

Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy: re-examining common ELT assumptions

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This article argues that the teaching of English as an international language (EIL) should be based on an entirely different set of assumptions than has typically informed English language teaching (ELT) pedagogy. To begin, several defining features of an international language are described. Because these features have altered the nature of English itself, the author maintains that the pedagogy for teaching English must also change. The author then describes how two developments – a dramatic increase in the number of second language speakers of English and a shift in the cultural basis of English – have significantly altered the nature of English. These changes challenge several common assumptions of ELT pedagogy, namely that: interest in learning of English is largely the result of linguistic imperialism; ELT research and pedagogy should be informed by native speaker models; the cultural content for ELT should be derived from the cultures of native English speakers; the culture of learning that informs communicative language teaching (CLT) provides the most productive method for ELT. The article ends by positing major assumptions that should inform a comprehensive theory of EIL pedagogy.

Introduction

Most people agree that today English is a global lingua franca. English has achieved this status not because of a growth in the number of native speakers but rather because of an increase in the number of individuals in the world today who believe it is to their benefit to acquire English as an additional language. This situation has resulted in a tremendous growth in the number of second language speakers of English. In fact, Graddol (1999), in a paper on the decline of the native speaker of English, argues that in the next 50 years

the balance between native and non-native speakers of English will shift significantly. He maintains that

based solely on expected population changes, the number of people using English as their second language will grow from 235 million to around 462 million during the next 50 years. This indicates that the balance between L1 and L2 speakers will critically change, with L2 speakers eventually overtaking L1 speakers. (Graddol 1999: 62)

The growing number of people in the world who have some familiarity with English allows English to act as a language of wider communication for a great variety of purposes, contributing to its status as a global lingua franca. In the process of achieving this status, the very nature of English has changed in terms of how many of its speakers make use of English and how English relates to culture. In order to develop an appropriate pedagogy for EIL, it is essential to examine the nature of these changes.

Features of English as an international language

Brutt-Griffler (2002) argues convincingly that one of the central features of any international language is that it spreads not through speaker migration but rather by many individuals in an existing speech community acquiring the language, what Brutt-Griffler terms 'macroacquisition'. Although the initial spread of English was clearly due to speaker migration, resulting in the development of largely monolingual English-speaking communities (e.g. the United States, Australia, and New Zealand), the current spread of English is, as Graddol's projection demonstrates, due to individuals acquiring English as an additional language for international and in some contexts intranational communication. However, unlike speaker migration, this type of language spread results not in monolingualism but rather in large-scale bilingualism.

The fact that the spread of English today is primarily due to macroacquisition has several important implications for EIL pedagogy. First, it suggests that many learners of English today will have specific purposes in learning English which in general are more limited than those of immigrants to English-speaking countries, who may eventually use English as their sole or dominant language. Second, many learners of English will be using English in multilingual contexts, with English serving designated purposes in their linguistic repertoire. Finally, many current learners of English may desire to learn English in order to share with others information about their own countries for such purposes as encouraging economic development, promoting trade and tourism, and contributing to international scholarly exchanges. Such purposes for learning and using English undermine the traditional relationship that has existed between culture and the learning of English, in which the teaching of English has often involved learning about the concerns and cultures of what Kachru (1985) terms Inner Circle countries.

This shift in the relationship between EIL and culture was recognized quite early by Smith (1976), who in his discussion of an international language posits several assumptions regarding the relationship of an international language and culture. Among these assumptions are that

- a) learners of an international language do not need to internalize the cultural norms of native speakers of that language,
- b) the ownership of an international language becomes “de-nationalized”, and
- c) the educational goal of learning an international language is to enable learners to communicate their ideas and culture to others.

Subsequent investigations of the development of English as an international language have resulted in an important modification of this perspective. Kachru (1985) and others (e.g. Lowenberg 1986; Sridhar & Sridhar 1994) have argued convincingly that, especially in contexts in which English has official status, the ownership of English has become not de-nationalized but rather re-nationalized in the sense that these speakers of English have taken ownership of the language, creating new ways of using English on a phonological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic level.

The fact that English presently is an international language being learned by more and more individuals as an additional language often to communicate information about their own cultures in order to participate in a global community challenges several common assumptions of ELT pedagogy. Among them are the following:

- Interest in learning English is largely the result of linguistic imperialism.
- ELT research and pedagogy should be informed by native speaker models.
- The cultural content for ELT should be derived from the cultures of native English speakers.
- The culture of learning that informs communicative language teaching (CLT) provides the most productive method for ELT.

All of these assumptions are based on the notion that English must be linked to the cultures of Inner Circle countries and be based on native speaker models. In what follows I will examine each of these assumptions with reference to the current status of EIL. Throughout this article I will maintain that the increasing number of bilingual users of English and the de-linking of English from Inner Circle countries warrant a new pedagogy.

I will use the term ‘bilingual users of English’ here to describe individuals who use English as a second language alongside one or more other languages they speak. Although Jenkins (2000) includes both native and non-native speakers in her use of the term ‘bilingual English speaker’, in my use of the term, I am excluding so-called native speakers of English who speak other languages. I do so because the domains of use of English for most native speakers tend to be

quite different from those of other bilingual users of English, who frequently use English in more restricted and formal domains.

