Looking at Globalization of English in the Context of Internationalism

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ABSTRACT: The present study is an attempt to provide a current synopsis of World Englishes within globalized communities, as well as theoretical and applied feasibility of global linguistic features of English as an International Language (EIL). To do so, first, three main reactions against the spread of English by scholars around the world are discussed. Then, the possibility of describing and teaching such globalized varieties will be evaluated. Finally, current challenges ahead of the researchers in the field will be presented.

Keywords: global linguistic features, globalized community, world Englishes.

Globalization found its way into our lives at the turn of the century. Like other phenomena, it first received great enthusiasm. Then came the reactions; then the battle began between those who favored it and those who resisted it. Books and articles were published; new scholarships and disciplines were created by academic departments to discuss the width and breadth of the issue. For the most part, the intellectuals expressed concerns over its harms. A meta-analysis of the spread of English reveals the fact that after three decades from the inception of the term, it has remained at the implicational level (Kachru, 2005). One problem with the concept is the fact that it has remained mostly a voice seeking to be recognized by the ELT community.

We should note that globalization is a 'multifaceted' phenomenon. No single aspect of human life in modern society has been immune to the thrust of globalization, including economy, politics, education, and culture (Warschauer, 2007). It should be noted that language holds the key to each and every level of global interaction. Thus, the language that plays a role in global interaction (i.e. English) spreads throughout the world. The fact is that the more nations use that language, the more influential it becomes. The spread of English affects nearly all aspects of the life of those who use it for communication. The dynamism between native speakers and non-native speakers has ended in a symbiotic co-existence in the form of local varieties of English or globalized English resulting from the resistance of users of English as an International Language (EIL) toward the threat of their national identities (Pakir, 1999).

Review of the related literature

Much has been written on the theoretical and applied aspects of globalization in TESOL/TEFL. On the theoretical grounds, it is possible to categorize the scholars and their contributions into three major categories. What follows is a brief sketch of theoretical issues over the Englishization of local

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languages. Figure 1 below displays the researchers' perception of the reactions against the spread of English by TESOL/TEFL scholars.
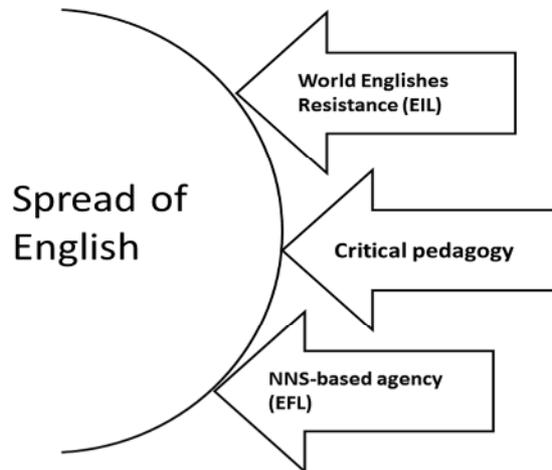

Figure 1. *Reactions towards the spread of English by TESOL/TEFOL scholars*

Pluralism in English: World Englishes

The strongest reactive voice against the spread of English as an international language was the introduction of the notion of the World Englishes (Kachru, 1990). Coined in early 1890s, the term *World Englishes* (WE) displays growing concern among modern societies over the spread of English and the threat it provides against their national identity. Another concern relates to the premise that the teaching of English should be reflected in socio-cultural contexts and the educational policies of the countries concerned (Warschauer, 2007). These concerns resulted in a reconsideration of the relative status of English and local languages in the context of globalization.

It should be noted that the term symbolizes functional and formal variation. At the heart of the theories of English variation lies Kachru's circle model which categorizes users into three concentric circles; INNER where English is spoken, OUTER where English is socially penetrative, and EXPANDING where English is used but in a limited range (Kachru, 2005). Kachru (p. 166) summarizes future areas of research as follows:

1. Sociolinguistic profile of the English users in largely monolingual and complex multilingual communities.
2. Variation within varieties and their societal function.
3. Attitudinally neutral investigation of variety-specific characteristics of regional Englishes (not only of less well-studied Inner Circle varieties such as Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand Englishes, but also those of Outer and Expanding Circles.
4. Similar investigation of stylistic, discoursal, and genre-related differences and innovations in specific sociocultural contexts.
5. In-depth study of literary creativity and canons of English literatures.
6. Attitudes and experiences that facilitate intelligibility across varieties.
7. Awareness of factors that promote the teaching and learning of English in various contexts instead of promoting belief in the "myths" of "native speaker, "natural [to the Inner Circle] input.

