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The Global Spread of English and the Need for EIL Pedagogy

English in the World, the World in English 

Known as a truly global language, or a lingua franca, English has “touched the lives of so many people, in so many cultures and continents, in so many functional roles, and with so much prestige” (Kachru, 1990, p. 5). Although the adjectives might change, one thing remains the same: English has unquestionably become a global phenomenon.

Reinforced by globalization, today English is used on all seven continents, is an official or second language in more than 100 countries, and is used as an official language in more than 85% of international organizations. Although the numbers are subject to change, English is used by nearly 2 billion speakers in varying degrees of competencies, and nonnative speakers (NNSs) of English outnumber native speakers (NSs) by a ratio of 3:1 (Crystal, 2003). Serving as the common vehicle of communication among speakers with or without the same linguistic and cultural background, English is the language of air and maritime navigation, the Internet, politics, business, education, media, diplomacy, sports, and international scientific exchange. Whether you are an English tourist bargaining in the Grand Bazaar of Istanbul, a Chinese business professional on a business trip in South Africa, a graduate student in a multilingual classroom in Washington, D.C., a pilot of an Australian airplane landing in Toronto, or a Brazilian economist presenting your latest research in Moscow, you probably speak some English.

REFLECTIVE BREAK

- There are many ways to describe the English language (*international, global, lingua franca*, etc.). What is yours?
- What spheres of your professional life are influenced by EIL?
- What are the roles of English in your country? How do these roles influence your teaching?

Teaching and Learning an International Language

The global spread of English, the emergence of its nativized varieties, and ever-increasing number of NNSs of English across the world created an unparalleled global interest in the teaching and learning of English. As a pedagogical response, increasing importance is attached to developing principles and practices specific for teaching EIL. In this vein, McKay (2002) argues, “the teaching and learning of an international language must be based on an entirely different set of assumptions than the teaching and learning of any other second and foreign language” (p. 1). This simple yet profound statement generates a series of questions surrounding EIL pedagogy: Whose language is being talked about? On which speakers is instruction being modeled? Which language variety or varieties should be taught to learners? Which teachers are qualified to teach English? Which approaches are the best in teaching? These fundamental questions should be of interest to all English language teaching professionals in the new millennium and, therefore, define their goals throughout this book.

The new linguistic landscape of the world where NNSs of English outnumber their native counterparts by a ratio of 3:1 suggests a reconsideration of the ownership of the language. English is no longer an exclusive commodity of native-speaking communities. Today, people are more likely to use English to communicate with “multilingual speakers than with monolingual speakers, and for their own cultural, social, political, and economic purposes, removed from Inner Circle norms” (Burns, 2005, p. 2). Its ownership is now shared by the

native- and nonnative-English-speaking communities because English “belongs to all people who speak it, whether native and nonnative, whether ESL or EFL, whether standard or non-standard” (Norton, 1997, p. 427). This understanding redistributes the rights to determine norms and standards to those who use the language. From a pedagogical point of view, NS norms perpetuate monolingualism, essentialize Anglo-American users of English as a reference point, marginalize NNSs, and fail to recognize proficient speakers in Outer and Expanding circles (Jenkins, 2009).

REFLECTIVE BREAK

- In what ways do you encourage your students to claim the ownership of English and the right to appropriate and manipulate it?
- To what extent is your language learning and teaching motivated by standard English norms and goals? Do you think standard English should be a model of English language learning and teaching? Why or why not?

Traditionally, NSs are seen as the absolute source of knowledge and the target of language learning and teaching, whereas NNSs are stigmatized as deficient communicators who are considered less than a native. A NS model sets an unrealistic and possibly unattainable goal for ELLs and also adversely affects their motivation to progress.

The debate about instructional variety (such as choosing between U.S. and British English) becomes even more complicated by a growing sensitivity toward nativized varieties in postcolonial contexts. This reality necessitates a modification in the role of linguistic norms in language pedagogy. Consequently, there emerges a growing trend to move away from introducing a single variety to exposing and embracing multiple varieties determined by learners’ needs and goals in learning the language. Along these lines, McKay (2002) argues that EIL users’ cultural content and their sense of the appropriate use of English are two key factors that inform EIL pedagogy. Thus, as an alternative to standard variety, she emphasizes the centrality of “*intelligibility*

(recognizing an expression), *comprehensibility* (knowing the meaning of the expression) and *interpretability* (knowing what the expression signifies in a particular sociocultural context)” (p. 52).

Applying this view to English language teaching, exposing English language students merely to British or U.S. English, and regarding those Englishes as universal norms and desirable targets in language instruction means neglecting the realities of EIL uses and users. Therefore, some scholars argue that the ultimate instructional goal should be achieving intelligibility rather than acquiring a native or nativelike accent. Imposing the standard of an exclusive single variety of English assumes language as a static and unchanging entity and prioritizes imitation over communication as the chief purpose of learning the language (Burns, 2005). Most important, choosing one exclusive variety as a standard in instruction would place it in a privileged position and thereby place all others in an underprivileged, nonstandard, and marginalized position.

