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**An Online Course For Teachers**

v.03

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### Unit 3: Learning English

* *This unit discusses how English is learned as a first or additional language.*

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**3.0 English as Subject and Object**

The monolithic view suggests that learning a language is similar to learning other subjects, like biology or geography. And indeed, this is what many students, parents, politicians, and members of the public assume. But we have been proposing that ontologically, ethically, socio-economically, and pedagogically, it makes sense to view English as plurilithic.

What do we know about how learners learn plurilithic entities like English? In this unit we invite you to reflect on what actually happens in your students’ minds as they learn ‘the language’.

*Concept: Learning English isn’t the same as learning other school subjects*

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* Figure 3.1: A German school timetable

A school pupil in Germany following the above timetable would study English on Monday and Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, alongside other traditional subjects. This amounts to a couple of hours a week.

Pupils’ experience of studying English will be similar in many respects to their experience of studying the other subjects on the timetable, with a teacher who determines what happens in each session, a textbook, homework, and tests.

In their history class at 08:20 on a Monday morning, they may be taught that the Chinese revolution began in 1911 with the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and the abdication in 1912 of the last emperor, Puyi, following 2000 years of imperial rule. This follows on from 40 minutes of English, in which perhaps they have been introduced to some new vocabulary and ways of expressing the future, including the use of the auxiliary verb shall, e.g. in *Shall we stay to help clear up?* (as in [**Headway Upper-Intermediate**](https://elt.oup.com/student/headway/upperintermediate/?cc=gb&selLanguage=en)).

From the learner’s perspective, they are getting a series of facts from the teacher which they are expected to store permanently in memory. (Although it’s unlikely that a great deal sinks in at that time on a Monday morning!)

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Note down some quick responses to the following questions:   * To what extent do you consider English to be like other subjects your students might be studying? Is it more like some subjects than others, or is it not really like a school subject at all? * To what extent do you regard what you do as similar to, or different from, what teachers of other subjects do? * Do you think your current students are learning English in the same way that they are learning the subject matter of other classes that they might be taking? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Your response will depend to a great extent on your own experience of learning an additional language, as well as the educational context in which you work, the kind of training you've done, and your actual teaching experience.  Another important element in the way you conceive of English in the classroom is the extent to which you've studied, and reflected on, the mental processes by which language is learned. Teachers vary enormously in the exposure they've had to research on Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Many teachers resist the topic because the internal workings of the mind and brain seem so far away from the social realities of the classroom, but we think they are essential to understanding the plurilithic perspective. |

Plurilithic thinking entails challenging the belief that English is 'a thing' out there in nations, books, classrooms, and curriculums. So in this Unit we'll look inside learners' minds. Those who have already studied SLA may feel tempted to skip this section, but we recommend at least skimming the content because what we present here is not the traditional view of the field.

Adapting terms used by Widdowson (2000), we may call English as it is actually acquired and used the ‘object language’, described by linguists, and distinguish it from ‘the language subject’, the curriculum matter that is taught and tested alongside geography, biology, mathematics, literature, etc. The two are, of course, intimately related, but the relationship between them is far from straightforward or free of controversy. Monolithic thinking about English makes ‘the language subject’ manageable for teachers (but not necessarily learnable for learners), whereas plurilithic thinking about Englishes takes the learner’s ‘object language’ seriously, and by doing so challenges many of the certainties that teachers have long believed in.

Many teachers clearly appreciate that the ‘the language subject’ can’t be approached in exactly the same way as other school subjects, despite the expectations of students, parents, and educational authorities. But they also have legitimate doubts that English can be learned in classrooms the same way that ‘the object language’ is acquired by infants who grow up in English-using contexts. In this unit we invite you to reflect on the processes involved in both first and L2 acquisition.

**3.1 First Language Acquisition**

*Concept: Children acquire the Englishes they are exposed to*

People who acquired English in early infancy, either monolingually (as is common in many Inner Circle contexts) or multilingually (the case for many people in Outer Circle contexts), don’t normally have much idea of how they did it. Can you remember anything about acquiring your own first language(s)?

The process of learning the forms of English occurs largely below the level of consciousness, as the child concentrates on the functions of language.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  The following are examples of the spontaneous talk of Barbara, a little girl growing up in the early 1990s in Belfast, the capital city of Northern Ireland (where the Titanic was built). They were recorded when she was four years and seven months old, before she started going to school, and are available online in the [**CHILDES**](https://childes.talkbank.org/) database (Henry, 1995; Wilson and Henry, 1998).  A map of the united kingdom  Description automatically generated   * Figure 3.2: Location of Belfast [Source: adapted from [Alphathon](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Northern_Ireland_in_the_UK_and_Europe.svg)]   A. Examples of Barbara’s speech:   1. *she poured out a cup of tea and drinked it* 2. *I didn't went to the toilet* 3. *the clock ringed* 4. *will I do it again?* [asking mother whether she should do a jigsaw puzzle again] 5. *I […] don't eat them no more*   Imagine Barbara was a student in your class, learning English as a second or foreign language and you had to correct her mistakes. What would you tell her are the ‘correct’ versions of her utterances? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  You have probably corrected Barbara's utterances as follows:  B. 'Corrected' versions of Barbara's speech:   1. *she poured out a cup of tea and* ***drank*** *it* 2. *I didn't* ***go*** *to the toilet* 3. *the clock* ***rang*** 4. ***shall*** *I do it again?* 5. *I […] don't eat them* ***any*** *more* |

These versions represent the forms used in 'Standard English', the ones you teach to your students and that textbooks present as 'correct'. For example, in the *New Headway Upper-Intermediate Tests* (Krantz, 2005), one question requires learners to correct the mistakes in a set of sentences, including the following (p. 55):

* *I shouldn't have ate that last piece of cake.*

(Compare this with A2/B2.) Another question asks learners to '[c]hoose the correct verb form' and includes the following item (p. 24):

* *Shall we invite* / *Will we invite* the neighbours to the party next week?

(Compare this with A4/B4.)

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Now compare Barbara’s utterances with the following, spoken by her mother in the same speech event:  C. Examples of Barbara’s mother’s speech:   1. *she's went and seen Santy yesterday* 2. *will I just stay with you and not work no more?* 3. *well will I get it for you?*   What conclusions do you draw about the nature of Barbara’s ‘mistakes’? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  From a plurilithic perspective, it makes no sense to expect 'Standard English' forms from Barbara, if the language she hears around her is coded according to different norms. Her mother and other people she interacts with use a version of the language (Belfast English) which differs in significant ways from 'Standard English' in its pronunciation, grammar, and word forms.  Barbara's mother's utterances in C suggest, for example, that for users of Belfast English:   * *went* serves as the past participle of go (C1: *she's* ***went***) * negation may be doubly marked (C2: ***not*** *work* **no** more) * *modal will is used in first person questions* (C2:***will*** *I just stay*; C3:***will*** *I get it*)   So Barbara's usage in A2, A4 and A5 are not mistakes. They follow the norms of the community she is growing up in. In fact, then, we can say that they are examples of successful learning. |