Globalization: Variation in English

Even native speakers of English have varieties in terms of lexis, grammar, phonology, and discourse features. The same is true for the users of English varieties. These differences do not interfere in communication, but they will be marked from the Inner circle speech (Seidlhofer, 2004).

English has been used by two sets of nations in different ways (Outer and Expanding circles). Along with their mother tongue, people have been using it. This co-existence, through the course of time, has not been without its effects. The effect and the dominance of English on the receiving nations are undeniable. But through usage, EIL speakers have changed English and institutionalized it as their own property (Canagarajah, 2006). Globalized forms of English have now achieved visibility through media. EIL speakers around the world communicate using their own English which is in many ways specific to their geopolitical circumstances. Monolithic English seems to be remaining behind inner-circle borders as the number of EIL users grows (Pakir, 1999).

The description of English varieties

Wherever English goes, it takes a new form and function depending on the local parameters. Thus, the way it is used in Singapore, for instance, tends to be rather different from how South Africans or Nigerians use it. Distinct features can be observed specific to these globalized varieties; Seidlhofer (2004) lists the major characteristics of EIL *lexicogrammar:*

1. non-use of the third person present tense
2. interchangeable use of the relative pronouns *who* and *which*
3. omission of the definite and indefinite articles
4. use of an all-purpose question tag such as *isn't it? Or no? Instead of shouldn't they*?
5. increasing of redundancy by adding prepositions
6. heavy reliance on certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as *do, have, make, put, take*
7. pluralization of nouns which are considered uncountable in native speaker English
8. use of that-clauses instead of infinitive constructions

This invites multiple questions regarding its description, teaching methods, effectiveness, and its future. The concentric-circle proposes a typology of two major NNS English varieties as of Outer and Expanding circles. They differ in using English in different domains. English is used in limited social circumstances in the Expanding circle but in multiple and various domains. This difference in terms of depth and range of English can be the source of variation (Kachru, 1990).

During years of using English, many distinguished writers from Inner and Outer circle have created great works some of which rank among the masterpieces (e.g. Joseph Conrad and George Orwell). Through studying their works in terms of stylistics, code-mixing, and discoursal features, one can observe the creativity in bilingual users. A closer look reveals the fact that their texts involve culture-specific features in all respects. The bulk of literature on bilingual creativity is an indication of the possibility of all domains of communicative competence for NNS speakers (Crystall, 1997; Graddol, 1997; Kachru, 1990). Various strategies are employed in these writings. The following excerpt from Mukherjee's (1989, p. 77) novel called "Jasmine" might clarify the point:

> In Hasanpur, wives used only pronouns to address their husbands. The first month, eager and obedient as I was, I still had a hard time calling him Prakash. I'd cough to get his attention, or start with "Are you listening?" Every time I coughed, He'd say "Do I hear a crow trying human speech?" Prakash, I had to practice and practice … so I could say the name without gagging and blushing in front of his friends …. His friends were like him: disrupters and rebuilders, idealists.

Such a narration can be subject to meticulous explorations. This is a sort of English not used and even comprehensible (let alone to be intelligible) by many others in the Inner circle. Thus, socio-cultural idiosyncrasies of World Englishes users can be here listed:

- Blessings in leave-taking
- Kinship terms of address
- Forms of abuse and courtship

Therefore, in case there is diversity in informal variety of Inner circle, the users in the Outer and Expanding can have access to all levels of usage (Kachru, 2005).

