a contribution from *English World-Wide* 36:3
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Kirkpatrick, Andy and Ronald Sussex, eds. 2012. *English as an International Language in Asia: Implications for Language Education*. New York: Springer. viii + 243 pp. EUR 114.99 (hardcover and softcover). ISBN 978-94-007-4577-3.

Wee, Lionel, Robbie B. H. Goh and Lisa Lim, eds. 2013. *The Politics of English: South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Asia Pacific*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. ix + 322 pp. EUR 95.00 (hardcover). ISBN 978-90-272-2835-2.

Reviewed by Jonathan Newton

1. Introduction

English threads itself through the political, social and educational ecology of Asia in richly varied, complex and dynamic ways. While “entity-English” (Kirkpatrick and Sussex 2012) maintains a dominant position in syllabuses and curricula across Asia, Asian Englishes flourish and find expression in a range of varieties (and sub-varieties). Code-mixing between English and local languages is also widespread. Predictably then, English is a site of contestation between pressure towards convergence from above and the “bubbling up” (Pennycook 2013:5) of localized indigenous language practices from below.

Of course Asia is a multifaceted construction and as such offers a kaleidoscope of contexts which produce to diverse national responses to English. Yet within this diversity, English has rapidly established itself as a *lingua franca* in pan-Asian communication, its status to be further solidified in late 2015 when it is to be formally adopted as the official language of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Across the region English is also the dominant “foreign” language in schools. Indeed, as Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012) remind us in the first of the two volumes reviewed here, “there is no country in Asia where English is not the first language after the national language” (p. 3). Situating these trends in a global context, Kirkpatrick and Sussex suggest that Asia will play a pivotal role in the future of World Englishes, not least because in India and China it has two of the largest blocks of English speakers, with both countries pursuing a policy of expanding English language education (p. 3). The second of the two volumes reviewed here (Wee, Goh and Lim 2013) takes us beyond education to explore the impact of English in political, cultural and social spheres. Taken together, there is much to

be gleaned from these two collections to inform our understanding of the present and future of English as an international language, not just in Asia, but, by extrapolation, globally.

Each book is a collection of papers presented at (or “inspired by”) one of two forums in which scholars from across Asia came together to explore the presence and impact of English as an international language in Asia. Wee, Goh and Lim (2013), based on the first of these forums chronologically speaking, emerged from a workshop on the politics of English in Asia at the National University of Singapore in August 2009, and the second, Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012), grew out of an international forum on English as an International Language (EIL) in Asia held in Macao in December 2010. I shall now review each book in turn in order of publication before concluding with some general points.

Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012). *English as an International Language in Asia: Implications for Language Education*.

As the title suggests, the volume edited by Kirkpatrick and Sussex focuses on the implications for education of English’s role as a dominant international language in Asia. Education, the editors argue, acts as a prism, concentrating the social and political sway of languages. It is thus a site of intense contestation. Themes addressed in this collection include: whether to use entity English (the notional standard variety based around a model native speaker) or a local variety in a syllabus and as the performative target; how much space to devote to English across the curriculum from primary to secondary school and into tertiary education; the related issue of how early to introduce English in the curriculum; which subjects are taught in English; and what cultural content is appropriate in English classes in Asian contexts.

To my mind, three pivot chapters hold the book together and in concert present the broad backdrop against which the remaining country-specific chapters can be situated. The first is Bolton’s overview of the field of World Englishes in which he presents a survey of English as an international language within Asia. Bolton engages with Graddol’s (2006: 72) claim that, with the trend across Asia to learn English at an ever-earlier age (in China, for example, English was made compulsory for all primary schools in 2001), English will become less of a “foreign language” and more like “a near universal basic skill”. However, as Bolton points out, this wholesale promotion of English has not been “an unqualified success story” (p. 23), a point to which most of the chapters in both volumes attest. An obvious example, as discussed by Gill, is the reversal in Malaysia in 2009 of the (at that time) recently introduced policy of using English as the language of instruction for science and

maths. In its place, the country returned to using Bahasa Malaysia. The Philippines provides another counter example in the move away from English-medium instruction and towards multilingual education (a trend discussed in more detail in the chapter by Tinio in the Wee, Goh and Lim volume). As the chapters in this book illustrate, across the region there is widespread concern about the negative effects of an overemphasis on English on local and national languages and on other areas of the curriculum.