REFLECTIVE BREAK

- What variety or varieties of English do you present to your ELLs? How do you justify your choice?
- What attitudes do you and your students have about the notion of standard English? How do these attitudes influence your methodology, choice of materials, and assessment practices?
- Does your curriculum aim for intelligibility or acquisition of native or nativelike accent? Which one informs your materials and classroom techniques as the ultimate instructional goal?

Although *communicative language teaching* (CLT) has been the dominant methodological approach in English language teaching, it has been criticized for not paying adequate attention to local cultural and linguistic needs and culture of learning, as well as for imposing prepackaged, one-size-fits-all methods, materials, assessment tools, and teaching approaches imported from the West (Bax, 2003). As

a response to emphasizing particular methods, the field of English language teaching moved into a postmethod era, which emphasizes “a pedagogy of particularity, practicality, and possibility” (Kumaravadevelu, 2003). This development increased the ever-existing reliance on teachers as agents of curricular reforms and decision-makers who are cognizant of learners’ needs, local dynamics, global context, and realities of EIL. Therefore, EIL pedagogy emerges as a viable response to the global use of different types of English for communication. The various aspects (methods and materials, culture and identity, assessment, and curriculum) of this pedagogy are discussed in the following chapters.

Uses of Englishes Around the World

Any discussion regarding EIL would be incomplete without referring to conceptual frameworks and debates underlying principles and practices of EIL pedagogy. Building upon this premise, this section involves the discussion of Kachru’s (1992) model of concentric circles and the levels of variation.

Kachru’s Model of Concentric Circles

Kachru (1992) offers a model that portrays the classification of localized and nativized forms of English, known as *World Englishes*, using three concentric circles: Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle. As described and visually represented in Table 1, each circle refers to a set of countries and is determined by the manner people acquire and use English. Figure 1 presents a visual representation of Kachru’s model of concentric circles.

Although Kachru’s eminent model is generally considered a useful approach to describe the spread of English around the world, it should not be interpreted as indicating (a) supremacy of the Inner Circle over other circles, (b) uniformity within and immobility across circles, or (c) well-captured accounts of individuals’ proficiency levels and purposes for using English.

Table 1. Kachru's (1992) Model of Concentric Circles

Circle	Acquisition and Role of English	Countries
Inner (norm-providing)	The primary language acquired as a native language (ENL) and used as dominant language.	United States, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand
Outer (norm-developing)	Has a colonial history; acquired as a second language (ESL) and primarily used in major institutions and in multilingual contexts.	Malaysia, Singapore, India, Ghana, Kenya, and Malawi
Expanding (norm-dependent)	No colonial history; learned as a foreign language (EFL) and used for international communication; no distinct status or function in institutional domains.	China, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, Brazil, Russia, and many other nations

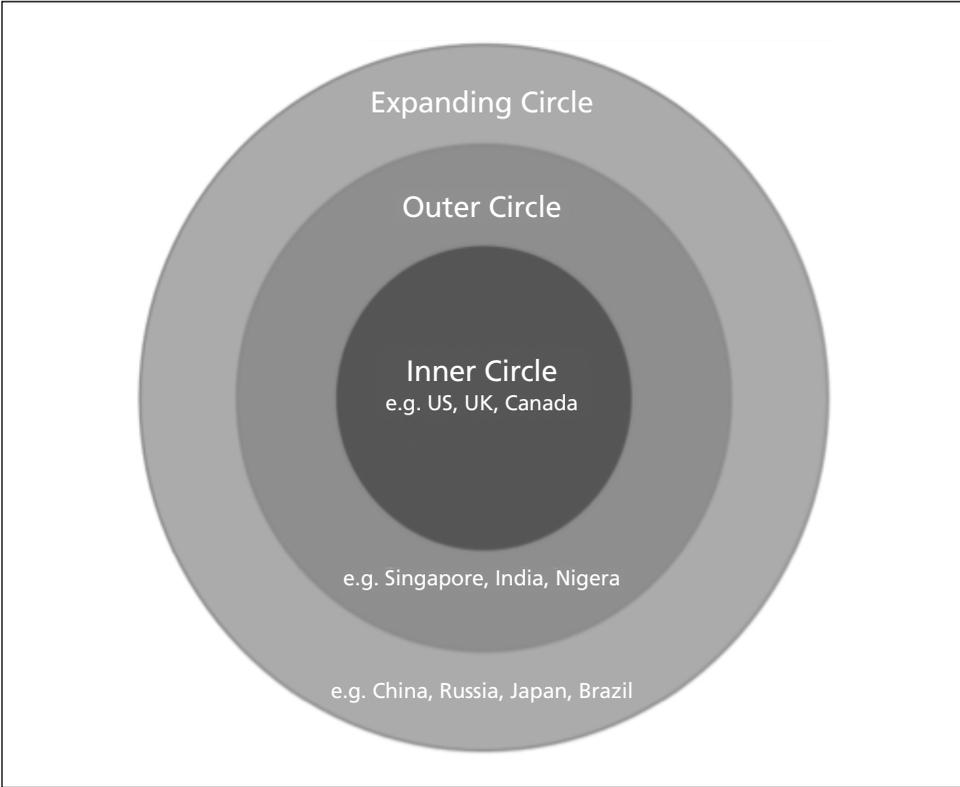


Figure 1. Kachru's model of concentric circles.