The case of Iran

The contact between Persian and English can be divided into three major phases: (1) pre-revolution, where, due to the cooperative atmosphere between Iran and the West, a sense of modernity was prevalent, and NS-based teaching models were preferred; (2) post-revolution, where resistance was made through "cleansing" English from its Western culture with attempts to localize textbooks; and (3) use of internet, which was a new platform of complicated motives for English learning (Sharifian, 2011).

As a result, various forms of Persianized English (Penglish) were created. Research shows that through meeting with Persian, the globalized variety has proved to be unique in nature due to the specifications of the local parameters. The following sample from Sharifian (2011) illustrates *cultural conceptualizations* among Persian speakers:

American lecturer**:** *Here's the recommendation letter that you asked for.*
Iranian student: *Thanks very much. I am ashamed.*
American lecturer: *What have you done?!*

As can be seen, the Persian cultural schema of "gratitude" (*tashakor*) is literally translated into English, which confuses the native speaker. Sharifian argues that such cultural conceptualizations are indications of a new genre inside English and witness the fact that through agency NSs of English are changing the language. The implication here is that EFL users of English carry with themselves culture-specific qualities without which the interlocutors might experience problems on their communications.

Grammar

The globalized Persian form of English tends to be different from Standard English in the following aspects (Yarmohammadi, 2002):

1. Confusion between infinitives and gerunds: *He went to the bazaar for buying grapes.*
2. Confusion with Subordinators and Conjunctions: *Although he said he was going to be late, but he actually arrived on time.*
3. Problems with Relative Clauses: *The man I saw him yesterday, is sick today.*
4. Problems with Prepositions and Particles: *I really enjoyed from swimming.*

Phonetics

This variety of English tends to be different from NS speech. The main phonetic peculiarities are listed below:

1. Aspiration of all English unaspirated voiceless stops – i.e., aspirating English [p, t, k] after /s/. Strong palatalization of English velar stops before front vowels and in final positions in cases they are released.
2. Substitution of Persian /s/ or /t/ for English [th] – i.e. *thank* is pronounced as *tank* or *sank*.
3. Substitution of Persian /z/ or /d/ for English [dh] – i.e., *then* is pronounced as *den* or *zen***.**
4. Substitution of English /ŋ/ by Persian /ng/ (phonetically as [ŋg].
5. Substitution of English /w/ by /v/ syllable-initially –i.e., *went* is pronounced as *vent***.**
6. Interpretation of the initial CC- clusters as (1) CVC- or (2)? VCC-- /V/ is rendered as /u/ if the second C is /w/, /i/ if the second C is /y/, and /e/ if otherwise.

Vocabulary system

Yarmohammadi (2002) claims that the two languages differ greatly in terms of lexical usage. Persian tends to have a large-scale approach toward the vocabulary (mostly when the root is borrowed), while

English is a much more small-scale, detailed, and elaborate language. For instance, the globalized form of "*chief*" *of the bank* shows that two languages are different in their mental perception of their speakers over the concept of the word *boss* or */ræ?is/*. The source of the difference might be best illustrated by the following diagram (Figure 2):
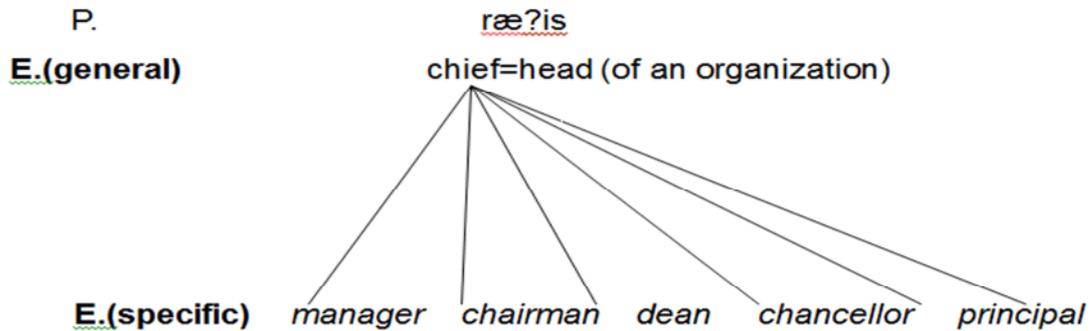

Figure 2. *Source of difference between boss and /ræ?is/*

The academies

Three academies were established in Iran: (1) The Iranian Academy (1935-1943), (2) Iranian Academy of Language (1958-1979), and (3) Academy of Persian Language and Literature (1991-to date), aiming at saving language by coining. However, the fruit of their labor was the creation of at most 10,000 words. The number loses its appeal when compared to huge bulk of approximately 200,000 of loaned words (Sadeghi, 2001). Sadeghi also concludes that there is no proportion between LPP developments in Iran and the real needs to cope with the stream of incoming terms entering Persian language from dominant languages.

