THE EMERGENCE OF WORLD ENGLISHES: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we cast to light how English has acquired the international status in the world, and how the phenomenal spread of English in the world brings about new Englishes that are widely used to serve non-native speakers' various communicative purposes. We critique that the traditional English language teaching (native-speaker-based) paradigm does not gear learners towards the messier world of English in the global context. Given the changing profiles of English, there is a need for English language teaching professionals to address the notion of English as an international language in classroom pedagogy. We end this paper by reviewing pedagogical guidelines that are believed to be necessary for global English language education and for language learners in Thailand who primarily use English as a lingua franca to interact with speakers from different first language and cultural backgrounds in their daily lives.

Keywords: World Englishe; English language teaching; non-native speaker; English as an international language; global English

INTRODUCTION

The English language has shifted from being a language that was primarily used to serve native speakers' intra-national and communal purposes to becoming an international medium in lingua franca communication (Jenkins, 2003b; Kirkpatrick, 2007). Its phenomenal spread implies that it serves as a communicative tool not only for native-to-native or native-to-non-native interactions but also for meaningful interactions among non-native speakers (Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 2007). Due to its large geographical reach (McKay, 2008), English has come to be learned as a second language or spoken by a large number of people. According to Graddol (2007), approximately 2 billion people are said to have English knowledge. Statistics from various sources also show that the number of non-native speakers has significantly outnumbered that of native speakers (Kirkpatrick, 2007). In light of this, several scholars have argued that English becomes a denationalized language (Kachru, 1992; Widdowson, 1994) in which it is not anymore tied to native speakers in terms of linguistic usage. In this connection, Widdowson (1994) asserts that:

> The very fact that English is an international language means that no nation can have custody over it. … It is a matter of considerable pride and satisfaction for native speakers of English that their language is an international means of communication. But the point is that it is only international to the extent that it is not their lanaguge. It is not a possession which they lease out to others, while still retaining the freehold. Other people actually own it (Widdowson, 1994, p. 385)

Given this changing trend of English, the traditional English language teaching (ELT) orientation that centers on native-speaker linguistic monocentricity (Kachru, 1992) has been

called for a paradigm shift in order to be more consistent with the current profile of English. Drawing specifically on the contexts of Education in Thailand, this paper aims to critique the ELT assumptions that rest on the native-speaker ideological paradigm. We will discuss how such pedagogical assumptions are unattainable and inconsistent with the sociolinguistic and socio-political realities of contexts where English is used as a lingua franca. Our focus is to provide a discussion of how the international status of English and the emergence of world Englishes suggest for implications for ELT in the era where English functions as an international language. More specifically, we will review some pedagogical guidelines with reference to the notion of English as an international language (EIL) that can be usefully implemented in ELT curricula to raise language learners' awareness or recognition of the existence of world Englishes.

THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF ENGLISH

English has, without doubt, acquired the international status and has become a truly international language. To highlight the international role of English, many scholars have tried to introduce *English as …* with the focus on the language in its worldwide functions (Erling, 2005), such as English as a global language (Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 1997); English as a 'glocal' language (Pakir, 2000); English as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2004); English as a world language (Brutt-Grifler, 2002) and most frequently used, English as an international language (Jenkins, 2000; Modiano, 1999; Widdowson, 1994). Even though these proposals have slight differences in descriptions and interpretations, they similarly stress the prominence of sociolinguistic and socio-political realities (Kachru, 1992) of English use in the world. In this sense, however, the term 'English as an international language' seems to have achieved wider acceptance or recognition as a universally appropriate term to refer to most of the current uses of English worldwide, especially in those lingua franca interactions where non-native speakers interact in English both with native speakers and other non-native speakers (McKay, 2008; Llurda, 2004).

Given that English has been referred to as the language of international communication, McKay (2002) notes that the international status of English is not merely based on a great number of native speakers; if so, Chinese, Spanish or even Arabic are clearly the leads because they are, in fact, spoken by a greater number of populations as mother tongue languages. What exactly gives English the international status is, instead, its unique and special role that is recognized in various parts of the world (Crystal, 1997). Aside from being taken as an official language in public administration, education, media and business transaction in native speaking and many former colonial countries, English has also gained priority in other parts of the world where it has no official role in most domains of life. It serves as a lingua franca in both global and local communication and is learned as a compulsory foreign language in school (Crystal, 1997). Providing similar ground to Crystal, Phillipson (2008) explains how lingua franca English is inextricably connected with many special purposes in many societal domains of life. International English, in Phillipson's (2008, p. 250) opinion, is described as "a *lingua economica*" (a medium for business dealings or international trades), *"a lingua academica*" (a medium for content learning and academic publications), *"a lingua cultura"* (a medium for cultural exchange or intercultural communication), to name a few.