These themes are explored in detail in the second pivotal chapter in the book, the chapter by Kirkpatrick, which carries the book's title. Using the Indonesian experience of English in education as a point of reference, Kirkpatrick critiques language policies that promote English at the expense of the welfare and maintenance of other languages. Notable amongst these policies is the currently popular "earlier the better" approach to English language education in the region which Kirkpatrick argues is having a profoundly negative impact on local languages. He argues instead for a *lingua franca* approach to the teaching of English in which English is introduced in schooling only after other core languages (the national language, a local *lingua franca* and the learner's mother tongue) have been established. Such an approach, he proposes, would also focus on functional English proficiency for international intelligibility rather than proficiency defined in native speaker terms (p. 38). Here Kirkpatrick lays out, in unambiguous terms, an agenda for promoting English as an International Language (EIL) as the basis for English education across the region.

Pennycook's chapter, in the latter third of the book, provides the third pivot point for understanding the role of English in Asia. Pennycook takes issue with notions of English as a static "system-entity-edifice" (pp. 138–143), proposing instead a negotiated model of English defined by local practices. This is feasible, he argues, because English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is an ideological construct and a way of viewing the world rather than a linguistic system. To support this argument, Pennycook critically deconstructs the claim that another widely spoken *lingua franca*, Mandarin Chinese, is the most widely spoken mother tongue. He notes, for example, that this claim ignores the range of local varieties of Putonghua (common language) and the fact that Putonghua is spoken by a little over 50 per cent of the population of China, many of whom will have only learnt it as a school language. Turning to English, he argues for the need to view ELF as dynamic and constitutive of diverse local practices. As he concludes, "lingua franca communication is emergent and multilingual: we speak both our own and each other's languages. It is built from the bottom up: it is an emergent collection of local language practices" (p. 152).

A theme that appears across both volumes is the place of "culture" and intercultural teaching practices in English language education. This theme is particularly

well articulated by Wen in her chapter on teaching English as an international language in mainland China. Wen shows how teaching cultural knowledge within English language education in China has gone through three stages. In the first, linguistic knowledge was taught with little reference to cultural content. The second involved attention to the target language culture, typically either British or American, to which the English language was inextricably linked. In the third (and current) phase, a greater range of cultures is represented, including attention to Chinese culture. However, the “native variety” is still presented as the attainment target. Wen argues for a new model in which learners are progressively exposed to a wider range of varieties of English as they progress through the curriculum. Similarly, in the areas of culture and pragmatics, an initial focus on target language cultures and universal rules of communication should be increasingly supplemented by a broader focus on non-native cultures and on the learners’ own cultural worlds. Wen argues that cultural knowledge should not be presented as an end in itself but as the means to achieving intercultural competence defined as sensitivity to cultural difference, tolerance, and flexibility in dealing with cultural differences and managing the inherent dynamism of intercultural communication. Essentially, Wen is arguing that the native variety should be kept as the main source of what to teach but not as the attainment target to be acquired. In her words, “the model makes a clear distinction between what is to be taught and what is to be achieved” (p. 92). Learning objectives in this approach are defined not as approximations to native speaker competences but in terms of the communicative, intercultural and pragmatic competences required to accomplish tasks in English involving communication with a culturally diverse range of interlocutors. In this chapter, Wen offers an important statement on how ELT in China can be developed in a more interculturally relevant direction.

Culture is also addressed in Proshina’s brief chapter on the teaching and use of English in Russia to communicate with Asia. In an interesting contrast to most other contexts where cultural content is typically directed towards Kachru’s inner circle countries such as Britain and North America, Proshina highlights the predominance of courses in which the focus is on Russian cultural content — “expressing Russian culture through English” (p. 99) — mainly for the purpose of training future tourist guides and interpreters. Proshina then proceeds to discuss six problems that Russians face when communicating in English with people from Asia. One such problem is the strength of the prevailing orthodoxy of the ideal native speaker model among Russian teachers and linguists and the inevitable deficiency model of other Englishes that this leads to. Proshina concludes by arguing that, for the future, English language education in Russia should expose students to a variety of Englishes, especially Asian Englishes, not only because of the economic importance of business relationships with Asia but also to promote

tolerance and offer a means to reflect on both linguistic and cultural ethnocentrism. As with Wen's chapter on China, Proshina provides a useful agenda for enhancing interculturality through ELT in Russia.