The other forms used by Barbara that you probably corrected—*drinked* and *ringed*—don't occur in Belfast English, however. In this sense, then, they are mistakes. But they are examples of the positive kind of mistakes that linguists call **overgeneralisation**, where learners assume that a rule they've discovered has no exceptions, so they use it where it's not actually part of the target grammar.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  What do you think Barbara is said to be overgeneralising in A1 and A3? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Barbara is overgeneralising her knowledge of other verbs used with the –*ed* suffix in past tense contexts. In her first recorded interaction in the [CHILDES](https://childes.talkbank.org/) database (around 6000 words), for instance, she is exposed to around thirty different verbs with this suffix. Many of these forms are repeated, and several of the verbs also appear many times without the suffix and with other suffixes. For example see figure 3.3.  A green and white chart  Description automatically generated with medium confidence  Figure 3.3: Some regular verb forms in the speech Barbara hears  Barbara uses her contextualised experience of these and other verb forms from previous interactions to produce forms like *drinked* and *ringing*, always in appropriate past time contexts (e.g. A1: *poured* and then *drinked*).  Linguists would claim that she has built these new forms on the basis of **analogy** with similar **constructions.** Some linguists would claim that this is evidence for Barbara's acquisition of a **rule:**  **TO FORM THE PAST TENSE OF A VERB, ADD *–ed* TO THE END OF IT**  But because Inner Circle users of Standard English have a different past tense form for these two verbs (in which the vowel changes from *i* to *a*), then the rule doesn't apply and she is said to have **overgeneralised** it in these cases. |

**3.2 Back to Rules**

We need now to return to the discussion of what we mean by ‘the rules’ of English, last discussed in Unit 1, and what this implies for learning English as a first or second language. Recall that there we drew a distinction between rules understood as 'regulations' (prescriptions of certain forms of a monolithic system as the 'correct' ones) and rules understood as 'regularities' (patterns which can be detected in plurilithic language use).

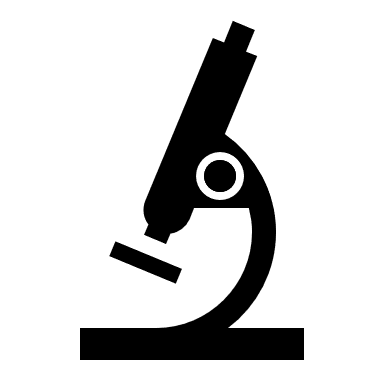
Like all native speakers, Barbara will come to have rich English resources and use them effortlessly. But the rules which govern this ability won’t be the 'regulations' she learned deliberately in educational contexts. Rather, they will be the 'regularities' she automatically constructed through participation in countless usage events. How do we account for this and why is it important for second language learners? In this section we take the issues step by step.

**3.2.1 Rules as Patterns in the Mind (Part 1)**

*Concept: Children acquire language by unconsciously analysing patterns*

Barbara’s mother didn’t teach her daughter the past tense suffix (“Barbara, will you please add an –*ed* suffix to put that verb into the past tense!”).

Instead, Barbara worked it out on her own, on the basis of experience, using analogy to construct new knowledge. In the examples we’ve looked at, she came up with (overgeneralised) the novel verb forms *ringed* and *drinked* having heard other phonological forms ending with the same set of endings, which she associated with certain verbal meanings and time references. In other words, she was unconsciously analysing words in the language she heard around her, keeping track of how they were used, extracting patterns on the basis of regularities she detected there, and then using newly learned words (like ring and drink) according to those patterns, even when the adults around her didn't.

 *More…*

Here you can discover how children's learning of grammatical rules is similar to other kinds of pattern learning, using the process of analogy.

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Of course Barbara wasn’t aware of the complex set of cognitive routines that her mind was engaged in. Children do analogical and other kinds of complex analysis as a natural, unconscious process, and it is one of the major ways in which they learn general patterns from multiple experiences on their way to adulthood.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  To appreciate the kind of pattern-learning Barbara was engaged in, look at the diagram in Fig. 3.4. This is an example of an ‘IQ test’ question, given to adults to see how well they can do deliberately what all (normal) children do involuntarily. See if you can:   1. provide the missing pattern (in the space on the bottom-right) 2. state a rule which describes the pattern (in other words, the *regularity* of the first two rows) 3. identify the parallel with what Barbara was doing in overgeneralising the verbs *ring* and *drink*   A group of black and white squares  Description automatically generated  Figure 3.4: An example of an IQ test item to be answered through analogical reasoning [Source: adapted from [Jirah](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RavenMatrix.gif)] |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*   1. Here is the solution:   A black and white squares and a red square  Description automatically generated  Figure 3.5: The IQ test item answered through analogical reasoning [Source: adapted from [Jirah](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RavenMatrix.gif)]   1. Here’s our best attempt at an explicit and accessible expression of the rule:   **IN ANY SHAPE WHICH IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR EQUAL PARTS,**  **SUCCESSIVELY FILL IN THE PARTS CLOCKWISE,**  **STARTING FROM '9 O'CLOCK' (OR 'DUE WEST')**   1. You worked out how to complete the third row on the basis of analogy with the pattern you detected on the first and second rows. This is a similar process to what Barbara did to produce *drinked*, as the following figure illustrates (although of course she had more than two sets of previous experiences to base her solution on):  * A white background with black text    Description automatically generated   Figure 3.6: The use of analogy to produce novel past tense forms |

**3.2.2 Rules as Social Markers**

*Concept: Grammar rules are markers of social identity*

So in producing ‘mistakes’ like *ringed* instead of *rang*, and *drinked* instead of *drank*, Barbara has constructed new bits of English. They are perfectly understandable to the people she interacts with, but they don’t coincide with the forms these people use. In time, Barbara will attend to this discrepancy between her output and the input she receives, and will start to add exceptions to her rule.

The ‘add –*ed*’ rule she has worked out is a regularity of the speech of her community, but because of her overgeneralisation of it, her individual grammar isn’t identical to the community grammar for all past tenses. Barbara revises her overgeneralised forms not because she can’t effectively make and share meaning with adult members of the community she’s being socialised into, but because we all, though not necessarily consciously, want to sound like the people we identify with. So, she revises her grammar for reasons of social identity rather than for communicative function.

In this sense, then, grammar rules are social markers: part of the customs and behaviours that identify a specific group of people, just as much as clothing, hairstyles, and body adornment (Fig. 3.7).

* A person and person with a graduation cap

  Description automatically generated
* Figure 3.7: Different social identities, marked in part by different ‘rules’ of appearances [Source: [ピグモン](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%E6%9D%B1%E4%BA%AC%E3%82%AB%E3%83%B3%E3%82%AB%E3%83%B3%E3%83%96%E3%83%A9%E3%82%B6%E3%83%BC%E3%82%BA%E7%AC%AC10%E5%9B%9E%E5%85%AC%E6%BC%94.jpg); [Frank Cone](https://www.pexels.com/photo/side-view-photo-of-bearded-shirtless-man-with-chest-and-arm-tattoos-2235350/); [Pxhere](https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1514305); [Pixabay](https://pixabay.com/photos/tradition-man-headdress-traditional-60791/)]

Notice, then, how easy it is to turn social *regularities* into *regulations*: just as certain cultural groups (e.g. religions, professions or gangs) might prescribe certain ‘rules of appearance’, so too linguistic ‘authorities’ tend to prescribe certain ‘rules of grammar’.