THE SPREAD OF ENGLISH IN THE WORLD AND THE EMERGENCE OF WORLD ENGLISHES

According to Kachru (1992), the spread of English throughout the world can be categorized into three classical concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding

Circle (see Figure 1). The three circles "represent the types of spread, the pattern of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts" (Kachru, 1992, p. 356).

Expanding Circle

Outer Circle

Inner Circle
e.g. USA, UK
320-380 million

e.g. India, Philippines
300-500 million
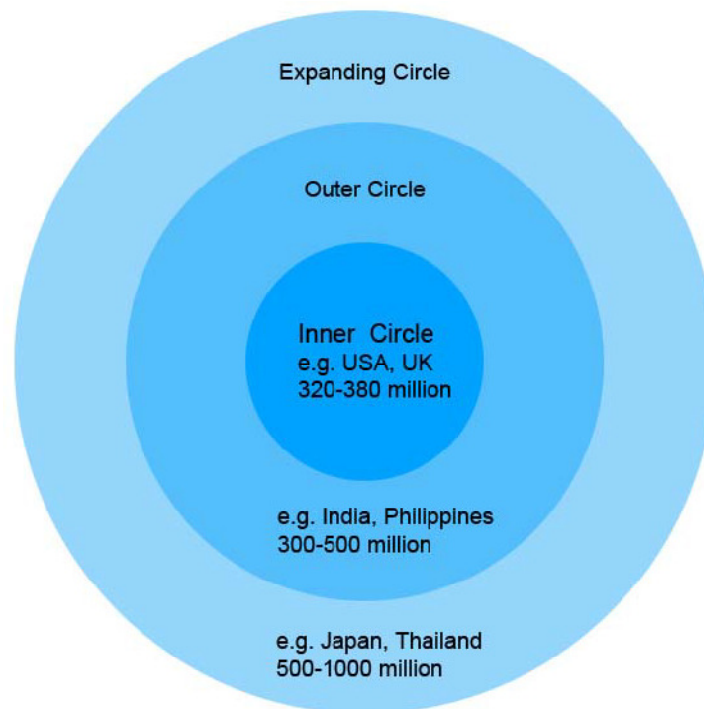
e.g. Japan, Thailand
500-1000 million

Figure 1. Kachru's three concentric circles of English

Adapted from Crystal (1997, p. 54)

The Inner Circle refers to countries where English was originally codified as a linguistic base and is primarily used as a mother tongue or native language (ENL) in every sphere of life. Countries lying in this circle include the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and some of the Caribbean and Australasian territories. The total number of English speakers in the inner-circle countries and territories around the world is estimated to be about 380 million (Crystal, 1997). Next comes the Outer Circle. English spoken in this circle is often described as English as a second language (ESL), which means that people use English alongside their mother tongue as a second language to officially communicate in several domains or carry out various institutionalized functions (Kirkpatrick, 2007). English used by people in this circle has a long history and developed from colonial periods (Kachru & Nelson, 2000).

The Outer Circle comprises countries like India, Malaysia, Singapore, The Philippines, Nigeria, etc. These countries were once colonized by either the British Empire or the United States (Kirkpatrick, 2007; Strevens, 1992). Versions of English spoken by around 500 million in these countries are often referred to as 'new Englishes', 'nativized Englishes', 'institutionalized Englishes' or 'indigenized Englishes' (Bamgbose, 2001; Kachru, 1992).