Language policy is the focus of the chapters on Malaysia and Indonesia. In the first, Gill critically examines the recent shifts in policy on the language used to teach science and maths in Malaysia. An initial reversal from Bahasa Malaysia to English in 2002 was followed in 2009 by a re-reversal from English to Bahasa. These shifts reflect a struggle between the forces of linguistic nationalism and development-oriented nationalism. Gill examines the context for these changes and public reactions to them. She raises the question of whether it is appropriate or effective to use language as it was in the case of the re-reversal to "pursue advancement and equalize the opportunities provided for the peoples of a multi-ethnic nation" (p. 56). She is referring here to one of the main reasons for the re-reversal back to Bahasa Malaysia; that is to mitigate the negative impact of English-based instruction on the educational performance of students from the Malay community. In order to address the needs of all the main ethnic groups in Malaysia (Malays, Chinese and Indian) she suggests that schools could be provided with greater freedom to choose which language to teach these subjects in.

In the chapter on Indonesian language policy, Hamied situates English in the context of Indonesia's overriding concern for national unity in a country containing hundreds of local languages and in which Bahasa Indonesian, the official language of the country, has been used as a key tool for cultivating a sense of national unity. Hamied provides a useful historical overview of language policy in the country and follows this with a discussion of current challenges which include assessment issues and a shortage of resources and adequately trained teachers. For Hamied an issue of concern is declining proficiency in the national language which he suggests may be the result of placing too much emphasis on foreign languages, especially English, although there is little evidence or argumentation provided to support this claim.

The remaining chapters cover a wide range of topics. Oanh reports on a survey of teacher attitudes to localized varieties of English. She finds, predictably, that teachers strongly favour standard English and the role of English as an Asian *lingua franca* but are reluctant to accept localized varieties. Hino's chapter on Japan is a fascinating exploration of the conflict of cultural values in pedagogies and textbooks used to teach English in Japan. Hino provides a nuanced and insightful account of the Japanese approach to translation and its basis in 1000 years of reading and translating from Chinese which he argues has had a profound impact on the Japanese approach to learning English. Most noticeably this has led to a privileging of the written form, which sits uneasily with imported methodologies and their tendency to focus on oral communication. An education focus is largely

absent in three chapters in the latter half of the book and so I will not discuss them at length here. These are Sussex's chapter on inter-language switching in international English, Mukherjee's chapter on competing varieties of Sri Lankan English, and Moody's chapter on English in popular Asian music.

Overall this collection does a fine job of articulating a wide range of current concerns regarding the educational implications of the growth of English as an international language across Asia. It is ably introduced by the editors who also provide the compelling final chapter, "A Postscript and a Prolegomenon", in which they highlight three central threads that run through this collection: tensions between English as system-entity-edifice and as an emergent means-for-communication; the exercise of English in policy and practice; and communicacy, defined as the skill sets necessary for successful language users.

Wee, Goh and Lim (2013). *The Politics of English: South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Asia Pacific*.

The Wee, Goh and Lim volume is broadly organized by Asian region: South Asia (India and Sri Lanka), South-East Asia (Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines) and Asia Pacific (Korea and Japan). A novel structure has been adopted in which each country is represented by two chapters, one providing a critical assessment of the country's language policy and the other focusing on the use of English in particular cultural domains. As this is the larger of the two volumes by almost 100 pages I shall devote more of this review to discussing its content. Furthermore, there is such richness and diversity in this collection that I will work sequentially through each of the chapters in the book to do justice to it.