**3.2.3 Rules as Mental Representations**

*Concept: Children represent the rules they detect in their ‘mental grammar’*

Evidence from studies of children like Barbara show that learning English (or any other language) outside of classrooms involves the active (but unconscious) construction of it in the learner’s mind. Infant learners are not explicitly taught, and neither do they just passively absorb and copy what they hear, like parrots. Novel forms like Barbara’s *drinked* and *ringed* demonstrate that they work out patterns from the data that’s available in the speech used to and around them.

This means that they are storing, analysing and creating knowledge in their minds, in what cognitive psychologists call **mental representations** of English. A mental representation is the temporary or permanent form that information takes when it’s stored in human memory. When we recognize something that we have experienced before, we’re matching its features with those that are stored in a mental representation.

We have mental representations of words (in a **mental lexicon**) like we have mental representations of concrete entities (e.g. clocks) and abstract entities (e.g. time). And we have mental representations of the meaningful patterning of words (in a **mental grammar**), just as we have mental representations of the meaningful patterning of concrete entities (e.g. the orientation of the hands on a clock face) and of abstract entities (e.g. ‘six minutes before the hour’). See Jackendoff (2012) for an entertaining introduction to the mental reality of language and its relationship to thought and meaning.

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| Microscope *More…*  The idea of mentally represented language can be difficult to grasp. Here, to make it more concrete, we use the example of bicycles and how we recognize them. In the same way you recognize something as a bicycle when you see it, you can recognize words and grammatical patterns when you hear or read them (because they match the patterns you've mentally represented).  *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Look at the photograph in Fig. 3.8 and think about the process by which you recognize what the objects are, even though it’s highly unlikely you’ve ever seen these particular ones before. Be as explicit as possible about what your mind is doing to recognize the objects portrayed. |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Oversimplifying massively, what's happening is the following. Your mind receives information that is collected by your eyes. This information is primarily about shape, colour and orientation. Due principally to contrasts in colour, you distinguish three separate objects of different shapes in the foreground, against a background of grey. Of the objects in the foreground, two appear to be instances of the same one (tokens of the same type), but in different orientations. They each have a pair of bright yellow discs, connected together by bright green bars, with two black appendages on top, as well as other attached objects. You compare this visual information with information stored in your mental 'image library' and make a match with your 'bicycle' concept.  You 'recognize' the objects as bikes by 're-cognizing' them: mentally experiencing phenomena that match what you have mentally experienced and recorded before.  You don’t recognize the objects in Fig. 3.8 by matching them with stored images of every single bicycle you’ve ever seen in your life, or even just the last one you saw. Psychologists think that you develop mentally represented **prototypes** of frequently experienced things (often also called **schemas**). These are generalised mental representations that contain the most frequently occurring features of the set of tokens corresponding to the type. For a bicycle, your prototype might be something like Fig. 3.9.     * Figure 3.9: Representation of a prototypical bicycle [Source: [PublicDomainPictures](https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/en/view-image.php?image=37279&picture=bicycle-clipart)]   You know that some actual bicycles will be more or less similar to your prototype, varying in the number of prototypical and non-prototypical features they exhibit (e.g. Fig. 3.10). For example, more prototypical bikes have wheels of the same size, only one saddle, one set of handlebars, and one set of pedals.  A collection of bicycles in different positions  Description automatically generated with medium confidence   * Figure 3.10: A selection of more prototypical and less prototypical bicycles [Source: [University of Seville](https://www.flickr.com/photos/fdctsevilla/5208307581)] |

* Concept: Children ‘construct’ the grammar of their language gradually through experience*

In the same way that people learn about objects like bicycles by seeing them and using them, they learn their first language(s) as children by hearing them and using them in interactions. This is a very gradual process, because languages are so much more complex than bicycles!

For one thing, it’s relatively easy to distinguish the different component parts of a bike, and to see how they function: the saddle is what you sit on, the pedals are what your feet operate, the wheels are the two round objects which spin over the ground, etc. Language is a very different phenomenon. For children like Barbara, language is the exchange of countless streams of speech which:

* unfold moment by moment in constantly shifting acoustic shapes;
* sound different each time they are produced (depending on who’s talking and under what circumstances);
* accompany all sorts of communicative acts and communicated events, some of which may not have immediate visible manifestations (e.g. when someone is talking about something that happened in the past).

Children learning their first language(s) are in some respects faced with the same challenge as an adult learning a new second language (**L2**). Recall the last time you heard a new language which is unrelated to the one(s) you already know. It’s likely that you didn’t even know where one word finished and the next one started. (Learning about new *physical* objects, like motorbikes once you know what bicycles are, is *much* easier!)

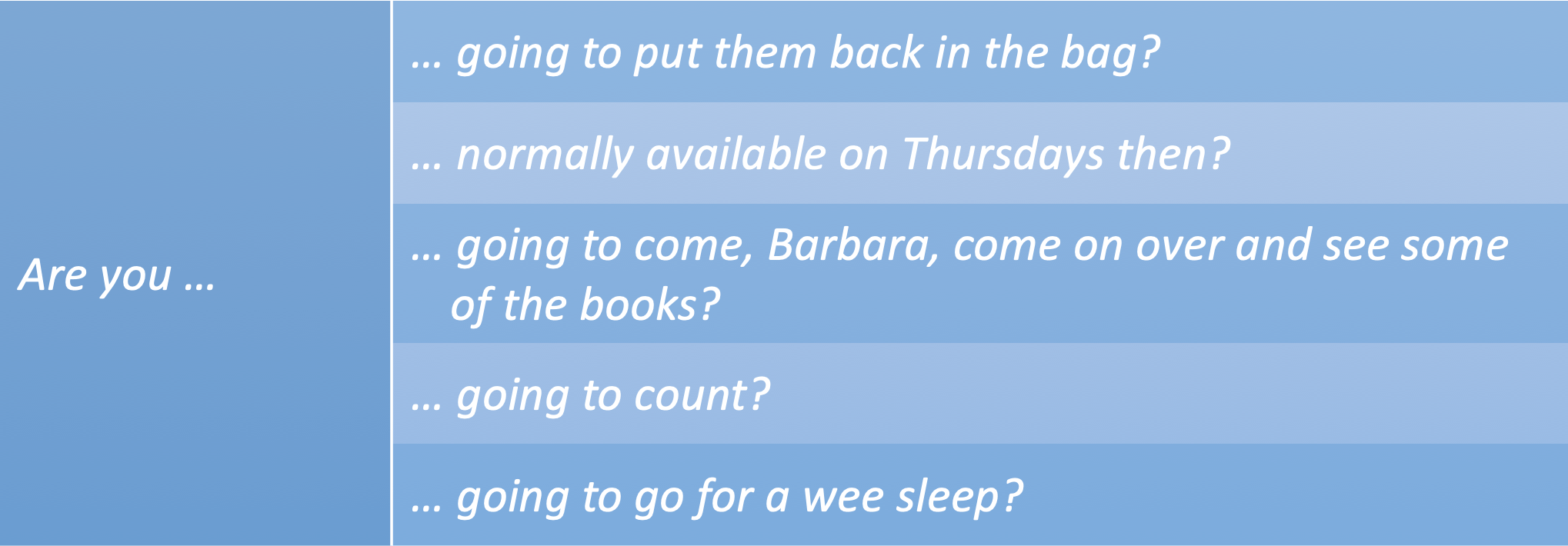
But children learn languages remarkably fast and they do this by storing and analysing input automatically, at an unconscious level. As they distinguish different units within the stream of speech they’re exposed to, they store them in memory, and each time they hear a unit again, its memory trace gets stronger. As they detect units co-occurring with other units, they also store mental representations of these groupings, and gradually these get more and more abstract. So for example, from repeatedly hearing pairs like new/good/broken toy and naughty/good/lazy doggie they abstract to the rule [Adjective Noun].

