EMBRACING GLOBAL ENGLISHES IN ASIAN CONTEXT: IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONS IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS

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Abstract

The notion of global Englishes is known as an approach recognizing the use of language in different social and cultural contexts, where multiple languages and cultures exist. This conceptual-based paper aims to elaborate the need of integrating global Englishes in language instructions. This paper focuses on how the integration should be implemented in English language instructions in terms of several aspects, including language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. The aim of integrating global Englishes in language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment is to help learners develop awareness of the contexts in which English is used across different sociolinguistic backgrounds. By adopting the paradigm of global Englishes, it is expected that language learners will transform to language users, recognizing their first language as a valuable resource for enhancing their English language skills. Moreover, this paper also sheds on light a common construct related to global Englishes, known as native speakerism. In implementing global Englishes, I believe that the paradigm of native speakerism is no longer relevant, especially for English teachers. Non-native English teachers, in fact, offer advantages which can enhance the process of English language teaching in multicultural settings such. They are able to implement language instructions effectively, provide more detailed information regarding the target language through their native language, anticipates linguistic barriers, and understand the characteristics of learners.

Keywords – global Englishes, native speakerism, language instructions, multicultural settings, English teacher

Introduction

The rise of English as a global language has prompted ongoing debates about how to view English from perspective where it is used for the medium of communication. This perspective involves recognizing and observing the use of English in various geographical locations, where speakers come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The notion of global Englishes is known as an approach recognizing the use of language in different social and cultural contexts, where multiple languages and cultures exist. In current years, there has been an accelerating trend showing an increase of the number of non-native English speakers and learners around the world. This phenomenon reflects the evolving status of English as a global lingua franca (Galloway & Rose, 2018). This shift implies that English is owned by anyone who uses it, regardless of their native status. Considering this changing sociolinguistic context, the traditional view of English as a second or foreign language is becoming old-fashioned as well as ambiguous, as English is used for various social purposes, such as interpersonal friendships across nations, business, tourism, diplomatic relations, etc. Moreover, it is taught in diverse institutional settings. Non-native English speakers are using English by integrating their first or native languages as linguistic resources. This integration poses a challenge for non-native speakers to contextualize their English use at the level of sociopragmatic and discourse.

The role of English as a global language, a lingua franca (ELF), and an international language (EIL) and its significances on English language teaching and learning has attracted many scholars to investigate

this issue (e.g., Renandya & Widodo, 2016; Widodo et al., 2017). In fact, the number of English learners and teachers in nations in which English is used as a non-native language is growing significantly, surpassing those in native countries or countries using English as a second language. Within this context, issues, aspects related to linguistics and discourse of English need to be connected to language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. In other words, the perspective of global Englishes should be embraced when designing and implementing English language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, going forward from the framework of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006). The aim of integrating global Englishes in language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment is to help learners develop awareness of the contexts in which English is used across different sociolinguistic backgrounds. By adopting the paradigm of global Englishes, it is expected that language learners will transform to language users, recognizing their first language as a valuable resource for enhancing their English language skills.

This conceptual-based paper aims to elaborate the need of integrating global Englishes in language instructions. This paper will focus on how the integration should be implemented in English language instructions in terms of several aspects, including language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. Moreover, this paper also sheds on light a common construct related to global Englishes, known as native speakerism. In implementing global Englishes, I believe that native speakerism is no longer relevant, especially for English teachers. Non-native English teachers, in fact, offer advantages which can enhance the process of English language teaching in multicultural settings.

Inclusion of Global Englishes in Language Instructions

English plays different but essential roles including social, economic, cultural, and political aspects with different social motivations for its use and learning (Widodo et al., 2017). Despite empirical studies revealing the view of English as more than just a language, many people still associate its importance with personal development. For instance, people want to pass standardized English tests (such as IELTS, TOEFL, or TOEIC), seek careers or education using English as the medium of communication, and visit foreign countries. This conception prompts the need of embracing the concept of global Englishes in language instructions.

Embracing global Englishes into language instruction needs to address various dimensions such as language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (Widodo & Fang, 2019). These dimensions are considered crucial in contemporary globalized language instructions. Changing existing language policies is challenging, which often results in hesitation to implement the concept of global Englishes in many curricula. Currently, the notion of integrating global Englishes into language instructions is supported by many practitioners with expertise in the field of global Englishes (D'Angelo, 2019; Xu, 2019). In this regard, it is expected that bottom-up policies will enhance the integration of global Englishes into language instruction within multilingual settings, with policies which recognize the importance of global Englishes. By promoting global Englishes through specific policies and curricula, broader implementation can be achieved.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to raise awareness among teachers and learners about the sociolinguistically flexible use of English for both non-native speakers and native speakers. In this case, incorporating global Englishes into language instructions reflects a linguistic

diversity in language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. Linguistic diversity refers to the representation of English usage by various speakers, regardless of their native status.