The book begins with Pennycook's agenda-setting chapter on language policy, language ideologies and language practices. Pennycook criticizes the plannability of language, arguing that language policy is not so much about language as it is about "language ideology". He draws on examples from the region including job advertisements for English teachers in Vietnam, the Singaporean "Speak Good English" policy, and language artefacts from the Philippines and India, to show that local language practices are always "divergent, exceptional and deviant" by their very nature (p. 3). Language planning attempts in Singapore are, for Pennycook, a particularly good example of on-going language ideological struggles which reveal the impossibility of turning the language of the state into the language of everyday use. Somewhat provocatively, Pennycook concludes that planning languages as distinct entities is doomed to failure because of the self-generating qualities of local language practices — "language variety and difference will keep bubbling up from below" (p. 5). Taking this argument to its logical conclusion, Pennycook

questions the ontological status of languages, and focuses instead on “ways in which linguistic resources are mobilized across (translingually) what are commonly conceived as languages” (p. 15). Viewing languages as “overlapping sets of multimodal semiotic resources” he argues, following Blommaert (2010), that “a sociolinguistics of globalization needs to move beyond a focus on languages in order to focus on styles, resources, genres, discourses and practices” (p. 15). This chapter provides a valuable lens through which to interpret the experience of hybrid forms of English discussed in subsequent chapters.

The two chapters on India address the politics of Hinglish and linguistic ecology in Delhi, respectively. In the first, Roy discusses whether the unifying potential of Hinglish has been able to provide a bridge across the sociocultural gap between classes in India. Drawing on a detailed and extensive analysis of Hinglish in the visual (including both Indian — Bollywood — and diaspora film cultures) and literary arts, she maintains that the mixing of Hindu and English tends to be shaped by two distinct class-differentiated motivations, either by “innocence” in the case of the non-elite classes, or “intentional play” (p. 34) in the case of elite speakers of Hinglish. For this reason Roy argues that Hinglish remains a site of class-based contestation between the aspirations of the lower and middle classes and the fashionable linguistic semiotics of the upper classes. She concludes that despite hopes to the contrary “the use of Hinglish by non-elite speakers has not bridged the socio-cultural gap between the classes and masses in India” (p. 34).

In the second chapter on India, Vaish draws on a grounded analysis of photos and artefacts to explore the linguistic ecology of Delhi. In doing so she addresses broader themes of language ecology in India and the relationship between globalization and multilingualism. On the basis of this evidence she argues that despite the spread of English, Hindi is also growing as a local language, thus confirming the claim made by Bhatia and Richie (2004) that bilingualism can be sustained and indeed strengthened through globalization.

Sri Lanka, the focus of Chapters 4 and 5, provides a vivid and, in many respects, troubling picture of the role of English in politics in Asia. Lim’s chapter provides an historical overview of the politics of English in Sri Lanka vis-à-vis the two main local languages, Sinhala and Tamil. As she points out, the politics of English have been experienced more painfully in Sri Lanka than elsewhere in Asia, with ethno-linguistic issues lying at the root of a quarter of a century of civil war. In Sri Lanka, English is referred to as *Kaduva* — Sinhalese for ‘sword’ — a weapon to control and intimidate. Lim’s chapter is succinct and informative, concluding with an insightful discussion of the future of evolving endo-normative varieties of Sri Lankan English as distinct from the standard Sri Lankan English associated with westernized upper classes and with the norms of British English. Lim predicts that endo-normative Sri Lankan English will take on a life of its own

as “a living, breathing language, used increasingly widely, by a growing body of multilingual users” (p.77) and, as such, will contribute to the broader multilingual ecology of Sri Lanka in the future.

Endo-normative varieties of Sri Lankan English are also the focus of the second chapter on Sri Lanka in which Goonetilleke explores themes of identity and language as expressed in literature and poetry. He discusses the problem faced by writers in ex-colonies writing in English of “reconciling their own sensibility, indigenous traditions and realities, on the one hand, and Western literary and other traditions and influences, on the other” (p.93). Goonetilleke draws on poetic work to show how writers have navigated this fraught relationship by making it the very subject of their artistic expression.