In effect, they construct their language bit by bit, mentally representing abstract prototypical units out of millions of different utterances experienced in millions of interactions (Tomasello, 2003). Although massively more complex, it’s essentially the same process as the one by which you have mentally represented a prototypical bicycle in your mind on the basis of seeing lots of wheels, saddles, frames, handlebars, pedals, etc., observing how they function separately and together, and using them yourself.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Let’s make this a bit more concrete by returning to Barbara again. Read through the extracts below and see if you can identify a multi-word unit that occurs in all of them. How does this unit pattern?   1. INV: Oh look at your lovely teeth have you got all your teeth oh aren't they gorgeous! 2. INV: Have you got one of those [a new toy]? CHI: yeah INV: have you got one? CHI: yes 3. INV: I'm going to talk to your Mummy and then I'm going to read you some of those xxx have you got good toys to play with as well? 4. INV: That's right have you got your own bedroom? CHI: yeah INV: have you got your toys in your bedroom and all too? |

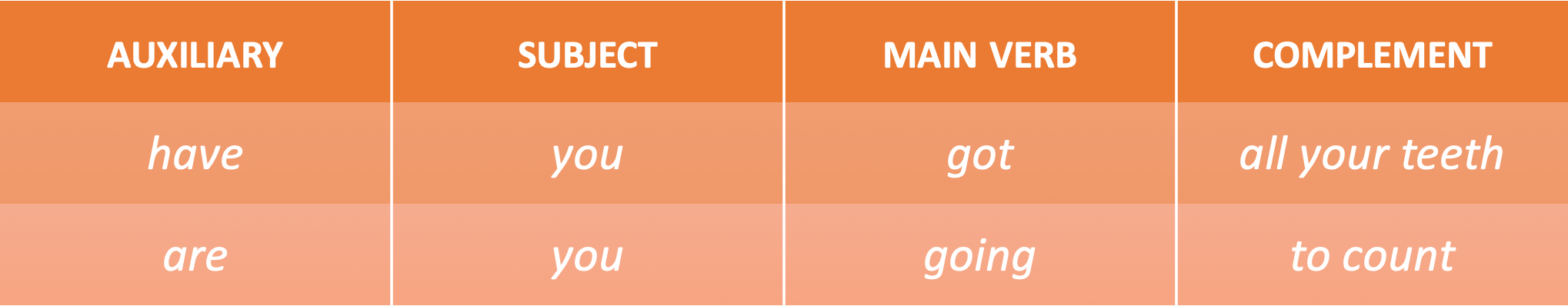
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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Part of Barbara's job of working out how to use words in grammatical structures involves keeping track of the lexical company they keep. In the short 6000-word transcript we used earlier, for example, she hears the form *have* followed by *you got* six times (shown in extracts 1 – 4 above). In each case it occurs in questions (indicated by surrounding context and, probably, distinctive intonation: remember that children don't hear question marks!). Following the multi-word *have you got* unit, she will detect groups of words referring to concrete entities:    * Figure 3.11: The [*Have you got* …] pattern in speech used to Barbara   In effect, she notices a regularity:   * In questions, *have* occurs before *you got*, followed by a phrase referring to a concrete entity   Every time she encounters *have you got* she strengthens its mental representation in memory, and continues to monitor and analyse: (a) the kinds of phrases that can follow; (b) the other patterns in which *have* regularly occurs; and (c) the formal and functional relationship between these usages. |

Through analogy with other regularities she has detected, Barbara stores more and more abstract patterns. For example, she also notices that another verb, *are*, occurs before the pronoun *you*, just like *have*. In the transcript we've been looking at she hears dozens of examples of the combination. Here are the first five:

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* Figure 3.12: The [*Are you* …] pattern in speech used to Barbara

Just as she found that *have you* is regularly followed by *got* + entity in questions, she finds that *are you* is regularly followed by *going to* + action in questions. She stores all these similar bits of language together in her memory. It's a massive task, yet somehow Barbara extracts a set of regularities from the speech streams she's exposed to and involved in, which together begin to form a mental lexicon and mental grammar.

We can call these bits of stored language **constructions** (Hilpert, 2014), some of which are strings of particular words, like *have you got*, *I have*, and *are you going*, and some of which are more abstract. For example, from sequences like *have you got all your teeth* and *are you going to count*, she builds the prototypical question depicted in the top row of Fig. 3.13:

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* Figure 3.13: Example of an abstract construction and two instances of it

Like bicycles, not all examples of a construction will follow its prototypical form:

* Barbara will also encounter additional units in the sequence (e.g. adverbs between the subject and main verb, as in *Have you* ***really*** *got your own bedroom?*). Similarly, the prototypical bike doesn't have mudguards, but the Helsinki bikes do.
* Sometimes Barbara will hear the first three units of the construction but no complement (e.g. *Are you coming* ***\_\_\_****?*). Similarly, the prototypical bike has visible spokes, but the Helsinki bikes don't.

And the prototypes are abstractions from actual tokens in both cases: the specification of auxiliary in 3.13 doesn't tell you which particular one it might be (*have* or *are*) , just as the frame on the prototypical bicycle doesn't tell you what particular colour it might be (bright green in the Helsinki tokens).

These abstract constructions are what many linguists recognize as 'rules' of English: not external statements about what is proper or correct or part of 'good English' or 'the language', but mental representations in individual users' minds which constitute the language itself. These rules are constructed on the basis of what learners detect in the input they've been exposed to; they therefore govern the way users speak and listen to those they interact with.

**3.2.4 Rules in Schools**

*Concept: The rules you’re* taught *are not the same thing as the rules you* use

We're now ready to address the critical difference between the plurilithic concept of rules-as-regularities that people natually extract from usage, and the monolithic concept of rules-as-regulations that are contained in grammar books and are taught in schools. Getting this distinction clear is important for English teachers, because it reveals a fallacy that strengthens monolithic thinking about grammar.

The fallacy is spelled out by the SLA expert Bill VanPatten (2010, p. 12) as follows: "For most (if not all) language teaching professionals, there is the belief that textbook rules are somehow representative of what winds up in learners’ minds/brains."

L2 learners are often explicitly taught rules as statements, using words like *question*, *verb*, *auxiliary* etc. For example, on the website [**Eslbase**](https://www.eslbase.com/grammar/questions) the question rule Barbara constructed is described in the following terms (with example sentences omitted):

1. In questions, the first auxiliary verb comes before the subject.
2. If there is no auxiliary verb we use *do* (or *does*, *did*).