Jenkins also distinguishes bilingual English speakers from ‘non-bilingual English speakers’. The latter term is used to describe those individuals with limited English proficiency whose English has “progressed to the level at which it serves their particular international communicative need” (Jenkins 2000: 10). Because there is a broad continuum in English language proficiency, making it difficult to draw a clear line between the two terms, I will use the term ‘bilingual users of English’ to describe a wide range of English proficiency. However, I fully recognize that there is a tremendous cline in language ability among bilingual English speakers, with some speaking English like native speakers and others having limited English proficiency that meets their particular communicative needs. I will also make use of Kachru’s (1985) useful distinction of Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle countries, though like Yano (2001) and Gupta (2001), I recognize the limitations of these terms.

English learning and linguistic imperialism

To begin, it is beneficial to examine why many individuals today are choosing to learn English so that pedagogical objectives and approaches can be designed to meet their needs. Some contend that one of the major reasons for the present-day interest in learning English is the extensive promotion of English by Inner Circle countries. One of the major exponents of this view is Phillipson, who in his book *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992) describes the spread of English as a post-colonial endeavor of core English-speaking countries to maintain dominance over periphery (in many cases developing) countries. He coins the term ‘linguistic imperialism’ to describe a situation in which “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (p. 47).

However, to assume that the active promotion of English is the primary cause of the current interest of many to learn English as an additional language is to oversimplify the complexity of the spread of English. Many individuals learn English not because English is promoted by English-speaking countries, but rather because these individuals want access to scientific and technological information, international organizations, global economic trade, and higher education. Knowing English makes such access possible. Indeed Kachru, in a book entitled *The Alchemy of English* (1986), contends that “knowing English is like possessing the fabled Aladdin’s lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates to international business, technology, science and travel. In short, English provides linguistic power” (p. 1).

There is a variety of evidence to suggest that the current interest in English learning is being fueled by a belief in the power of English. Chew (1999), for

example, argues that the learning of English in Singapore is the conscious choice of Singaporeans who view the use of English as key to their economic survival. She points out that whereas some Singaporeans are concerned that the widespread adoption of English will lead to a loss of ethnic identity and Asian values, many Singaporeans value the material and other rewards that English can bring. As she puts it, among parents there has been a pragmatic realization that their children's

lack of a command in English would mean the continued marginalisation of their children in a world that would continue to use the language to a greater degree. It would also deny them access to the extensive resources available in English – resources which have developed as a consequence of globalisation. (Chew 1999: 41)

Bisong specifically challenges Phillipson's theory of linguistic imperialism as it relates to his own country, Nigeria. He notes that at present many Nigerian parents send their children to an international school in which they are sure their children will learn English. However, Bisong maintains that it is important to consider why a parent would make such a decision. For Bisong, a parent does so not because of coercion but rather

does so in the secure belief that her child's mother tongue or first language is not in any way threatened. There is no way three or four hours of exposure to English in a formal school situation could possibly compete with, let alone threaten to supplant, the non-stop process of acquiring competence in the mother tongue. (Bisong 1995: 125)

Bisong concludes by pointing out that Nigerians learn English for pragmatic reasons and that Nigerians are

sophisticated enough to know what is in their interest, and that their interest includes the ability to operate with two or more linguistic codes in a multilingual situation. Phillipson's argument shows a failure to appreciate fully the complexities of this situation. (p. 131)

Thus, many language learners today are studying English not because they are being coerced to do so by speakers of Inner Circle countries, but rather because of the benefits knowledge of English brings. An effective EIL pedagogy, then, must consider the specific goals that lead learners to study English and not assume that these goals necessarily involve attaining full proficiency in the language.

Native speaker models and English learning goals

It has generally been assumed that the ultimate goal of English language learners is to achieve nativelike competence in the language. Stern (1983: 341),

for example, maintains that “native speaker’s ‘competence,’ ‘proficiency’ or ‘knowledge of the language’ is a necessary point of reference for the second language proficiency concept used in English teaching theory”. Yet as more and more users of English come to use English alongside one or more other languages, their use of English will be significantly different from monolingual speakers of English. Because bilingual speakers of English frequently have different purposes in using English than do monolingual speakers, it is unwarranted to assume that bilingual speakers necessarily want or need to attain nativelike competence. However, as Cook (1999: 189) notes,

SLA research has often fallen into the *comparative fallacy* (Bley-Vroman, 1983) of relating the L2 learner to the native speaker. This tendency is reflected in the frequency with which the words *succeed* and *fail* are associated with the phrase *native speaker*, for example, the view that fossilisation and errors in L2 users’ speech add up to ‘failure to achieve native-speaker competence’.