Singapore is the third country discussed in two chapters on Singapore’s language policy and the cultural politics of English and Chinese dialects. Wee first addresses the challenges faced in constructing Singapore’s language policies and particularly the fraught relationship, in policy terms at least, between English and Singlish. He argues that the government has failed to understand that Singlish, as a nativized colloquial variety, is an inevitable outcome of wider use of English in this multilingual environment. Wee proposes that the government “adopt a more hands-off approach” to Singlish, and indeed that it be used as “a resource for learning the standard rather than as an obstacle that needs to be eliminated” (p.116). Wee critiques assumptions behind the “Speak Good English Movement” in Singapore while also seeking to reconcile the roles that both Singlish and a conventional standard English can play in Singapore’s future. He situates the status of English within broader language policies designed to foster harmony in this ethnolinguistically diverse society, noting that Singapore’s branding of itself as a “cosmopolitan” city of the future implies an identity constructed less around Asian-ness than around global connectedness. For Wee, implicit in this identity is the need for language policy to ensure greater autonomy in language choices, especially around the mandatory assignment of a specific mother tongue (MT). This particular issue is complicated by the fact that of the four officially recognized languages of Singapore (English, Malay, Mandarin Chinese and Tamil) English is denied the status of a MT despite being the MT for many Singaporean Eurasians and the language of the home for a growing number of others.

This theme is built on in Goh’s chapter which examines the impact of English on “an increasingly fissiparous and fragile [...] Singaporean identity” (p.142). Not least among the identity issues Goh explores is the fragmented nature of a Singaporean Chinese identity which includes distinctions between China Chinese and Singaporean Chinese, and the contestation between Mandarin and the traditional dialects common in Singapore. This sets the background for considering identity issues in relation to English. Goh notes fundamental contradictions

between official English policy and “a persistent popular groundswell of mockery which casts a high Anglophone competence as foreign and aberrant [...]” (p. 135) reflecting “self-consciousness about and symbolic repudiations [...] of assured Anglophone and cosmopolitan identities [...]” (p. 139). Goh uses extracts from the Singaporean satirical website TalkingCock.com and contemporary fiction in an evocative exploration of these identity issues.

The next chapters take us across the causeway to Malaysia. Talib discusses code-switching between Malay and English, focusing on three notable examples. The first is the attempt by the Malaysian government in 2004 to impose a ban on Malay songs containing English words being broadcast on state-controlled radio and television. The problems this policy encountered underline the difficulty of imposing legislative controls over discourse and the dynamic interaction between languages, an issue Pennycook highlights in Chapter 1. The second is the use of the English word *Shit* in the title of a novel by award-winning Malaysian novelist Shahnon Ahmad, and the third, the extensive code-switching in songs written by P. Ramlee, the iconic Malaysian popular entertainer from the 1950s and 60s. The author explores the complex aesthetic and sociolinguistic factors behind these examples of code-switching. In the P. Ramlee case, he shows how in humorous songs code-switching is used with “evident relish” and that, in the light of the immoral behaviour depicted in the song, is employed as a device to imply that “this is not the kind of behaviour that Malays should indulge in” (p. 160).

The following chapter focuses on issues of identity and belonging that emerge from the experiences of a group of Malay users of English in a TESL (Teaching of English as a Second Language) programme. These young student teachers experience conflict between their emerging identities as English speakers and the ideologies of their home communities. In this chapter, Rajadurai discusses the reflective journal writings of twelve such student teachers, a number of whom were from rural communities, a factor that has some bearing on their experience. These students experience resistance and hostility towards English in the Malay communities they inhabit, reflecting, in Pavlenko’s (2002: 284, cited on p. 175) terms, “identity politics” and “conflict between their self-chosen identities and others’ attempts to position them differently”. As one of the participants notes in her diary while reflecting on the experience of returning home after a time in an academic setting, “[t]he community perceives English as inappropriate and it is not valued at all. When we speak English here, we are seen as snobbish” (p. 175). As Rajadurai notes, “community ideologies construct Malay speakers who choose to speak English as rude, offensive, showing off, patronizing, and arrogant” (p. 178) with the consequence that “these shifting linguistic allegiances imply shifting cultural identities, political affiliations and moral commitments” (p. 178). The broader theme here is that “for a large segment of the Malay community, promotion or use of English is

construed as a threat to the mother tongue, and by extension to the sovereignty of their community, culture and race” (p. 183). As Rajadurai argues, this tension is accentuated because, in contrast to Chinese and Indian Malaysians for whom bi- or multilingualism is the norm, many Malays are monolingual since the language of their home, religion and community is also the language of schooling.