The third and largest circle is called 'the Expanding Circle'. Broadly speaking, this circle refers to the use of English as a foreign or additional language (EFL) in countries that do not have the history of colonization by any English native-speaking countries (Kachru, 1992). That is to say, English, in this circle, has no official role to function within domestic

institutions (Jenkins, 2003b). Countries like Thailand, China, Japan, the Russian Federation, Denmark or France are grouped in the Expanding Circle. Although countries in this circle do not share the sense of colonial past that the outer-circle countries do, Y. Kachru (2005) points out that they have gradually come under the influence of the English speaking West (USA and UK) in a wide variety of English using domains such as academia, business and commerce, higher education, media, and science and technology. Regarding the number of English users in this circle, Crystal (1997) and Jenkins (2003b) maintain that it is difficult to estimate the exact number of current EFL users since much depends on how particular speakers are defined as competent language users. Jenkins (2003b, p. 15) further notes that "if we use the criterion of 'reasonable competence', then the number is likely to be around one billions".

Kachru's intention in portraying his concentric circles is to pull English users' attention towards the existence of "multilinguistic identities, multiplicity of norms, both endocentric and exocentric, and distinct sociolinguistic histories" (Kachru, 1996, p. 135). From this classification of English, we have come to realize that the spread of English has led to the pluralization or diversification of the language; it results in the birth of many new varieties of English or 'world Englishes' which conceptualizes "the function of the language in diverse pluralistic context" (Kachru, 1997, p. 67).

These newborn Englishes that are systematically used in outer- and some expanding-circle countries are somewhat different from native-speaker norms in terms of phonology, lexis, grammar, pragmatics and communication styles (Kachi, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 2007; McKay, 2002). Erling (2005) notes that English has acquired new names when it comes into contact with indigenous languages and cultures around the world. Thus, it is a myth to expect that when English is spoken by non-native speakers in a certain non-native context, it has to be pure English identical with the one spoken by a native speaker in England or America.

In fact, English used in various non-native settings must be multiple Englishes because they are phonologically, grammatically, lexically and pragmatically influenced by local speakers' first language structures. Widdowson's portrayal on language spread best describes how the idea of 'one-world English' or linguistic monocentricity is invalid in the nature of transmission. Below is his illustration:

If I spread something… the assumption usually is that it remains intact. 'Start spreading the news,' as Frank Sinatra sings, 'I am leaving today,' and everybody is supposed to get the same news. Spreading is transmitting. A disease spreads from one country to another and wherever it is it is the same disease. It does not alter according to circumstances, the virus is invariable. But the language is not like this. It is not transmitted without being transformed. It does not travel well because it is fundamentally unstable. It is not well adapted to control because it is itself adaptable. (Widdowson, 1997, p. 136)

From Widdowson's statement, it can be inferred that English does not represent a single shade of color; rather, it represents multiplicities or diversity known as *Englishes*. Similarly, Thanasoulas (1999) views that English must be multi-channeled, multi-variable and capable of self-modification. Thus, it should be realized English has become too complex to be chained to only inner-circle communities (Anchimbe, 2006). Metaphorically, in the end, English is no difference from a ship which is "built in Spain; owned by a Norwegian; registered in Cyprus; managed from Glasgow; chartered by the French; crewed by Russians; flying a Liberian flag; carrying an American cargo; and pouring oil on the Welsh coast" (The Independent, 1996, cited in Graddol, 1997, p. 32).

ELT IN THAILAND: A CASE FOR EIL PEDAGOGY

It is not an exaggeration to say that the model of language, that has been available and reinforced in the world today including Thailand, is that of a fixed linguistic code, which is more or less the same as the transmission of news or regulation of laws (Widdowson, 1997). This linguistic promotion seems to go against the fact of linguistic variations or sociolinguistic realities in many speech communities around the world (Canagarajah, 1999). Some evidence shows that English language education in the Thai context still rests upon the obsolete prototypical or traditional pedagogy of EFL which primarily trains learners to act in accordance with native speakers' directions (Buripakdi, 2012; Jindapitak & Teo, 2011, 2012; Methitham, 2011).

Additionally, Boriboon (2011) and Methitham (2011) observe that Thai English teachers have also been expected to act in accordance with a particular set of theoretical guidelines and pedagogical techniques which are conceptualized and materialized only by Western theorists. Moreover, Methitham (2011) claims that English language teachers and learners in Thailand have long experienced various ELT methodologies such as Audio-Lingua, functional-communicative approach, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). These Western-based methodologies were empirically validated in the West and passed on to local ELT practitioners to uphold (Canagarajah, 1999).