Within the pedagogy aspect, the theory of global Englishes cannot stand alone without its application in language pedagogy. Some experts have explored how to incorporate global Englishes into classrooms, such as global English language teaching (Galloway & Rose, 2018) and teaching pronunciation for intercultural communication (Fang, 2016). However, the implementation of global-English-oriented instructions depends on whether teachers possess knowledge regarding the pedagogical content, whether they are able to design a syllabus – which is both demanding and crucial – and whether they are willing to apply the notion of global Englishes in language instructions. Teachers are often aware of global Englishes, but they find it difficult to implement global Englishes-based language instructions. Since language materials influence how teachers and students engage directly with activities both inside and outside the classroom, it is crucial for teachers to design or develop materials based on the concept of global Englishes. In this context, teachers who are responsible for designing materials should consider several points: (1) using global Englishes as the guiding theory; (2) ensuring the authenticity of English usage across inner, outer, and expanding contexts; (3) incorporating topics related to global Englishes; (4) enhancing knowledge and awareness of global Englishes; (5) developing assessments based on global Englishes in various contexts; and (6) including tasks or activities that raise awareness of global Englishes. Moreover, teachers should also take into account their own and their students' prior knowledge and experiences. Introducing the concept of global Englishes to teachers and learners can thus be a cornerstone in implementing a curriculum and materials based on this approach.

The most significant gap in terms of global Englishes within English language education is in language assessment, as there are few studies focused on global Englishes-oriented assessment methods. Many assessment models still focus on English based on fixed native-speaker norms, ignoring the fact that English is spoken as a global language used for international as well as intercultural communication. Ideally, language assessment will become more aligned with global Englishes once language policies and curricula acknowledge their importance. However, international standardized tests, such as TOEFL, IELTS, and TOEIC, are considered slow to adapt to the evolving linguistic conditions. These tests often become one of the main requirements for students who want to study abroad. Despite recognition of the issue, research on assessment related to global Englishes is still limited, and native-speaker hegemony still dominate many English language teaching practices. For instance, many TOEFL and IELTS speaking sections employ native speakers who are not specialists in language assessment. These tests pose a dilemma, as they aim to measure English as an international language, but they still adhere to native-speaker standards. Although various objections have been made to move away from from native-speaker-oriented assessments, changes occur relatively slow, especially in the context of international standardized tests (Jenkins & Leung, 2019). In other words, it is fair to argue that while the theory of global Englishes is rapidly developing, its integration into language instruction and assessment is progressing slowly.

Promoting Values of Non-Native English Teachers in Multicultural Settings

A common construct that needs to be addressed in integrating global Englishes in language instructions is native speakerism. This construct sees native English speakers as the ones ideally representing the language, Western culture, and teaching approaches that negatively impacts English language teachers coming from non-English speaking countries (Lowe & Pinner, 2016). Native speakerism often prompts exclusions and creates unecessary label intended to classify English teachers as a professional community (Rose et al., 2022). The misconception of native English-speaking teachers representing a perfect English user and the marginalization of non-native English teachers are still considered prevalent in countries where English is not the first language.

Currently, many scholars raise objections against the idea stating that native-English speakers have better proficiency and skills in teaching English. Most of them argued against the unfounded notion that native English teachers are inherently better than non-native English teachers due to their birthplace. In this regard, the term "native speaker fallacy" is coined to refer to this phenomenon, claiming that the perceived superiority of native speakers is based on weak and unreliable argument (Phillipson, 1992). In fact, non-native English-speaking teachers potentially offer advantages including: (1) serving as better examples for learners, (2) using language instruction strategies more effectively, (3) offering more detailed knowledge about the target language, (4) anticipating language barriers, (5) being more compassionate and aware of learners background knowledge, and (6) using learners' first language in implementing English language instructions.

It is important to bear in mind that a good teacher viewed from their ability in facilitating teaching and learning process, regardless of the country of origin, which helps eliminate the division between native and non-native speakers. However, the debate about who makes the 'best' English teacher still exists. Non-native English teachers are frequetnly considered to be not as competent as native English teachers in both linguistic and pedagogical aspects, and this possibly leads to unfounded prejudice. Responding to the widespread of global Englishes, the requirements for a proper English teacher need to change from previous standards.

It is now widely accepted that being a native speaker, despite the fact it is advantageous, is not supposed to be regarded as the key factor in determining a good English teacher.