What is the relation between statements like these and the rules or constructions stored in learners’ minds? Let's look once more at Barbara's experiences to understand this problem and shed light on the fallacy behind much EFL and ESL grammar teaching.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Here are examples of Barbara’s use of the question rule from Fig. 3.13:   * *Would you read this one (.) would you read it for me?* * *Will you look at them now?*   When Barbara actually forms questions like these, can she possibly be looking up the actual words of the rule as it is stated in [**Eslbase**](https://www.eslbase.com/) or a textbook? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  No, of course not. Barbara doesn't even know what words like *auxiliary* and *subject* mean! And yet the word order she uses in these examples demonstrates that she knows the rule (as a regularity). Somehow, the mental representation of it must be stored in her mind not in the form of words like auxiliary and subject , but in some mental code that is accessed instantaneously as soon as she formulates her intention to ask something and selects the words she needs to do so. |

Barbara was four years old when the recordings we’ve been looking at were made. When she went to school, she would have learned how to read and write, and may also have had grammar lessons in the ‘standard’ version of her native language, like many children around the world. She would certainly have been exposed to more formal language (both lexically and grammatically), and would hear accents from beyond Belfast and Ireland itself.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*   * What effect do you think explicit teaching about grammar at school would have on Barbara's language, both as mental representation and as actual practice? * Can you identify any parallels between what happens with pupils like Barbara in a ENL school context and what happens with the students in traditional EFL or ESL classes? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Barbara would enter school with quite a complex Belfast English mental grammar and a vocabulary of a few thousand words, mostly related to her daily experiences. She would have very limited familiarity with genres beyond those of family life and play with other children. In school she would encounter other versions of the language, predominantly 'Standard English', as this is the version used in formal writing. She would also have to get to grips with more formal genres like lessons and school assemblies.  It is likely that she would be corrected when she used (spoke or wrote) constructions like:   * *I have went* * *I don't* [VERB] *no more* * *Will I* [VERB]*?*   …even though these are grammatical in the version of English she learned. She would therefore have two versions of some rules: one capturing a regularity of Belfast English, in a mental representation that unconsciously guides her usage, and one regulating her usage of 'Standard English', perhaps consciously memorised as a statement made up of words, e.g.  **DON'T USE A DOUBLE NEGATIVE**  or  **TWO NEGATIVES MAKE A POSITIVE**.  In actual practice, she will automatically and unconsciously activate mental representations of Belfast English, but must consciously monitor her constructions as she formulates them, and suppress them if they don't coincide with what she knows (has been taught) about 'Standard English'.  This is very similar to what happens with students in many traditional EFL and ESL classrooms at beginner level and beyond. They enter the class with one kind of linguistic knowledge (their L1), governed by unconscious but automatically available rules which they have constructed out of the regularities in the speech of those around them. They are then taught another set of language rules of a regulatory sort (corresponding to the L2), which they must use if they are to do well in the subject and not to 'make mistakes'. Additionally, they will formulate their own system on the basis of their actual experience of English usage, which may or may not coincide with the rules they are taught. |

**3.2.5 Rules as Patterns in the Mind (2)**

* Concept: Rules-as-regularities and rules-as-regulations are stored in different memory systems*

In the next section we will return to the problem of grammar rules in L2 learning. But here let’s complete our extended discussion of Barbara’s first language acquisition by examining in a bit more depth the relationship between the two types of rule she comes to know. To do this, we’ll focus on how memory is organized in the brain.

The kinds of regularities in the ‘object language’ that individuals detect through experience of usage are associated with one kind of memory format, unconscious and efficient, whereas the kinds of prescriptive regulations that get *taught* as part of the ‘language subject’ are associated with another kind of memory format, which is not best suited for usage.

A close-up of a hard drive

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Figure 3.14: Hard disk computer memory [Source: [Ed g2s](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hard_disk_dismantled.jpg)]

A close-up of several computer memory chips

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Figure 3.15: DRAM computer memory [Source: [Cyberdex](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Elixir_M2U51264DS8HC3G-5T_20060320.jpg)]

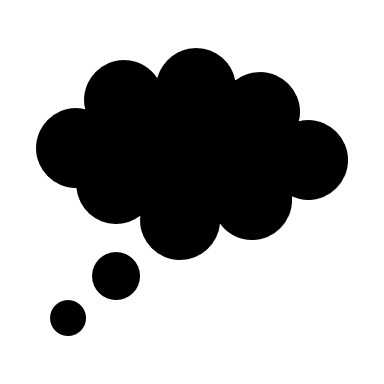
Memory comes in different kinds. Some are more permanent (like hard disk computer memory); others are used during an event and fade when the event is over (like DRAM computer memory). Some kinds of memory are used for facts and others for processes: basically ‘knowing what’ (declarative memory) and ‘knowing how’ (procedural memory). It is these two types of memory which are key to understanding the difference between the two things we call ‘language rule’ in the mind. A rule in declarative memory is something we ‘know about’—we can say it in words and apply it consciously to the process of stringing words together. A rule in procedural memory is something we just know—it is used automatically and involuntarily to guide our normal language usage.

* Concept: When we use language fluently, we’re automatically accessing regularities in procedural memory*

In the process of speaking and hearing English, learners are retrieving units (such as words and more complex multi-unit constructions) stored in declarative memory. As experience accumulates, the more frequently-used units lead to the extraction of general patterns, and these come to be stored in procedural memory, where they can be accessed automatically and unconsciously. These patterns are described by linguists as grammatical rules, and account for users’ unconscious knowledge of how their language works. The shift from declarative to procedural memory is called automatisation, and plays a central role in both first and second language acquisition (Ullman, 2015).

For an accessible account of this process, watch the video clip below.

* [Declarative and procedural knowledge of English](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kH6imk0v3A)

*Reflection 3.1*

A major conclusion we reached in the video clip on declarative and procedural knowledge of English is that ‘what [L2] learners are *taught* is not what they will come to *know* and *use* in any real communicative sense’. What do you think? Were you convinced by the neuropsychological account? Record your thoughts and read those of others in the Discussion Section.

**3.3 Models and Targets**

*****Concept: Learning models and targets emphasise monolithic rules-as-regulations*

We have seen throughout this course that from a monolithic perspective, there is only one English for speakers of other languages to learn and it is supplied in full by external authorities, including textbooks, teachers, and tests. English conceived this way is a complex series of facts **modelled** by a pedagogical authority which must be replicated internally by the learner (just like a painter might try to faithfully render a model: Fig. 3.17). Or it is a **target** towards which the learner moves (like a distant peak: Fig. 3.18). In these ways of thinking, English is something external, that must be internalised or arrived at, rather than something that is constructed internally and automatised for use.