Mixing genres

One of the distinctive features of English varieties is code-mixing. When hybrid texts are created for any purpose (e.g. advertising), it leaves certain psychological effects on the reader quite different from that of pure English or pure local which, in turn, serves the desire of the text creator. Figure 3 illustrates this better:
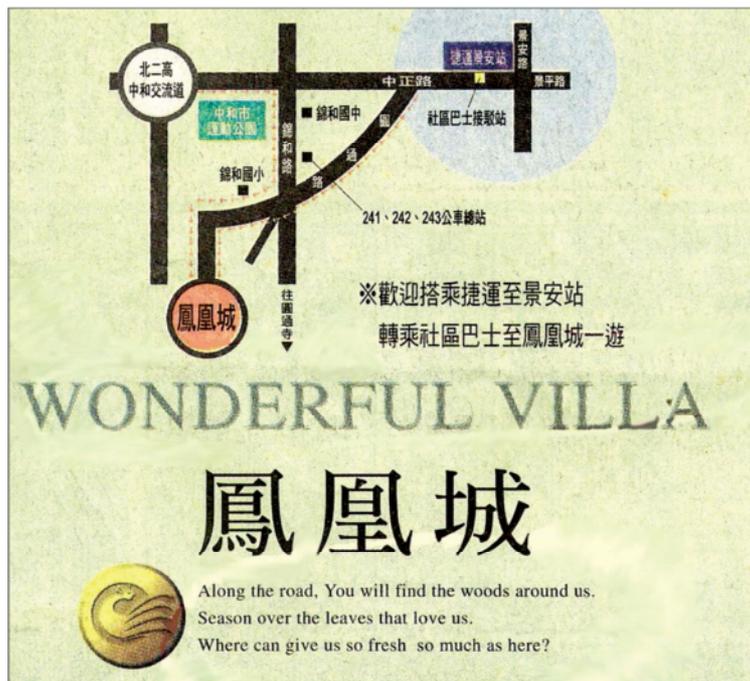

Figure 3. *Localized verbatim style of English sentence in Taiwan (Jia-Ling, 2008)*

This figure displays estate advertising in Taiwanese context in which the company officials have integrated English into Chinese texture or practically globalized it in hybrid form. Research shows that due to high status of English in the given context, "English mixing is best received with the bilingual advertising copy composed of easy-to-read vocabulary" (Jia-Ling, 2008, p. 155). Here houses and lands are sold better through using the "magic spell" of an additional language.

Looking with a suspicious eye: Critical pedagogy

Another trend of thought is in line with Phillipson's (1992) linguistic imperialism. It is believed that following the global spread of English, the propagation of English as a medium of education, commerce, and government has hindered literacy in learners' mother tongue, has denied social and economic progress for those who do not learn it, and has not generally been responsive to the needs of ordinary people in their lives (Ricento, 2000).

Thus, they highlight the danger of linguistic genocide of native languages through colonial spread of English (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 1994). Eurocentric ideologies embedded in instructions are considered to legitimize the establishment of power and resources and reconstitution of cultural inequalities between English and other languages (Phillipson, 1992). Even religious propaganda is believed to be one possible hidden agenda behind the purposeful spread of English in more recent time (Edge, 2003).

With such critical stance, this generation of scholars like Phillipson (1992), Pennycook (1994), and Bailey (1991) prefer English or any of its variety not to be the most widely used language (Jenkins, 2006). In a way, linguistic rights of all languages are equally taken care of with attempts to empower the students with critical thinking and awareness over their educational rights.