As in Sri Lanka, establishing a national language in the Philippines (Tagalog, and, from 1973, Filipino) involved conflict in the early years of the 20th century between Tagalog and non-Tagalog elites, with anti-Tagalog forces allied with the pro-English lobby. In the first of the two chapters on the Philippines, Lorente describes how English became the *de facto* language of instruction in public schools during the American colonial era (1898–1946) and came to be identified with the “progressive” American ideals of “enlightenment”, “democracy” and “self-governance” (Gonzalez 1980: 27–28 cited on p. 190), its privileged position being bolstered by international pressure in the form of demand for cheap English-speaking labour. All this has played a prominent role in shaping language policy in the Philippines.

For the groups whose rallying cry for English had been that Tagalog or Filipino would not represent them in the national arena, their almost indisputable argument now was that English was necessary if the country was to participate and fully benefit from the global economy. (p. 192)

Having traced the historic origins of the grip of English in the Philippines in the first half of the chapter, Lorente shifts her focus to mitigating the grip of English in the second. Here she focuses on the (then) pending Multilingual Education (MLE) house bill to introduce mother tongue education in all subjects from pre-school up to the end of grade school. While lauding how this bill reengages with national language policy and with multilingualism, she also cautions that the symbolic power of English still remains, as evident in the way the bill has promoted mother tongue education as a means to more effectively learning English and Filipino rather than as a good in its own right.

In the second chapter on the Philippines, Tinio focuses on the economic power of English in outsourcing industries set up in the Philippines and in the export of Filipino labour. Drawing on Bourdieu’s notions of the “linguistic market” and “linguistic capital”, Tinio examines economic needs-based sub-varieties of Philippine English — the kinds of working knowledge of English required to meet market demand, a demand that is typically for women and has led to a feminization of labour. Tinio is worth quoting in her powerful concluding statements on this issue:

Inscribed into the subordinate varieties of Philippine English is both a history and current order of exploitation in the name of either modernization and industrialization or development or in the name of a congenial, economically equal and liberal Asia-Pacific family. (p. 221)

Whether it is the female assembly line worker, the domestic helper, the bargirl, or the call centre operator, Tinio argues that “these women serve as the very foundations of the global economic order that oppresses them” (p.221), through their contributions to the Philippine government’s interest payments on its enormous foreign debt, a debt that ensures their ongoing subjugation.

The English they speak, idiosyncratic as it is, serves as a not so silent witness of the tenderness, care, libido, pretence at/desire for an ease with Western culture that is imbricated into this oppression. (p. 221)

The Asia-Pacific — Korea and Japan — is the focus of the final of the three sections of the book. It begins with Hiramoto’s insightful critique of the state of English language teaching in Japan. Hiramoto examines what she describes as the love-hate relationship the Japanese have with English in general. Traditional study of English in Japan is focused on passing exams with the result that Japanese students are often unable to communicate in English even after years of study. This has resulted in a whole sector devoted to filling this gap through offering “conversation English”. But here a native speaker ideology predominates with conversation invariably involving idealized native speakers: “Caucasians, Americans, hamburger-eaters, [and] drugstore patrons” (p.236). Hiramoto argues that this kind of essentializing contributes to an inferiority complex about English and the West exacerbated by the “shame” of not being able to converse in English despite years of study. She concludes that to shift these negative outcomes, the Japanese school system needs to work on fostering in learners the identity of a native Japanese learner of English rather than a non-native English speaker.

In the second chapter on Japan, Morita investigates the practice of using English loanwords in Japanese, words that a 2007 government report found were not understood by the average Japanese person, with 80 per cent of people surveyed stating that they encounter too many loanwords in everyday life. Morita explores the use of loanwords in the media and government documents, showing how, in the latter, these words are used not so much for information but for their “semiotic branding” (p.261), for the way they bestow “an aura of access to the international community and its consensus” (p.261).

Korea is the final destination in this collection. In her chapter, Min takes us on a powerful literary-historical journey through the lives of English speakers in Korea, her subjects being the Korean imaginaries of the English language as represented in and beyond literature and the cinema. One such subject is the adoptee — the 200,000 children placed in transnational adoption — who Min argues is one of the most powerful English speaking voices in contemporary Korean and Korean-American literature and who represents the disjunctive distance between

English as a symbol of elite status on the one hand, and of national cultural loss on the other (p. 283).