It should be noted that, among several ELT approaches, CLT seems to receive vast attention and preference by ELT professionals in Thailand (Methitham, 2011). According to Bhatt (2002), this ELT approach is known to be linked to the Noam Chomsky's notion of idealized native speaker – a native speaker as an ideal informant of a language. Simply put, native speaker's use of language is used as a yardstick for judgments of linguistic correctness and appropriateness even the use of English falls outside of the Inner Circle (Jenkins, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2007). Why is this approach problematic? Several EIL scholars (e.g., Cook, 1999; McKay, 2002; Kramsch, 1998) have argues that CLT, which is based on the native-speaker school of thought in linguistic judgment, usually defines "the language learners in terms of what they are *not*, or at least *not yet*" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 28).

In Thailand, it is apparent that CLT or the concept of idealized native speaker in linguistic judgments have been extensively authorized by many education planners and local practitioners and promoted through ELT conferences, training programs, and teaching materials (Leung, 2005). This is not surprising why native speaker is used as an icon of prestige in global ELT. For example, an international school in Thailand takes pride in being an all-English school with all speakers being native speakers. As boasted on its Internet homepage: "All of our English teachers *are native speakers, teaching natural English as it is spoken in real conversation*" (Bamgbose, 2001, p. 360). This discourse reflects a general belief (among many Thais) that the insistence on an inner-circle or native-speaker pedagogical model would best equip learners with the skills required to fare with reasonable success in the world (Methitham, 2011; Modiano, 2000).

It should be argued that this belief system does not take into account the fact of linguistic diversification or localization. Therefore, the inner-circle-orientated approaches to English language teaching and learning in Thailand should be critically revamped or at least attitudinally revisited. In order to make educational practices more realistic, up-to-date, and supportive of globalization, there is an urgent need to engage learners in a pedagogy that goes beyond the idea of nativeness (Cook, 1999)--the focus on increasing learners' awareness of EIL and cognizance of varieties of English.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

In light of the globalization of English, we agree with Todd's (2006) suggestion that the appropriate pedagogy in English language teaching and learning in Thailand should follow the ideology of EIL. This means that EIL should be used as an idealized approach to inform teaching and learning on both theoretical and practical grounds.

Theoretically, language learners should be made aware of the sociolinguistic and socio-political profiles of English, e.g., the spread of English in the world and its consequences; the ownership of English; the notion of standard English; a distinction "between the use of English in a monolingual society, as opposed to a multilingual society" (Kachru, 1992, p. 360); and so on. On practical grounds, learners should be made familiar with varieties of English. Exposure to varieties of English is believed to help facilitate learners' communication abilities when being confronted with diverse types of English uses and users (Matsuda, 2003). As Modiano (2009, p. 59) acknowledges: "An understanding of the diversity of English, for production as well as for comprehension, makes one a better communicator." The exposition activity, as adapted from Kachru's (1992) proposal in teaching world Englishes in the classroom, may involve familiarizing learners with major native and non-native uses and users, demonstrating examples of spoken genre in multifarious interactional contexts, and discussing shared and non-shared linguistic features such as similarities and differences in phonological systems. Nurturing learners through these activities under the framework of world Englishes may help create a sense of tolerance of linguistic diversity as well as enrich learners' linguistic repertoires when they cross-culturally interact with interlocutors from a great number of mother tongue backgrounds (Matsuda, 2003). Matsuda (2003) points out that limited exposure to varieties of English may cause learners to resist linguistic variations or form the ideas of confusion when they encounter different types of English uses and users in authentic contexts.

We maintain that there should be an opening up for covering other varieties of English aside from the popular Anglo-American English in English classes so that learners will become truly internationally-minded speakers who are conscious of the role of English in the world and the world in English (Pennycook, 2000). The incorporation of the concept of world Englishes into language curriculum has gained more recognition worldwide especially in several expanding-circle countries. For example, in Japan, the Department of World Englishes at Chukyo University has expressed the clear aim to enhance students' recognition of as well as appreciation for world Englishes by exposing students to major varieties of English and sending students abroad to experience different types of English uses and users (Yoshigawa, 2005). However, in Thailand, where the concept of EIL and linguistic diversity is still in its infancy, there appears to be multiple concerns about how to teach world Englishes. The major concern of the implementation of world Englishes into language pedagogy seems to be the difficulty in searching for and developing materials for the teaching of world Englishes (e.g., world Englishes pronunciation and conversation audios). Due to the advancement of information technology, many Internet sources offer millions of speech samples of speakers around the globe who have different tongues of English. Teachers can take the advantage of this technological availability by incorporating authentic audios of world Englishes available on hundreds of online sources (e.g., news, radio, films) into classroom materials so that students have an opportunity to have their repertoire internationally expanded, to be exposed to wider varieties of English. Regarding classroom implementation, several EIL advocates (e.g., Baik & Shim, 2002; Jenkins, 2003a; Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; Shin, 2004; Song & Drummond, 2009) have put great effort to incorporate the notion of world Englishes into classroom practices. They have come up with useful