Sridhar and Sridhar (1994) provide an excellent critique of traditional SLA teaching and research assumptions with regard to bilingual users of English outside of Inner Circle countries. They contend that much SLA theory is not relevant to an investigation of these speakers because it often rests on assumptions that were developed and tested with reference to the learning of English and European languages in the United States, with little input from the learning of English outside of Inner Circle countries. The first assumption is that the learner’s target of acquisition of English is nativelike competence. However, as Sridhar and Sridhar (1994: 45) point out, many studies of ‘indigenized varieties of English’ (e.g. Indian English, Nigerian English, Singaporean English) clearly demonstrate that a variety of English that is too closely aligned with a native standard can be seen by speakers in the local speech community to be “distasteful and pedantic” and “affected or even snob-bish”. As such, many learners of English do not want and may even reject a nativelike target.

A second assumption that underlies much SLA theory and pedagogy is that the input learners have available is extensive and intensive enough that learners can acquire nativelike competence. Yet for many language learners in the Outer and Expanding Circle, the nature of the English language input they receive is restricted in amount and quality. Often the learner is not exposed to a full range of styles, structures, and speech acts that supposedly is necessary to acquire nativelike proficiency, whatever that may be; instead “he or she gets exposed to a subset of registers, styles, speech event types – mainly academic, bureaucratic, and literary” (Sridhar & Sridhar 1994: 46–7).

A final and perhaps the most serious problem with much SLA theory and pedagogy is that the process of acquisition is not viewed with reference to the functions that English serves within the local community. As was pointed out

earlier, most bilingual users of English outside of Inner Circle countries use English alongside other languages they speak. In some cases English serves primarily as a High variety or formal register with respect to the other languages of the speech community. Hence, English does not serve all of the functions it might serve for learners in the Inner Circle who, in many cases, learn English as a replacement for their first language. This means that the language-learning goals of many current users of English are far more limited than the goals of those who learn English as a result of speaker migration.

As Sridhar and Sridhar (1994: 42) point out, the lack of applicability of many assumptions underlying current SLA theory and pedagogy is particularly disturbing in light of the fact that English learners outside of the Inner Circle “numerically as well as in terms of the range and diversity of variables they represent, constitute one of the most significant segments of second language acquirers in the world today”. Because of the growing number of such users, the varied uses of English among bilingual speakers of English in multilingual contexts is one that warrants a good deal more research so that an appropriate pedagogy for such learners can be designed.

To productively undertake such research, the prevalent assumption that the goal of English language learning is to achieve nativelike competence in English must be put aside. It is important to do so for two reasons. First, if – as more and more linguists are recognizing (see, for example, Cook 1999; Davies 1991; Rampton 1990) – the whole notion of defining a native speaker and native speaker competence is fraught with difficulty, it is unreasonable to take such a poorly defined construct as the basis for research and pedagogy in SLA. Secondly, an approach to SLA research that is based on the notion that all learners of English need or desire so-called native speaker competence will do little to contribute to a better understanding of the various ways English is used within multilingual contexts for intranational and international purposes. What, for example, are the functions that English serves within particular Outer Circle countries? How does English fit into the overall linguistic repertoire of bilingual users of these countries? In what contexts does English serve as the unmarked code? How is the use of English within these countries related to educational level, economic status, and ethnic background? In addition, far more research is needed on how English is used as a language of wider communication between individuals who use English as their second language. What strategies do such individuals use in repairing problems in comprehensibility? What does the use of English in such contexts suggest for linguistic standards and pronunciation models? (See Seidlhofer 2001 for a persuasive argument on the need for such research.)

Clearly, teaching English as an international language requires that researchers and educators thoroughly examine individual learner’s specific uses of English within their particular speech community as a basis for determining learning goals and set aside the native speaker fallacy whereby bilingual speakers of English, both in research and pedagogy, are constantly compared with native

speaker models. The comparison of bilingual users of English with native speaker models also needs to be challenged with reference to language teachers. To demonstrate the serious repercussions of applying native speaker models to language teachers, I turn now to an examination of bilingual teachers of English.

Native speaker models and teachers of English

The spread of English has brought with it a tremendous demand for more teachers of English, a demand that simply cannot be met by English speakers from Inner Circle countries. In fact, today 80% of English language teaching professionals worldwide are bilingual users of English (Canagarajah 1999). Whereas the vast majority of English teachers today are bilinguals, the comparative fallacy applied to so-called non-native English-speaking teaching professionals versus native speakers is widespread. Just as it is unreasonable to take such a poorly defined construct of the native speaker as the basis for SLA theory and pedagogy, it is unwarranted to take this construct as the basis for judging pedagogic expertise.

One of the most unfortunate repercussions of the acceptance of the native speaker fallacy with reference to language teaching is the positioning of bilingual users of English in the ELT job market. Invariably, in hiring practices it is the native speaker that is given preference. Govardhan, Nayar and Sheorey (1999), for example, found that in their survey of ads for teaching English abroad, the main and perhaps only common requirement was being a native or natively-like speaker of English. Many private language institutes find that they can charge more if they advertise that they have native English speakers as teachers. Hence, in many English teaching institutions around the world, the so-called native speaker of English is given preference in hiring. Such a perspective places the bilingual teacher of English at a severe disadvantage in the job market. Liu (1999), for example, in his research on the bilingual professional in TESOL, notes that all of the people he interviewed had experienced discrimination in hiring practices.