In the penultimate chapter, Park interrogates the relationship between English, class and the neoliberal reforms of Lee Myung-bak's regime (2008–2012). Park argues that the significance of English in Korea is greater than might be immediately obvious from an account of factors such as colonialism, global dependencies and language policy. Rather, "English is implicated much more deeply in local political processes, mediating relations of class and social reproduction and indexing models and stereotypes of personae that reflect contrasting values and positions" (p. 288). This chapter offers a compelling account of the role of English in neoliberal globalization and its complicity in reproducing inequalities rooted in class structure.

2. Concluding comments

While these are not the first edited collections to address similar themes in the Asian context (see e.g. Murata and Jenkins 2009) their appearance reflects the ever-growing importance of English across Asia and the need to identify and critically examine its impacts, both negative and positive. As their titles suggest, the two volumes address different dimensions of English in Asia; Wee, Goh and Lim focus broadly on social, cultural and political impact and implications of the spread of English while Kirkpatrick and Sussex focus on educational themes. There is overlap though. Hiramoto's chapter in Wee, Goh and Lim examines the phenomenon of conversation English classes in modern Japan while three of the chapters in the Kirkpatrick and Sussex volume are more sociolinguistic than educational in orientation. But these are trivial points. Overall, the two volumes overlap in necessary and helpful ways since any discussion of the politics of English inevitably draws attention to language policy and thus also to education policy.

Of course neither book can feasibly do justice to every single country in Asia, a point that Wee, Goh and Lim acknowledge in their introduction, where they note that neither China nor Hong Kong are addressed in separate chapters in their book. Also noteworthy in their absence from **both** books are any chapters devoted to the countries that make up mainland South-East Asia: Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. To address these gaps, both books include introductory and concluding chapters (as well as a number of non-country specific chapters in the Kirkpatrick and Sussex collection) that expand the reach of the books by including discussions of Asian countries which are not the topic of separate chapters.

The books are wide-ranging in other ways which more than compensate for any gaps in geographical coverage. Wee, Goh and Lim include a particularly rich

mosaic of cultural domains including linguistic landscapes, literature and poetry, personal narratives, ELT textbooks and government documents. At the same time, sitting alongside each of these domains and providing continuity are the sister chapters on each country that provide an overview of language policy. Kirkpatrick and Sussex's book, as the smaller of the two volumes, and the one more circumscribed by its focus on educational themes, nevertheless also delivers both range and depth. Depth is achieved in the complementarity of Bolton's empirically-based chapter surveying World and Asian Englishes, Kirkpatrick's chapter on the implications of EIL for language education, and Pennycook's chapter on *lingua francas*, three chapters which, in concert, make for essential reading on this topic.

In terms of organization and coverage, Wee, Goh and Lim, provide a more systematic and symmetrical organization of chapters with a section for each sub-region of Asia, each containing four chapters. The Kirkpatrick and Sussex volume on the other hand is organized by four themes (Education, Communication and Lingua Francas, Languages and Cultures in Contact, and Norms) but with less obvious unity in the chapters subsumed within each.

In their concluding chapter, Wee, Goh and Lim outline three main challenges that Asian countries face in their relationship with English. These challenges provide a useful thematic overview that, by and large, captures the main themes of both these volumes, and so is worth presenting at this point to conclude this review. The first involves re-thinking the foundations of English language education by tackling questions such as what language(s) will be designated the language(s) of instruction, how early English is to be introduced into the curriculum, and what variety of English will be mandated. The second concerns how to reconcile national language pride with English language usage and with the growing prestige of and demand for English, and indeed, for non-indigenous native-speaker varieties of English. Across Asia, the positioning of English alongside or in competition with (a) national language(s) in multilingual societies (e.g., Filipino, Bahasa Malay, Bahasa Indonesia) is highly contested, as is the official status given to English. A third challenge concerns the role of English as an expression of inter-country competitiveness (see, for example, Tinio's chapter on the archetype case of the economic power of English for the Philippines). In addressing these three challenges, both of these volumes make an important contribution to scholarship on English in Asia and, beyond that, to helping shape the agenda for a productive and more socially equitable role for English as an international language in Asia.

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