This head-in-the-clouds reaction to the overwhelming development of globalization on the part of critical pedagogy where neutrality is encouraged instead of any intervention might seem a little bit unearthly for those TESOL scholars who are worried about the imminent threat to the national identity of speakers of their languages (Ricento, 2000).

NNS agency-based World Englishes

The third response to the spread of English is rather less recognized view of Brutt-Griffler (2002), who believes that English has affected local languages and the local users have institutionalized and incorporated English for their own purposes. In this regard, the speakers of World Englishes have achieved agency, social, and economic mobility through using English by not being merely on the receiving part of it as passive and exploited users (Jenkins, 2006).

However, this view contradicts with the views of the anti-imperialist group of scholars (World Englishes and critical pedagogy) who take resisting position against the domination of English. Nevertheless, the idea of depoliticized transfer of a language sounds naive (Edge, 2003).

Discussion

Thanks to the reactions made by the aforementioned groups, there is now a universal consensus over the presence of diversity in the use and usage of English as it has spread. Taking the birth of English varieties as a phenomenon in response to the spread of English, multiple concerns and struggles do exist. The researchers will split these struggles into two parts: challenges and supportive evidence.

Challenges

Philipson (1992) asserts that abandoning NS-based models of teaching English and resolving into rather unknown world of EIL have invited a series of concerns. The researchers will discuss three major challenges against teaching globalized varieties of English around the world.

Intelligibility

When interlocutors from different circles communicate, they bring very specific speech idiosyncrasies which may block the communication. It is worth mentioning that mutual intelligibility requires a deep understanding at the levels of comprehension as well as interpretation that comes with cultural familiarity (Kachru, 1990).

Assessment standards

Another major critic against teaching globalized version is in the area of assessment. The lack of valid, reliable, and standardized models of assessment has laid more barriers ahead of World Englishes proponents. Essentially, the absence of adequate corpus and negative student attitudes toward non-BANA assessment models adds to the problems. Moreover, localized version of testing is in sheer contradiction with enabling speakers for global mobility. It is believed that as long as World Englishes communicative competence is not clearly defined, the challenge will remain a strong one (Kachru, 2005).

Directional attitudes

It is important to note that many still believe that localized forms of English use are erroneous. Following the emergence of the American English as a variation of the British Standard English, variations were taken as differences. This shift in the attitude means, no longer these differences are possible to accommodate (Kachru, 2005).

Supportive evidence

On the other hand, World Englishes thinkers attempted to provide scientific justifications on the feasibility of instructing localized versions in both theoretical and applied terms   (Canagaraja, 2006).

Bilingual creativity

As it was mentioned earlier, written samples of EIL writers were taken as positive evidence to prove the presence of adequate competency of World Englishes speakers. This means that research should be conducted to provide theoretical framework as well as pedagogical procedures (Kachru, 1990).

Availability of corpus

Lexicography projects that capture all modes (written and spoken) of globalized varieties are indication of the progress made in reaching a definable level of World Englishes. Seidlhofer's (2004) voice project and also creation of AQUIRES dictionary are two relatively successful examples in this regard.

Conclusion

Whether people like it or not, English is the domineering and global language of our time and its status will remain high in the coming future. People with various ethnicities use it for diverse sets of reasons and motives with a sense of ownership. This co-existence has brought about new and local versions of English blurring the distinction between "error" and "different".

The study focused on three main issues: theoretical credibility, practical feasibility, and current challenges. From the theoretical perspective, three main reactions to the spread of English were presented. The diversity within NS communication was considered as the initial point of reference to justify the linguistic deficiency of NNS speech. On the practical feasibility, paradigm shift was felt needed to feed the material from the corpus gathered through EIL speech, which eventually could be the basis for future standards of assessment.

In sum, although in many areas the globalization of English seems rather unrealistic, the presence of numerous globalized versions of English in "connecting communities" is no longer in its infancy and is now emerging as an undeniable fact. There is positive perspective that, by means of gathering reliable corpus, suitable localized teaching materials could be developed, paving the way for legitimating Englishes.

Acknowledgements

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