An acceptance of the native speaker fallacy with reference to language teaching also frequently reinforces a narrow definition of expertise in language teaching, one in which a great deal of prestige is given to natively-like pronunciation and intuition. As Canagarajah (1999: 84–5) notes:

Many Periphery professionals feel compelled to spend undue time repairing their pronunciation or performing other cosmetic changes to sound native. Their predominant concern is in effect “How can I lose my accent?” rather than “How can I be a successful teacher?” The anxiety and inhibitions about their pronunciation can make them lose their grip on the instructional process or lack rapport with their students.

However, pronunciation is not the only factor that can lead bilingual English teachers to experience a good deal of insecurity in their own abilities. Tang (1997), for example, reports on a survey she conducted in a teacher retraining course in Hong Kong in which she asked local teachers about their perceptions of the proficiency of native- and non-native-speaking teachers of English. A very high percentage of the teachers believed that native English-speaking teachers were superior to non-native English-speaking teachers in speaking (100%), pronunciation (92%), listening (87%), vocabulary (79%) and reading (72%). Seidlhofer (1999), in her survey of English teachers in Austria, found that a majority (57%) of the respondents stated that being a non-native speaker of English made them feel insecure.

It is encouraging, however, that more and more educators today are challenging the native speaker fallacy and pointing out the many strengths of competent teachers of English who share a first language with their students and have gone through the process of learning English as an additional language. Medgyes, for example, while arguing that bilingual users of English can never achieve nativelike competence, nonetheless maintains that bilingual teachers (what he terms 'non-native English-speaking teachers' or 'non-NESTs') have the following advantages as teachers:

- a. Only non-NESTs can serve as imitable models of the successful learner of English . . .
 - b. Non-NESTs can teach learning strategies more effectively . . .
 - c. Non-NESTs can provide learners with more information about the English language . . .
 - d. Non-NESTs are more able to anticipate language difficulties . . .
 - e. Non-NESTs can be more empathetic to the needs and problems of their learners . . .
 - f. Only non-NESTs can benefit from sharing the learners' mother tongue . . .
- (Medgyes 1992: 346–7)

Although it is encouraging that Medgyes emphasizes the strengths of bilingual teachers of English, his discussion is highly problematic in that it, too, rests on an acceptance of a native speaker fallacy in which bilingual teachers are compared with so-called native speakers. Such an approach is not productive in examining the benefits of bilingualism and biculturalism in the teaching of EIL. Bilingual teachers in Outer Circle countries, for example, are aware of how English fits into the linguistic repertoire of their students. They are familiar with the different varieties of English spoken within the country and where these varieties are appropriately used. They also possess an understanding of the local culture, knowledge that is crucial in the teaching of EIL, where, as was pointed out earlier, the purpose of acquiring the language is frequently to communicate local cultural knowledge to others. Only when the native speaker fallacy is put aside can a full exploration of such strengths of bilingual teachers be undertaken.

Native speaker models and culture in language teaching

The role of culture in language teaching is another area of ELT pedagogy that reflects a native speaker model, an approach that once again needs to be reassessed with reference to the teaching of EIL. Culture plays a significant role in language pedagogy in at least two ways. First, cultural knowledge often provides the basis for the content and topics that are used in language materials and classroom discussions. Secondly, pragmatic standards are frequently based on particular cultural models. Which culture to use in both these areas of language teaching needs to be carefully considered with reference to the teaching of an international language.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999: 204–5) distinguish three types of cultural information that can be used in language textbooks and materials:

- *source culture materials* that draw on the learners' own culture as content,
- *target culture materials* that use the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language, and
- *international target culture materials* that use a great variety of cultures in English- and non-English-speaking countries around the world.

Traditionally, many English language textbooks have used target culture topics. Frequently ELT textbooks use such content because textbooks are often published in Inner Circle countries and because some ELT educators believe such information will be motivating to English language learners. Whereas it is possible that target cultural content is motivating to some students, it is also quite possible that such content may be largely irrelevant, uninteresting, or even confusing for students. Furthermore, if one of the primary reasons for learners to acquire English today is to provide information to others about their own community and culture, there seems little reason to promote target cultural content in the English language classroom, particularly when such content can result in bilingual teachers of English feeling insecure because they lack specific knowledge about particular target cultures. (For a more extended discussion of the problems that can arise in using the target culture in EIL pedagogy, see McKay 2002.)

The advantage of using what Cortazzi and Jin call 'source culture' is that such content provides students with an opportunity to learn more about their own culture and to learn the language needed to explain these cultural elements in English. Such a situation also places local bilingual teachers in a position in which they can explain particular cultural events or cultural behavior to students who may not be familiar with that particular aspect of the culture. It is encouraging to note that today, in a variety of countries in which English is being studied as an additional language, there is a growing recognition of the importance of including the source culture. In the early 1990s, for example, the Moroccan Ministry of Education implemented a textbook project in which Moroccan culture formed the basis for textbook content rather than target culture

information. (See Adaskou, Britten & Fahsi 1990 for a description of this project.) More recently, Chile has developed an entire series of textbooks, entitled *Go For Chile*, that includes a good deal of source culture content. (See McKay in press for a description of this project.)

