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***Identities of English: A dynamic emergent scene.***

*Are Some Languages Better than Others?* asks R.M.W. Dixon in his newest 2016 book. For linguists, languages are equally 'good' in terms of status while they differ in structure and functions. Naïve users describe languages in terms of their relative ease of acquisition, esthetics, their native speakers or cultures and many other subjective criteria. For linguists and non-linguists alike, however, there is no language like English in today's world.

In this talk I will attempt to recognize the varied identities of English taking the bird's eye view on its presence in the global communication. Those identities will include English as a native language and English as a non-native language, the former splitting into dialects and the latter into numerous varieties. For the sake of this major division, a plausible definition of 'native-speakerness' needs to be provided since English is the only language with the majority of non-native speakers. The next major classificatory division is between English as a *lingua franca* and English as one of the seven thousand world's languages. Here the phenomenon of a *lingua franca* must be juxtaposed to the naturalness of multilingualism. Further, differing understandings of *English as a lingua franca* (ELF) will be discussed, taking into account such aspects as teaching English as a second language (TESL) and English as a scientific and research language. In particular, a critical appraisal of the so-called LFC-based ELF will be provided. Another major take on the contemporary identity of English is its role on the grave scene of language endangerment and extinction. Linguistic imperialism may lead to a self-destructive scenario for the emperor language, Latin serving a well-known example. Would non-native Englishes gradually emerge as separate languages? For the question of emergence, complexity theory as well as dynamic systems theory will be recommended. I will conclude with a proposal of a new project which might bring us closer to answering some of the questions posed in the talk.