A person drawing a person on a beach

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Figure 3.17: English can be conceived as an external model to be replicated [Source: [Mike Baird](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Painter_with_his_beautiful_female_subject_in_Spanish_dress.jpg)

A person walking on a snowy mountain

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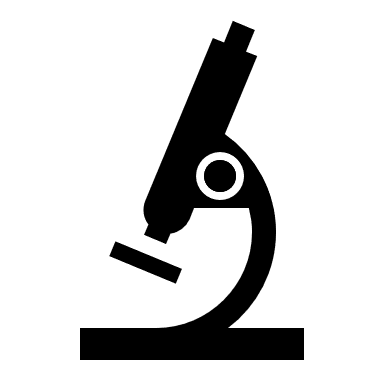
Figure 3.18: English can be conceived as a target to be reached [Source: [WikiMedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Survey-Route.jpg)]

This way of thinking about English follows from folk theories of language and has dominated approaches to teaching for centuries. But it’s at odds with the plurilithic realities of language and learning that we’ve introduced and asked you to reflect upon in the course so far.

In a [blog post](https://www.emmatrentman.com/blog/2018/3/14/what-is-language-folklinguistic-theories) on language teachers’ folk beliefs, the Arabic and SLA scholar Emma Trentman comments on the perceived need for more explicit grammar teaching when students repeat non-target forms:

I think this comes down to a belief that learning how to describe a grammatical feature should be sufficient for using it in the future. However, **describing** grammatical features, by for example filling out a chart of verb conjugations, is really more of a skill relevant to linguistics than actually **using** these features to do things with language, especially when it happens quickly.

Her reasoning is based on the same point we made about Barbara’s knowledge of grammar: when *using* a language, either acquired in infancy or learned at school, it’s not textbook rules that are being deployed.

 *More …*

Some aspects of mainstream SLA theory are inconsistent with the plurilithic perspective we've been presenting on this course. Here we discuss problems with the SLA notions of interlanguage and fossilisation.

…

Some of the fundamental assumptions of a lot of research work on SLA are also problematic from a plurilithic perspective. You may have read about **interlanguage** and **fossilisation** for example (e.g. Selinker, 1972, 1992).

* *Interlanguage* is the name Larry Selinker gave to the language system that a learner has constructed at any given point in the learning process. The interlanguage systems that learners construct are composed of elements from their native language (through **transfer**) and the ‘target language’ (through teaching), as well as elements from neither (e.g. overgeneralisations, other creative constructions, and features from the unique discourse events that learners participate in).
* *Fossilisation* refers to the process (and resulting state) in which ‘non-target’ elements of an interlanguage become fixed and unchangeable—this is understood as the point at which the learner stops learning, with their rules and/or usage not in full compliance with the ENL model they have been taught. In effect, this concept corresponds to learners’ inability to replace their **learner rules**, the ‘regularities’ constructed and automatised on the basis of usage and transfer from L1, with the **target rules** deliberately learned as ‘regulations’ in declarative memory (as explained in the additional material for 3.2.5.).

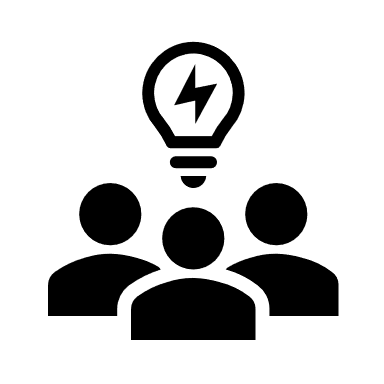
So, for example, Gass and Selinker (2008) state:

In SLA, one often notes that interlanguage plateaus are far from the T[arget] L[anguage] norms. Furthermore, it appears to be the case that fossilized or stabilized interlanguages exist no matter what learners do in terms of further exposure to the TL. (p. 14)

The reference to ‘plateaus … far from TL norms’ is suggestive of the mountainous landscape in Fig. 3.17, where the mountain summit represents monolithic English … and the learner gets stuck miles away, with little chance of making it to the top. The *inter*- in *interlanguage* suggests a state of being ‘between’ no knowledge and ‘complete’ knowledge of L2, and the fossilisation notion suggests that this ‘inbetweenness’ is likely to be permanent. In other words, these concepts represent a view of learning characterised by failure: the **gap** between their system and the ‘target’ or the **inaccuracy** of their reproduction of the ‘model’. According to this **deficit view** of learning, learners can never, or only very rarely, achieve a successful learning outcome.

Furthermore, the individual learner’s understanding of the ‘target grammar’ they must reach, or the ‘model forms’ they must reproduce, is necessarily different from their teacher’s (or linguists’) understanding. This is because English teachers and linguists normally have some kind of representation of ‘Standard English’ (to a greater or lesser extent) in declarative memory, as both ‘object language’ and ‘language subject’. Learners obviously don’t have this knowledge (that’s why they are learners!), yet the visual metaphors of models and targets suggest that they have a clear (if distant) view of ‘Standard English’ (the woman with the parasol or the snowy peak).

What’s actually out there, the ‘model’ of English that most learners are exposed to, is not, of course, monolithic ‘Standard English’, there for all to see. Instead, it is: (a) regulatory ‘rules’ and other ‘facts’ *about* English; and (b), in much greater abundance, *usage*: streams of speech and bodies of text which are variable, incomplete, and context-dependent.

*Discussion point 3.1*

Post in the Discussion Section a list of the different places or contexts (beyond teachers, textbooks, and tests) in which you think your students actually experience English (or you did when you were learning). What kinds of English are they? To what extent do these contexts correspond to the contexts in which learners might be *using* English in the future?

Few learners these days only experience English from textbooks, teachers, and tests using 'Standard English'. They also get non-native and 'non-standard' Englishes from peers and teachers in their classrooms (during group work and role-play, for example). They get different kinds of Englishes on the TV and at the movies, on social media, in popular music, out on the streets, while travelling, in advertising, on products they buy, etc., etc. … And they experience it also in their own heads, as they rehearse utterances, remember words or phrases, play with the sounds of the language, and invent their own words or constructions.

Even in textbooks and tests, learners experience a variety of different genres and styles of English which present different kinds of lexical and grammatical choices. So the external models don’t usually present evidence of one monolithic system, but of various plurilithic Englishes, on the basis of which learners must construct their own mental grammars and lexicons.

****3.4 Learning Contexts**

*Concept: English is learned in many different contexts, resulting inevitably in different Englishes*

Teachers taking this course are helping learners to learn English in many different contexts. The scenario we depicted at the beginning of this unit (the German school timetable) is one such context, which has traditionally been labelled **English as a Foreign Language** (EFL). As we saw in Unit 2, Kachru’s model of World Englishes distinguishes EFL from **English as a Native Language** (ENL) and **English as a Second Language** (ESL). According to Kachru, the distinction depends on the source of the **norms** (essentially, rules as ‘regulations’) learned and used by speakers in the three contexts. In this model, it is assumed that speakers in the ESL contexts of the Outer Circle are developing their own norms, whereas learners in the EFL contexts of the Expanding Circle look to the Inner Circle for ENL norms.