There are also many advantages to using what Cortazzi and Jin refer to as an international target culture. Imagine a text in which bilingual users of English interact with other speakers of English in cross-cultural encounters for a variety of purposes. Such materials could have several benefits. They could exemplify the manner in which English is effectively being used by bilingual users of English to communicate with others for international purposes. They could include examples of lexical, grammatical, and phonological variation in the present-day use of English. They could also illustrate cross-cultural pragmatics in which bilingual users of English, while using English, nevertheless, draw on their own rules of appropriateness. They could then provide a basis for students to gain a fuller understanding of how English today serves a great variety of international purposes in a broad range of contexts. There are clearly many advantages to reducing the focus on target cultures in teaching materials, as is evident in the current shift in some countries to do precisely that; furthermore, making such changes is relatively straightforward. However, culture as it relates to pragmatic appropriateness is more problematic.

The teaching of pragmatic appropriateness is frequently based once again on the assumption that the goal of the bilingual users of English is to achieve nativelike competence. Cohen (1996), for example, refers to the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989) that compared the speech-act behavior of native speakers of a variety of languages with the behavior of learners of those languages. For Cohen, the value of such studies is that they provide teachers and researchers with important information on how native speakers perform certain speech acts. In Cohen's view, this information should be used as a baseline to determine what should be done in language instruction. As he puts it:

Once descriptions of the speech acts are made available, the next task is to determine the degree of control that learners have over those speech acts . . . Ideally, this information could then be used to prepare a course of instruction that would fill in the gaps in language knowledge and also give tips on strategies that might be useful for producing utterances. The role of the learners is to notice similarities and differences between the way native speakers perform such acts and the way they do. (Cohen 1996: 412)

A variety of problems exist in applying a native speaker model, as Cohen does, to the development of pragmatic competence in English language teaching. Kasper (1997) points out several problems with this approach. First, the so-called native speaker is not a homogeneous group. Even individuals within the same country and sharing to some extent a common culture can have different standards of pragmatic appropriateness. Second, attempting to

achieve nativelike pragmatic competence, even if it were desirable, may not be a feasible goal for adult learners of English since it may be that, like phonology and syntax, there are maturational constraints on acquiring nativelike fluency.

Third, in some cases English language learners may lack the quality and quantity of contact with the second language that would give them the necessary input and occasions for gaining pragmatic competence. Whereas the problem of a lack of L2 input may be true for some English language learners, this is not the case in many Outer Circle countries where English may be widely used on a daily basis. In such circumstances, frequently there are pragmatic rules that inform appropriate language use for particular contexts, ones often not in keeping with so-called native speaker rules. Sridhar (1996), for example, reports in her study of requests within an Indian context that her subjects had a high level of agreement as to what would be pragmatically appropriate language use in particular contexts. For example, when asked to describe how they would ask a friend's mother for water if they were at their friend's home and very thirsty, many of her subjects indicated that they would wait for their friend to come back, or if they did ask the mother they would not use English but a combination of English and the mother tongue. In other words, there are pragmatic rules that inform the appropriateness of interactions in many countries where English plays a significant role. Hence, in such countries, bilingual users of English need not look to native speakers to develop pragmatic competence for the appropriate use of English within their own country.

Another problem that exists in applying a native speaker model to the development of pragmatic competence is that from the L2 learners' perspective there may be aspects of the way in which a particular speech act is expressed in a target culture that conflict with their own sense of appropriateness. Sridhar (1996), for example, found that often Indian speakers, when making requests in English within India, used forms that would be considered overly polite by native speaker judges. Finally, for Kasper, a native speaker model is often not appropriate since the use of nativelike pragmatic competence by bilingual users of English may be viewed by some native speakers in the target culture negatively. In fact, some studies suggest that there may be benefits to not conforming to native speaker pragmatics in cross-cultural encounters.

Aston (1993), for example, suggests that not having nativelike competence may be a means of establishing friendly relationships or what he terms *comity* between people of different cultures. He points out that there are a variety of grounds on which individuals can establish solidarity and support in cross-cultural contexts. In order to achieve solidarity and support, Aston contends that individuals have to focus on their identities as individuals rather than as representatives of members of their culture of origins. If this is done, then individuals in cross-cultural encounters might achieve comity by, for example, expressing a critical stance toward their own country or exploiting their own incompetence in either the language or specific areas of knowledge. For Aston (1993: 245), the potential to establish comity in cross-cultural encounters

supports the argument that interlanguage pragmatics should operate with a difference hypothesis rather than a deficit hypothesis . . . and not simply analyze NNS [non-native speaker] discourse in terms of failure to conform to NS [native speaker] conversational norms. Pedagogically, it implies that the learner's task in developing an ability for interactional speech using the L2 is not simply one of acquiring nativelike sociolinguistic competence in the attempt to mimic the behavior of a native speaker, but requires the development of an ability to use specific comity strategies appropriate to the context of NNS discourse.