REFLECTIVE BREAK

- Using Kachru's conceptualization, identify the variety or varieties of English you and your students use, as well as the variety or varieties presented in your teaching materials.

Levels of Variation

Language variation refers to differences in aspects of a language resulting from its historical, geographic, social, or functional changes. World Englishes differ from each other mainly on four levels: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse styles (Jenkins, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2004).

Regarding pronunciation, Jenkins (2009) discusses the differences in the production of consonant and vowel sounds. Speakers of Englishes in the Outer and Expanding circles replace some consonants with others. For example, /θ/ and /ð/ sounds in *thin* and *this* are pronounced like /t/ and /d/ by speakers of Indian and West Indian Englishes. Also, speakers of Sri Lankan and some Indian Englishes pronounce /w/ as /v/, so *wet* sounds like *vet* in their speech. Regarding the variations in vowel sounds, Jenkins observes they vary “according to how high/low and forward/back the tongue is in the mouth, and the degree to which the lips are rounded or spread, and to how long the sound is actually maintained” (p. 25). For instance, the short vowel /ɪ/, as in *sit*, and long vowel /i:/, as in *seat*, are slightly distinguished in most Outer and Expanding Circle Englishes, and both are pronounced as /ɪ/, which is also a tendency in the production of /ʊ/ and /u:/.

Regarding the differing grammatical tendencies in Outer and Expanding circles, Jenkins (2009) cites the list by Platt, Weber, and Ho (1984). Some of these tendencies are (a) to not mark nouns for plural, (b) to use a specific or nonspecific system for nouns rather than a definite or indefinite system or to use the two systems side by side, and (c) to change the form of quantifiers. Additionally, Seidlhofer (2004) identifies some generalizations in grammatical features of NNS–NNS interactions, which usually occur in Expanding Circle countries. Some of these generalizations include dropping the third-person present

tense -s, omitting the definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in English as a native language (ENL) and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL, and failing to use correct tag questions (e.g., *isn't it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn't they?*).

Jenkins (2009) discusses three types of lexical variation in Outer and Expanding circles: (a) locally coined words and expressions, (b) borrowings from indigenous languages, and (c) idioms. Locally coined words and expressions reflect speakers' creative capacity, as in the following examples: *spacy* ("spacious" in Indian English), *jeepney* ("a small bus" in Philippine English), *enstool* ("to install a chief" in Ghanaian English), and *basket-woman* ("coarsely behaved woman" in Lankan English). Another category of lexical variation includes the words that Englishes have borrowed from indigenous languages: *chai* ("tea" in East African English), *crore* ("10 million" in Indian English), and *kundiman* ("love song" in Philippine English). Finally, there are four categories of variation in idioms used in Outer Circle and Expanding Circle Englishes: (a) direct translations from indigenous idioms (e.g., *to shake legs* in Singaporean and Malaysian Englishes comes from a Malay idiom), (b) those based on ENL (e.g., *to be on the tarmac* in East African English means "to be in the process of seeking a new job"), (c) combinations of ENL and indigenous forms (e.g., *to put sand in someone's gari* in Nigerian English means "to threaten someone's livelihood"), and (d) variations on ENL forms (e.g., "to have your cake and eat it" in British English becomes *to eat your cake and have it* in Singaporean English).

Concerning the variations in discourse styles across Englishes, Jenkins (2009) attends to the following differences: (a) speakers of Outer Circle and Expanding Circle Englishes tend to use sentences that seem formal and complex to ENL speakers in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structure, (b) indigenous cultures have led to new discourse styles that do not exist in ENL use (e.g., some Indian English expressions of thanks, deferential vocabulary, and the use of blessings that ENL speakers could find redundant), and (c) expressions of greeting and leave-taking tend to be different in Outer Circle and Expanding Circles, which is also an influence of indigenous language and culture (e.g., *You're enjoying?*, a greeting translated from Yoruba, becomes an expression of greeting in Nigerian English, and *Walk slowly ho!* is an expression of leave-taking in Singaporean/Malaysian English).

REFLECTIVE BREAK

- What patterns do you observe about the levels of variation (pronunciation, lexicon, grammar, and discourse) in your own variety of English?
- For spoken data, you can record and transcribe your own conversations or analyze samples from Speech Accent Archive (<http://accent.gmu.edu>). For written data, copy your email correspondences and personal or academic writing. This inquiry can also be replicated as a consciousness-raising activity with your students.