pedagogical ideas and activities that are believed to help language learners better focus on realistic learning goals of becoming effective EIL users (Song & Drummond, 2009). Pedagogical ideas or activities, proposed by some of these EIL advocates, are highlighted as the following.

Baik and Shim (2002) proposed an intriguing 15-week plan for teaching world Englishes via the Internet. The objective of their internet-based course was to enhance Korean learners' awareness of the existing English varieties. Throughout 15 weeks, learners were exposed to more than 18 varieties of English from various internet sources (e.g., news, radio and movie clips) and were assessed their world Englishes and/or EIL knowledge through various types of activities and exercises. The activity was proven to be successful as the learners' reactions to world Englishes were positive, and they were active to discuss about the further study of world Englishes.

In Japan, Song and Drummond (2009) developed a project to raise advanced language learners' awareness of varieties of English and appreciation of world Englishes speakers. Learners were given the task of searching for English speakers (both native and non-native) who they deemed to characterize good language qualities. They were asked to analyze the techniques used by the chosen speakers which showed the said qualities and share their analysis with their classmates. The learners' responses to the presented speaker models were found to show "marked recognition of venerable qualities irrespective of accents and that the techniques used by the speakers to facilitate communication can be employed by the learners themselves" (Song & Drummond, 2009, p. 201).

More recently, Jindapitak and Teo (2012) proposed an attitudinal neutrality activity to be implemented in language classroom. Based on their research conducted to explore Thai tertiary English majors' stereotypical reactions to world Englishes, they found that Thai English learners held prejudiced reactions to non-native accents of English. They argued that without critical awareness of world Englishes, learners may hold a monolithic view of the world and may devalue their own status as being non-native speakers. Thus, in order to prevent language learners from developing prejudiced reactions to non-native accents, the learners should be exposed to an awareness-raising activity. The implementation of this activity is based on the three steps as adapted from Munro, Derwing and Sato (2006): (1) collecting and preparing speech samples from various non-native communities; (2) presenting the selected audios to learners to evaluate the speakers on pre-determined dimensions; and (3) tallying the results of the evaluations, followed by in-class discussion of the task outcomes.

These positive moves as reflected in classroom implementation in various parts of the world have shown how pluralism has become part of English in the era of globalization. Therefore, we all need to be aware of it or conscious enough about the larger contexts of English. Last but not least, it is important for all parties involved in the field of global ELT to realize that English is not anymore a franchise like Pizza Hut or Kentucky Fried Chicken licensed by its investors (Widdowson, 1997).

CONCLUSION

To sum up, Graddol (2007, p. 62) notes that "English is no longer the 'only show in town'" because there are some other indigenous languages that are spoken by more native speakers. Nevertheless, English has achieved a genuinely international status while other languages are left behind because of the result of its special role that is recognized in every country; it is made an official or semi-official language in many countries and is used as a medium of

communication in various domains of life and learned as an additional or second language. It is also important to note that one characteristic of an international language is its capability of being transformed when it is adapted by local speakers outside of the Inner Circle. In fact, the spread of English is dealt with the assumption that the language must be diverse. This is because when English comes into contact with other indigenous languages and cultures or gets adapted by non-native users, it acquires new forms which can be labeled as Thai English, Filipino English, Japanese English, to name just a few. These new names of English suggest that English has been acculturated and transmitted to release multiple characteristics deviant from its mother originated in the Inner Circle. Given these sociolinguistic and socio-political profiles of English, the obsolete ELT paradigm, that is based on the ideology that native speakers are the authority of the language, needs to be replaced by a newer paradigm that relates language classroom to the world (Pennycook, 2000) and takes into account local adaptation or appropriation. Thus, classroom pedagogy should equip language learners with skills that can help them not only to effectively perform in linguistic activities but also to become effective international speakers who are cognizant or aware of the diversified contexts of English.

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