Ultimately, then, with reference to both cultural content and pragmatic standards, there are many reasons for putting aside the traditional pedagogical approach of employing native speaker models. Chief among these is that, as an international language, English belongs to its users, and as such it is the users' cultural content and their sense of the appropriate use of English that should inform language pedagogy.

Native speaker models and communicative language teaching

Another area of English language pedagogy that has been influenced by a tendency to rely on native speaker models is language methodology. The literature on ELT methodology is filled with characterizations of what Cortazzi and Jin (1996) refer to as the 'culture of learning' of a particular country. Typically, such discussions provide generalizations regarding the typical roles of teachers and students, as well as the nature of learning, and reflect a view of culture in which a particular culture is seen as a homogenous entity related to a specific geographical region. China is one country for which there exist many such descriptions of the culture of learning. Cortazzi and Jin (1996), for instance, maintain that Chinese children are socialized into a culture of learning in which there is a strong emphasis on memory, imitation, and repetitive practice.

Frequently descriptions of a particular culture of learning also include a comparison of the culture with Western cultures of learning. Cortazzi and Jin (1996) compare how Chinese students view certain aspects of student behavior in contrast with how Western teachers perceive them. For example, they maintain that while Western teachers view volunteering in class as showing strong interest and activity on the part of the students, Chinese students often view this as showing off and preventing teacher talk. Many Western teachers view group discussion as useful interaction and student-centered learning; however, many Chinese students view it as a fruitless activity that should be replaced by the teacher giving facts and generalizations.

Flowerdew (1995) contrasts Chinese and Western approaches to academic lectures, maintaining that the differences that exist are due to Confucian as opposed to Western values. What is particularly disturbing in his comparison is that the terms 'Confucianism' and 'Westernism' are accepted as legitimate labels rather than as labels that need to be examined and problematized. He summarizes these differences in Table 1 (Flowerdew 1995: 348):

Table 1. *Confucian and Western values as they relate to academic lectures*

Confucian	Western
Respect for authority of lecturer	Lecturer valued as guide and facilitator
Lecturer should not be questioned	Lecturer is open to challenge
Student motivated by family and pressure to excel	Student motivated by desire for individual development
Positive value placed on effacement and silence	Positive value placed on self-expression of ideas
Emphasis on group orientation to learning	Emphasis on individual development and creativity in learning

Such descriptions of cultures of learning raise several problems. First, they mask the diversity that exists within any culture. National identities are not monolithic entities; rather they differ by age, social class, and region. Second, in many instances characteristics that are attributed to a particular culture of learning are not supported by studies based on extensive classroom observation. Kubota (1999), for example, points out that a large body of research on Japanese primary schools shows that the Japanese preschool and elementary curriculum does indeed promote creativity, original thinking, and self-expression. These findings clearly undermine the stereotypical images of Japanese education that includes only mechanical learning and a lack of individualism, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Third, and most important in the teaching of an international language, is that such characterizations of cultures of learning often contrast a particular culture of learning with Western cultures, resulting in ideas of otherness and foreignness. Kubota (1999: 16) argues that “labels that symbolize a cultural dichotomy serve to create and perpetuate, rather than reflect cultural difference”. She maintains that this “construction of Otherness is part of the colonial discourse” in which colonizers construct an artificial view of the “Other as being what the colonizer is not, as having negative qualities such as backwardness, opacity, and a lack of reason, constituting a depersonalized collectivity” (pp. 16–7).

Although no one would deny that cultural differences do exist, Kubota believes it is essential that describing cultural differences is not viewed as an end in itself; rather, educators must seek to understand how “difference is produced, legitimated, and eliminated within unequal relations of power” (Kubota 1999: 27). Unfortunately, a discourse of otherness in which particular cultures of learning are depicted as less productive than others underlies much of the discussion of what is referred to as communicative language teaching (CLT). In these discussions, CLT is often viewed as the ideal methodology for English language teaching; at the same time, some argue that CLT, while the most productive method, is not feasible in many countries because the local culture

of learning tends to promote mechanical learning and a lack of individualism and creative thinking.

Today many educators, particularly Inner Circle educators, contend that CLT is and should be the dominant method in ELT. Brown (1994), for example, maintains that the generally accepted norm in the field in terms of methodology is CLT. He notes, however, that although CLT is generally accepted, there are numerous ways in which it is defined. Nunan (1991: 279), for instance, maintains that CLT can be characterized by the following features:

- 1) An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- 2) The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- 3) The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.
- 4) An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- 5) An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside of the classroom.

CLT has been largely promoted in ELT in Inner Circle countries and in private English language institutes in Outer and Expanding Circle countries. In using this method, typically a great premium is placed on using group work to develop students' spoken English.

The fact that CLT has been defined in such diverse ways suggests that it does not conform to the traditional definition of a method, namely, a specification of the form and function of instructional materials. Rather CLT is more in keeping with what Richards and Rodgers (1985) term an 'approach', namely assumptions and beliefs about the nature of language and language learning. If CLT is viewed as an approach, it is clear that some of its assumptions are not appropriate for the teaching of EIL, particularly its reliance on native speaker models to inform a definition of authentic materials and cultural appropriateness. On the other hand, CLT's emphasis on actual language use, meaningful tasks, and learners' personal experiences could well be productively applied to the teaching of EIL.