English language teachers must be able to show a significant level of language proficiency to effectively implement language instructions and provide a proficient English users (Renandya et al., 2018). The proficiency is derived from the concept of communicative competence which includes several aspects such as grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar rules, word formation, sentence structure, pronunciation, and spelling. It reflects the understanding how words are constructed and used correctly in sentences. Sociolinguistic competence involves understanding the social context in which language is used. It includes the ability to use language appropriately according to the setting, participants, and purpose of the interaction. This competence is about knowing how to vary your language use based on social factors, such as formality, politeness, and cultural norms. For instance, individuals with high sociolinguistic competence understand that the language used in a job interview differs from that used when teaching children. Lastly, strategic competence refers to the ability to use communication strategies effectively to overcome

difficulties and gaps in communication. These strategies help learners manage and navigate conversations, especially when they encounter problems due to limited language proficiency. Strategic competence involves both verbal and non-verbal tactics to ensure that communication is maintained even when there are breakdowns. Even with strong grammar and vocabulary knowledge, communication issues can arise, necessitating strategies such as paraphrasing, asking for repetition, and guessing to convey ideas. Different schools and countries have varying policies regarding the required level of teacher language competency. English language teacher candidates in Hong Kong, for instance, are required to have IELTS score of 7, while in Malaysia, English teacher must meet level C1 based on the (CEFR) (Renandya et al., 2018).

While language proficiency is crucial, it is not enough to be a good English teacher. An English teacher must also build awareness of the "variation in the use of English on a grammatical, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse level" (McKay, 2018, p. 4). It is also essential for English teachers to be aware of sociolinguistic competence, which involves using the language appropriately based on the contexts. Additionally, strategic competence is also significant because it helps facilitating communication by clarifying meaning or requesting further information when a teacher encounters difficulties in conveying meaning or when misunderstandings arise due to limited English knowledge or speakers' different cultures. Thus, sociolinguistic and strategic competencies are equally important for English teachers, and they cannot be separated from a teacher's overall language competence.

In addition to language proficiency, English teachers need to possess broad disciplinary and content knowledge. Disciplinary knowledge is regarded as a comprehensive understanding of the nature of language and language instructions, while pedagogical knowledge refers to practical teaching skills and methods applied by teachers for ensuring that the language instructions are relevant to contexts and implemented effectivel. In the era of English as a global language, teachers must be able to employ those types of knowledge to develop teaching approaches which address the needs of learners in diverse contexts of situation and culture. This requires teachers to thoroughly assess learners, formulate practical teaching objectives, determine the most effective and appropriate strategies to help students achieve these objectives, whether through specific tasks, pattern practice, or communicative exchange, and eventually, evaluate the students' progress in the process of the established objectives (Floris and Renandya, 2020).

English teachers within the conception of global Englishes must also adopt roles specific to English as an International Language (EIL) when instructing their students. Teachers should actively promote global Englishes multilingualism and multiculturalism, critical users or writers of textbooks, and critical users of teaching methodologies in implementing language instructions. These roles differ from those in the past due to the diverse learning contexts and various educational settings in which English is now taught, necessitating new concepts of appropriate teacher roles. Brown (2012, p. 151) asserts that there are at least several skills required by English teachers to implement global Englishes in language instructions effectively. These skills include (1) understanding learners' background of language and culture, (2) knowing the key elements which are essential for learner to acquire language, (3) showing an ability to use learners' native language to explain materials effectively, (4) being a role model of effective language learners, (5)

evaluating and adjusting teaching approaches and content knowledge to local conditions, and (6) understanding the expectations of stakeholders, administrators, and learners.

Conclusions

Embracing global Englishes into language instruction needs to address various dimensions such as language policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. It is expected that bottom-up policies will enhance the integration of global Englishes into language instruction within multilingual settings, with policies which recognize the importance of global Englishes. By promoting global Englishes through specific policies and curricula, broader implementation can be achieved. In addition, the curriculum also needs to reflect linguistic diversity which is concerned with the representation of English usage by various speakers, regardless of their native status. In terms of pedagogical aspect, the implementation of global-English-oriented instructions depends on whether teachers possess knowledge regarding the pedagogical content, whether they are able to design a syllabus, and whether they are willing to apply the notion of global Englishes in language instructions. In addition, many assessment models still focus on English based on fixed native-speaker standards, ignoring the fact that English is spoken as a global language used for international as well as intercultural communication. Ideally, language assessment will become more aligned with global Englishes once language policies and curricula acknowledge their importance.

Another way to succeed the integration of global Englishes in language instructions is to eliminate the paradigm of native speakerism. Despite the fact that native English teachers are seen to have better language proficiency, non-native English teacher should not be regarded inferior. A good English teacher should not be judged

by whether he/she is a native or non-native English speaker. A good English teacher should be evaluated based on their academic qualifications, professional competence, and experience. Support from English language teaching professionals and scholars is needed to actively challenge the unfounded conception. It may take a long process to acknowledge that qualified non-native English teachers can achieve the level of qualified native English teachers, but this process must be passed through.

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