* 
* Figure 3.19: An adult ESOL class in Georgia, USA [Source: [Christopher Connell](https://www.flickr.com/photos/chrisconnell/4069721736)]

In reality, this view captures only a small part of the global diversity of English learning. Although it’s true that many learners and users in the postcolonial Outer Circle are learning national varieties of English which don’t match Inner Circle norms, and although many learners are learning a version of ‘British’ or ‘American’ English in the Expanding Circle, we also need to consider other contexts, including the following:

* There are many learners and users of L2 English in the Inner Circle. With increasing mobility over the past several decades, these learners and users are growing in numbers. They include:
  + Adult migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and asylees for whom English is not their first language. They study English at the same time as working or seeking legal status (in many cases while also experiencing considerable hardships), often in evening classes. The term **English for Speakers of Other Languages** (ESOL) is used for this learning context in the UK and some other countries.
  + Children and young adults from homes where English is not the main language. They usually (further) develop their English language skills in mainstream education, sometimes with separate language support from ‘native’ English-speaking students. In the UK the term **English as an Additional Language** (EAL) is used for this context. The official term for such students in the USA is **Limited English Proficiency** (LEP), but this stresses students’ deficit, so the term preferred by practitioners is simply **English Language Learner** (ELL).

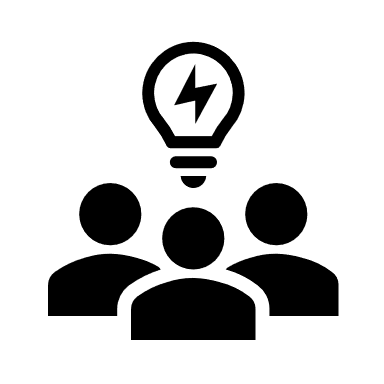
In both these contexts, learners will be learning English in English-dominant societies, but many will also be members of local communities where the home language is shared by members of the community, or where many home languages are used. Such contexts will be characterised by lots of **translanguaging** and **ELF** usage.

* In the Outer Circle, there are many learners of ENL (‘Standard English’) in educational contexts, albeit spoken with regional accents, despite the emergence of local (more or less standardised) varieties for grammar and vocabulary.
* Conversely, in the Expanding Circle, many people learn and use local Englishes, despite official policies which determine ENL as the model and target in schools. Examples include Euro English (which has survived Brexit, as Modiano, 2023 and [this article in The Conversation](https://theconversation.com/the-english-language-is-evolving-heres-how-it-will-change-after-brexit-117614) point out) and China English (Xu et al., 2017).
* Finally, learner mobility and access to mobile technologies means that the geographical factors underpinning Kachru’s Circles model are becoming increasingly irrelevant, at least for some learners and users (see Blommaert, 2010).

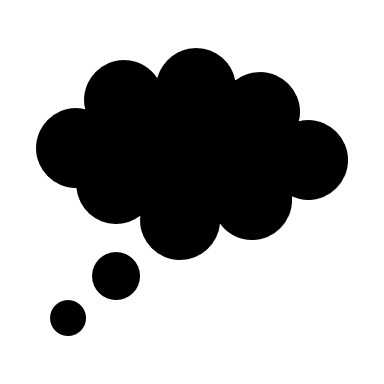
(For a useful glossary of acronyms used to label English learners and learning contexts, visit [this page](https://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-teaching-and-learning/eal-glossary/).)

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Apart from norm (in)dependence and the local presence or dominance of English, there are many other factors which define the diverse contexts of English learning which will affect the kinds of Englishes learned. How many can you think of? Which factors determine the context you teach in or have taught in before? If you learned English as an L2, what was the context in which you learned it? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  Perhaps the most fundamental factor in learning contexts is whether the learning happened in a classroom or not. Many people learn English without teachers, either through persistent interaction with English speakers (often in Inner Circle countries) or through self-study (much of it these days using online apps).  But given that this is a course for teachers, the following factors are more relevant:   * The kind of educational institution where the learning/teaching happens. Is it public or private? This distinction can have an impact on the following factors:   + *Teacher and learner motivation*: Young learners may not have much choice in learning English at government-run schools, for example, whereas adults paying for their courses in private schools often need English for their careers. Teachers in government-run schools might have more job security than those in hourly-paid private language schools, and this might affect their commitment to their students.   + *Availability and quality of resources*: Public schools in many parts of the world can be woefully under-funded, whereas private institutions in some of the same countries may charge high fees to wealthy clients and therefore have the money to spend on books, IT, trained teachers, and state-of-the-art facilities.   + *Class size*: Following the previous point, private institutions may be able to afford more teachers, and therefore smaller class sizes.   + *Teaching goals and method*: Government-run schools often suffer from the inertia inherent in bureaucracies, resulting in conservatism in curriculum and neglect of teacher development; governments also have vested interests in maintaining and promoting ‘standard language’ ideologies.   + *Learning outcomes*: In the public education sector, outcomes are often driven by state-mandated tests, which are required for university entrance and/or graduation. These tests tend to be oriented towards knowledge of ‘Standard English’ (i.e. accuracy), rather than communicative effectiveness.   In many countries, there is also a similar distinction between public schools in rural areas (underfunded and often neglected) and urban areas (receiving more support and often attracting the more educated, better-trained teachers).   * This leads on to the role of teacher attributes in the learning context, including the following:   + *Level of training*: From zero in the case of some native speakers employed outside the Inner Circle just on the basis of their native speaker status, to those with an MA TESOL or a high-level professional qualification such as the Cambridge Assessment English DELTA. Qualifications are not, of course, guarantees of openness to plurilithic thinking!   + *Native speaker status*: A massive amount has been written about the advantages, disadvantages, unfairness, and/or irrelevance of this factor (see Wicaksono, 2020, for a review).   + *Degree of bi-/multilingualism:* Related to the previous factor, if the teacher is monolingual, it’s much harder (but not impossible) to use translanguaging as a resource (although it’s not impossible: see this [web series](https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/teaching-bilinguals-webseries/)); also, the more multilingual the teacher, the more they will be able to identify with the task confronting their students. Clearly also the degree of cultural openness and multiculturalism will affect a teacher’s approach to their teaching and their students’ learning.   + *Personality, motivation, teaching style, etc.*: Many successful English learners attribute their success to a particular teacher or teachers, who have inspired them or provided them with opportunities that other teachers in the same contexts have not.   + *Educational philosophy*: Many teachers are guided by educational philosophies which are part of broader national or regional cultures, and these will shape students’ expectations about learning and teaching too. For example, in many cultures the teacher is positioned as an authoritative transmitter of knowledge rather than a facilitator of learning. This is equivalent to the distinction between ‘teacher-centred’ vs. ‘learner-centred’ classrooms: see Schweisfurth, 2011 for a review (and this [magazine article](https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/do-learner-centred-approaches-work-every-culture) for a critique from the perspective of a Burma-based teacher). In either case, however, the learning/teaching goal tends to be conceived in terms of the ‘regularities’ of ‘Standard English’, as the previous section on Models and targets stressed.   + *Awareness of Global Englishes*: The one this course is all about! * Finally, the type of student group will affect the Englishes learned and the way they are taught. Two of the major factors are:   + *Age*: Younger children are less likely to have been socially conditioned by ‘standard language’ ideologies, and will thus be more open to plurilithic views of English. On the other hand, older learners will perhaps be more open to reflection and logical, evidence-based arguments.   + *Shared or different L1s*: Both possibilities offer rich translanguaging resources for English learning, with the latter (more common in Inner Circle contexts) also accompanied by cross-cultural experiences. |

*Discussion point 3.2*

There will, of course, be many other factors which shape the learning of English around the world, and the Englishes thus learned: please post any that you thought of in the Discussion Section.