What has led to the widespread promotion of CLT as the most productive method for teaching English? Tollefson (1991) suggests one reason. He argues that the spread of English is linked to what he terms *modernization theory*. According to this theory, "Western societies provide the most effective model for 'underdeveloped' societies attempting to reproduce the achievements of 'industrialization'" (p. 83). As applied to ELT teaching, in modernization theory "Western 'experts' . . . are viewed as repositories of knowledge and skills who pass them on to elites who will run 'modernized' institutions" (p. 97).

Whereas modernization theory may well be one factor that has led to the spread of CLT, such a view hides the complexity of the issue. Just as the idea of linguistic imperialism can be challenged on the grounds that in many countries

English has spread because there is tremendous interest on the part of the people of that country to learn English, so too in many cases CLT has spread not only because of the promotion of the method by Western specialists but also because educators in these countries have advocated the adoption of this method.

Japan is a case in point. In 1989 and 1990, the Japanese Ministry of Education released new guidelines for the study of foreign languages in junior and senior high schools. According to LoCastro (1996), one of the primary aims of the new curriculum was to require teachers to promote speaking and listening skills as a way of developing the communicative language ability of the students. Furthermore, teachers were to strive to adopt CLT methods in their classrooms. Korea is another country that is encouraging the use of CLT. Convinced that the grammatical syllabus does not develop students' communicative competence, in 1992 the Korean Ministry of Education published a new curriculum which clearly states that CLT should replace the audiolingual and translation methods currently used in the schools.

The above discussion demonstrates that just as the Inner Circle is often looked to for target models of language use, it is also frequently looked to for methodology models. Whereas this dependency on the Inner Circle for methodology models may in part be due to a type of pedagogical imperialism on the part of Inner Circle educators, there is no question that, just as with the spread of English, an equally important factor in the spread of CLT has been its conscious selection on the part of local educators. The widespread acceptance of CLT, however, has not gone unchallenged.

For example, Medgyes, a Hungarian teacher educator, has various concerns about the implementation of CLT in his country, even though he has publicly advocated the method in teacher education courses. His primary concern is the burden CLT places on teachers. To begin, teachers of CLT are encouraged to base the syllabus on students' needs and interests. Yet, as Medgyes (1986) points out, most Hungarian students, like many EFL students, study English for no obvious reason other than because they are required to do so. Hence, teachers face a group of students who often have very little motivation or interest to use English and uncertain needs for English in the future. Teachers are also asked to develop authentic communicative situations where real messages are exchanged. Hence, "teachers have to create favourable conditions for such needs to arise and get expressed" (p. 108). Creating such a context is, of course, particularly difficult in EFL classes in which students would naturally use their mother tongue to communicate in so-called real interactions. In addition, in CLT the textbook is suspect. Hence, teachers are asked to do away with the textbooks and substitute it with a "wide stock of flexible and authentic 'supplementary' material" (p. 110), an extremely difficult task to undertake in countries in which there is not a wealth of readily available English texts.

Given these difficulties in implementing CLT in Hungary, Medgyes (1986) asks who would possibly attempt to implement the method. He contends that perhaps the only teachers who would do this are the elite who have had the opportunity to exchange ideas at conferences and "on arriving home, they feel

obliged to promulgate all the trendy thoughts they have picked up, never doubting that their message is true and will reach the general public" (p. 111). Often such conferences are held in Inner Circle countries, providing a further impetus for the spread of predominant methods of Inner Circle countries to other contexts. In the end, he believes that what is needed are educators who work halfway between "the zealots and the weary" (p. 112), local educators who are well aware of the complexities of teaching English in the local context.

Indeed, since EIL by definition no longer belongs to any one nation or culture, it seems reasonable that how this language is taught should not be linked to a particular culturally influenced methodology; rather, the language should be taught in a manner consistent with local cultural expectations. In short, an appropriate EIL methodology presupposes sensitivity to the local cultural context in which local educators determine what happens in the classroom. As Kramsch and Sullivan (1996: 211) put it,

appropriate pedagogy must also be a pedagogy of appropriation. The English language will enable students of English to do business with native and non-native speakers of English in the global world market and for that they need to master the grammar and vocabulary of standard English. But they also need to retain control of its use.

For Kramsch and Sullivan, such a view of an appropriate pedagogy is in keeping with the political motto "think globally, act locally", which translated into a language pedagogy might be "global thinking, local teaching" (p. 200). This motto is particularly important for the teaching of EIL. Clearly, EIL educators today need to recognize the use of English as a global language, where English is used for a wide variety of cross-cultural communicative purposes. Yet in developing an appropriate pedagogy, EIL educators also need to consider how English is embedded in the local context.

The promotion of CLT has been fueled by the tendency to extend so-called Center assumptions of English language learning to other countries. Unfortunately, the prevalent assumption that CLT is the best method for the teaching of EIL has several negative effects. It often requires students to become involved in language activities that challenge their notion of appropriate language behavior in a classroom. Its emphasis on an English-only classroom can undermine the productive use of the mother tongue in the learning of English, which is particularly problematic in an era when English is being learned primarily in bilingual classrooms. Most importantly, it can marginalize local teachers who at times are asked to implement a methodology that may be in conflict with their own sense of plausibility. Clearly the first step toward an appropriate methodology must be for local educators, as Kramsch and Sullivan argue, to be involved in a "pedagogy of appropriation" in which they retain control of the teaching of English. As Canagarajah (1999: 90–1) argues:

If English teaching in Periphery communities is to be conducted in a socially responsible and politically empowering manner, the authority for conceiving and implementing the curriculum and pedagogy should be passed on to the local teachers themselves.

Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy

The teaching of EIL takes place in a great diversity of contexts. In some countries, like Singapore, English is the medium of instruction. In other countries, e.g. Jamaica, students bring to the classroom their own distinct variety of English. In still other countries, like Japan, the learning of English in public schools is promoted through national examinations. In addition, within each country, great diversity exists so that the teaching of English in, for example, public versus private institutions and urban versus rural institutions tends to be quite different. Clearly, any sound pedagogy for teaching EIL must be informed by a theory of language learning and teaching that is sufficiently complex to account for this diversity. However, in closing, let me suggest some of the assumptions that need to inform a more comprehensive theory of the teaching and learning of EIL.

Throughout this article, I have argued that the development of English as a global lingua franca has altered the very nature of English in terms of how it is used by its speakers and how it relates to culture. As was pointed out earlier, the current spread of English is largely the result of macroacquisition, leading to more and more bilingual users of English. The growing number of bilingual users of English suggests that a productive theory of EIL teaching and learning must recognize the various ways in which English is used within multilingual communities. Typically these bilingual users of English have specific purposes for using English, employing their other languages to serve their many additional language needs. Often they use English to access the vast amount of information currently available in English and at times to contribute to this knowledge base. One purpose they all share, however, is to use English as a language of wider communication, resulting in cross-cultural encounters being a central feature of the use of EIL. Hence, one of the major assumptions that needs to inform the teaching of EIL is a recognition of the diverse ways in which bilingual speakers make use of English to fulfill their specific purposes.

The second major assumption that needs to inform the teaching of EIL is that many bilingual users of English do not need or want to acquire nativelylike competence. Such an assumption, of course, presupposes that there is some agreement as to what constitutes a native speaker, although this is clearly not the case. Nevertheless, current theories of second language acquisition and pedagogy frequently posit that the goal of most learners of English is to develop native speaker grammatical standards, phonological patterns, and discourse competence. There are, however, several reasons why many current bilingual users of English may not see this as their goal. First of all, on a practical level they may not need to acquire the full range of registers that is needed by monolingual speakers of English since their use of English may be restricted to largely formal domains of use. Secondly, there are attitudinal reasons why they may not want to acquire nativelylike competence, particularly with reference to pronunciation and pragmatics. Third, if, as I have argued throughout this article, English as an international language belongs to its users, there is no

reason why some speakers of English should be more privileged and thus provide standards for other users of English.

The final assumption that needs to inform a comprehensive EIL pedagogy is a recognition of the fact that English no longer belongs to any one culture, and hence there is a need to be culturally sensitive to the diversity of contexts in which English is taught and used. In terms of materials, this suggests that the traditional use of Western cultural content in ELT texts needs to be examined. There are clear advantages to the use of source culture content. Such content minimizes the potential of marginalizing the values and lived experiences of the learners. Source culture content can also encourage learners to gain a deeper understanding of their own culture so that they can share these insights when using EIL with individuals from different cultures. Perhaps most significantly, source culture content does not place local teachers in the difficult position of trying to teach someone else's culture.

The de-linking of English from the culture of Inner Circle countries also suggests that teaching methodology has to proceed in a manner that respects the local culture of learning. An understanding of these cultures of learning should not be based on cultural stereotypes, in which assertions about the roles of teachers and students and approaches to learning are made and often compared to Western culture. Rather, an understanding of local cultures of learning depends on an examination of particular classrooms. Although it is important to recognize that what happens in a specific classroom is influenced by political, social, and cultural factors of the larger community, each classroom is unique in the way the learners and teacher in that classroom interact with one another in the learning of English. Given the diversity of local cultures of learning, it is unrealistic to imagine that one method, such as CLT, will meet the needs of all learners. Rather, local teachers must be given the right and the responsibility to employ methods that are culturally sensitive and productive in their students' learning of English.

Common assumptions regarding English teaching have been largely based on an instructional context in which immigrants to English-speaking countries learn English often as a replacement for their first language. Today, however, English is being studied and used more and more as an international language in which learners acquire English as an additional language of wider communication. Hence, the dominance of native speakers and their culture has been seriously challenged. Given this shift in the nature of English, it is time to recognize the multilingual context of English use and to put aside a native speaker model of research and pedagogy. Only then can an appropriate EIL pedagogy be developed in which local educators take ownership of English and the manner in which it is taught.

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