*Reflection 3.2*

Reflect on the educational philosophies or ‘learning/teaching cultures’ of the country/countries you’re familiar with.

What features of these cultures and the ways they are manifested might help or hinder the development of plurilithic approaches to English in public and private education there? Share your thoughts in the Discussion Section.

**3.5 Owning a Language (Part 2)**

*Concept: You own the English you construct from experience*

In the previous unit, *Using English*, we noted that the association between language and nation is a logical outcome of the monolithic perspective, and that governments are keen to promote this view for the sake of national unity (and economic advantage). But we also pointed out that English has for long been ‘owned’ by millions of non-native speakers around the world, and we quoted the African writer Chinua Achebe and the British applied linguist Henry Widdowson to drive home the argument.

In his article on the ownership of English, Widdowson also made a link between ownership and proficiency, which connects the international spread of English to the issues of SLA we are dealing with in this unit. He wrote:

[y]ou are proficient in a language to the extent you possess it, make it your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it rather than simply submit to the dictates of its form. [...] So in a way, proficiency only comes with non-conformity [...]. (Widdowson, 2003, p. 42)

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Reflect on what Widdowson is saying.   * How do you think he is interpreting the idea of proficiency? * How does what he says relate to the notion we have been exploring, that learners inevitably construct their own English? * When Widdowson talks of users of English ‘submit[ting] to the dictates of its form’, how is ‘form’ being presented here? * To what extent do you agree that ‘proficiency only comes with non-conformity’? |

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| *Arrow Horizontal U turnFeedback*  We think that by 'proficiency' Widdowson doesn't mean how closely a learner can imitate a native speaker (the kind of proficiency measured by most English tests), but rather how effectively and efficiently a learner can use the language for their own purposes, including to express their own identity (to 'assert yourself through it').  'Mak[ing] the language your own, bend[ing] it your will' is precisely what learners do when they construct their own rules on the basis of experience, although at an unconscious level.  The idea of 'form' referred to here is presumably the form of the pedagogical target or model ('Standard English' rather than Belfast English, Nigerian English or any other 'non-standard' version which lies outside of the monolithic ideal).  Clearly learners can become proficient in conformist 'Standard English', and this is what most proficiency tests (like IELTS and TOEFL) measure. But for learners to be efficient and effective users of the language, rather than just successful test-takers, they will need more than what they get from textbooks, teachers and tests, and so will need to depart from the confines of 'Standard English' to a greater or lesser extent. We'll explore this idea in the closing part of this unit. |

**3.6 Learners and Users**

*Concept: English learners are inevitably users, and users never stop learning*

All human beings are constantly using and learning their languages, both L1(s) and L2(s). The natural kinds of interaction that children like Barbara engage in (as documented in [**CHILDES**](https://childes.talkbank.org/)) are far from the English class and homework activities she will have experienced at school, but they are by far the richest learning environments for her in terms of becoming an efficient and effective user of the language for her day-to-day purposes.

Of course, what children like Barbara learn deliberately at school is also critically important: formal literacy skills, together with the norms of ‘Standard English’ that underpin essential aspects of them, are necessary attributes in the technologically and informationally rich workplaces and civic spaces of most Inner Circle countries. ‘Educated usage’ is also extremely highly valued by most people, operating as they are under what Hall (2005) calls the ‘spell’ of monolithic beliefs about language.

But throughout the processes of natural and institutional learning that they experience, children are also using what they have learned, and the using is itself learning, as we have seen. Furthermore, **the learning never stops**. Although most of the grammatical resources that users need are proceduralised in childhood, the process of acquiring new lexical, stylistic, and strategic resources continues throughout life, as new conceptual and communicative needs are experienced. Also, the cultural encounters NSs have with other users of English are constant, and in these globalising times they tend to be increasingly diverse. So children like Barbara grow up to learn the Englishes of others, and if the encounters are frequent enough, they constantly enrich their own English repertoires (if only passively) as a result.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Make an inventory of how your own mental lexicon is expanding as a result of taking this course, by going through the glossary and noting newly acquired lexical depth (new word meanings for word forms you already knew) and breadth (new forms as well as meanings). |

L2 learners of English are inevitably *users* of English, and users of L2 English never stop being *learners*. This is not the traditional way of thinking about these concepts. It is often assumed that what language students do in an educational environment is only learning, and that using the language only starts once they have finished learning: in ‘real life’. But in fact language learning and use operate in parallel, if they can be separated at all (Fig. 3.20).

* A chart with green and yellow bars

  Description automatically generated
* Figure 3.20: Two conceptions of the relationship between language learning and use: (a) consecutive; (b) parallel

The consecutive conception of learning and use is reinforced by the monolithic view of English and its language subject status in school curriculums. Divorced from use, English is an externally-imposed set of facts which most students won't learn well if at all. And even those who succeed in internalising the forms so that they can pass standardised tests will be ill-equipped to communicate effectively in our globalised world of plurilithic English users.

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| *Lightbulb and gearActivity*  Ask your students about the contexts in which they encounter and use English outside the classroom. Are they different from the ones you listed in Discussion Point 3.1? Reflect on how they might build on these English experiences in classroom learning activities. |

**3.7 Check your Understanding**

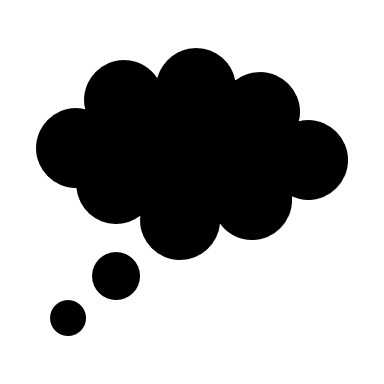
Throughout the course we provide definitions of some of the key terms used in our discussion of changing Englishes.

You can use the online flashcards to check your understanding of these terms by reading the word or phrase on the flashcard and recalling the definition. You can then check your answer by clicking the ‘show answer’ button.

**3.8 Reflect and Discuss**

In this unit, we introduced the following concepts:

* Learning English isn’t the same as learning other school subjects
* Children acquire the Englishes they are exposed to
* Children acquire language by unconsciously analysing patterns
* Grammar rules are markers of social identity
* Children represent the rules they detect in their ‘mental grammar’
* Children ‘construct’ the grammar of their language gradually through experience
* The rules you’re taught are not the same thing as the rules you use
* Rules-as-regularities and rules-as-regulations are stored in different memory systems
* When we use language fluently, we’re automatically accessing regularities in procedural memory
* Learning models and targets emphasise monolithic rules-as-regulations
* English is learned in many different contexts, resulting inevitably in different Englishes
* You own the English you construct from experience
* English learners are inevitably users, and users never stop learning

*Reflection 3.3*

Reflect in greater depth on one or more of these concepts and then take part in discussion with other course users in the Discussion Section, replying to one or more previous posts.

**Note: Please complete this exercise in order to be eligible for the Course Certificate**.