IDEA SHARING:
INTRODUCING ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE (EIL)
TO PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS
IN A *WORLD ENGLISHES* COURSE

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Introduction

Today, English is truly regarded as an international language. It is the *lingua franca* in various international situations; it is also the most widely-learned and spoken second or foreign language in many countries. In recent years, the number of second and foreign language speakers has far exceeded the number of first language speakers of English. In fact, in 2008, the number of speakers of English reached a third of the world's population (Crystal, 2008).

This dramatic change, many (e.g., Brown, 2012; McKay, 2003, 2012) have argued, should be taken into account in designing and planning our curriculum. Traditional assumptions about English language teaching need to be revisited and reframed to suit the reality of how English is used in the world today. Traditionally, as stated by Brown (2012), people have had some long-established assumptions about the teaching of English as a second or foreign language, such as (a) students need to learn the English of native speakers, (b) native speakers should serve as the model and standard, (c) American or British culture should be taught, and (d) communicative language teaching is the best way to teach the language. However, as argued by McKay (2003), the teaching of English as an International

Language (EIL) nowadays should "be based on entirely different assumptions that have typically informed English language teaching pedagogy" (p. 1). The purpose of teaching EIL nowadays should aim to prepare learners to become competent users in international contexts, to enable them to communicate with others for the purposes of academic advancement, career advancement, technology access, intercultural communication, and other domains of communication (McKay, 2003). McKay (2012) further maintained that a language program should incorporate the promotion of intercultural competence, an awareness of other varieties of English, multilingualism in the classroom, the use of instructional materials that include both local and international cultures, and the adoption of socially and culturally-sensitive teaching methodology.

It is important to note that the changes in English language teaching suggested by these scholars cannot be successfully implemented without involving the teachers (Renandya, 2011). Since the majority of those that want to be teachers usually take a pre-teacher education program, it is necessary to introduce the concept of EIL to pre-service teachers so that they are more prepared to meet the needs of today's learners of English.

The Implementation of the *World Englishes* Course at Petra Christian University

In 2010-2011, the English Department of Petra Christian University revised its curriculum. The department now has three programmes offered to its students: English for Creative Industry, English for Business Communication, and English Education Business. The English Education Business Programme (EEB) was set up to prepare student-teachers to teach English, to be English course/curriculum specialists, and/or to manage English language courses.

The spirit of EIL has been incorporated into its curriculum. A compulsory subject, *World Englishes*, is offered to student-teachers that are in their 4th semester. This subject, along with other new subjects, such as *Education Policy, Current Issues in Global*

Education, and *Intercultural Teaching & Learning,* are offered because such courses have a scope which is not limited to the inner circle countries and are likely to result in a "world view . . . [that is] more consistent with the sociolinguistic realities of the spread of English as an international language" (Brown & Peterson, 1997, p. 44). These courses are designed to help our students understand more about the concept of EIL.

The implementation of the revised curriculum began during the 2nd semester of 2011/2012 (February – August 2012). I was asked to facilitate the *World Englishes* course, which aimed to enable the students to consider the historical, political, and sociocultural issues associated with the globalization of English. The course also discussed some ideological underpinnings of debates concerning nativization, standardization, identity, and ownership. Students were required to attend 14 consecutive meetings.

There were 11 pre-service teachers enrolled in this class. At the beginning of the course and during each class meeting, I asked them to share their beliefs about some EIL issues. I observed that none of the student-teachers was aware of the changes that have happened to English. They, for instance, still believed that American English and British English were the best varieties of English, and perceived native speakers to be "perfect" English teachers because they taught their own native language, i.e., English. These beliefs are incompatible with the key principles espoused by the EIL proponents and I was challenged to change the students' beliefs.

Pajares (1992) has noted that it is difficult to change pre-service teachers' beliefs since beliefs are formed during the years these student-teachers have spent sitting in the student desk prior to entering a teacher education program (a.k.a. "apprenticeship of observation"—a term introduced by Lortie (2002)). Minor et al. (2001) have suggested that while difficult, changing pre-service teachers' beliefs is possible. Research done by Minor et al. (2001) to find out 84 pre-service teachers' pedagogical beliefs showed that at the end of the semester of their observation, the beliefs of the pre-service teachers observed became more in line with the instructor's, i.e. to have a

more progressive orientation. This happened because throughout the course, these pre-service teachers had systematic opportunities to articulate their beliefs through a variety of assignments, including a written critique of an article from a refereed education journal, an individual presentation, a group presentation, reflections of reading assignments, active participation in class activities, exams, and the development of a professional portfolio. This then indicates that carefully-designed instruction can impact pre-service teachers' beliefs. In my *World Englishes* class, I adopted some of the activities implemented by Minor et al. (2001) in order to familiarize the students with the concept of EIL.

After having 14 weekly meetings and a series of classroom discussions and assignments, at the end of the semester, the students were once again asked to revisit their personal beliefs and write their reflections about their prior and current beliefs. Now I found out that there was a considerable shift in their beliefs. These 11 pre-service teachers are aware of the changes in the uses and users of English. They believe that the teaching of English in this century should acknowledge the EIL pedagogy, for example by having and empowering more local (non-native) speakers to teach English and by acknowledging other varieties of English. Overall, after the *World Englishes* course, all participants also have more confidence as non-native speakers that will become language teachers in the future (see Floris, 2013 for further details).

Though I realize that it is not easy to introduce the concept of EIL and to change pre-service teachers' prior beliefs, I found out that, based on my own teaching experience in teaching the *World Englishes* class, instruction can indeed impact pre-service teachers' beliefs. Therefore in this paper, I would like to share some of my classroom activities, which can hopefully inspire others.

Classroom Activities to Promote the Concept of EIL

The following are three classroom activities used in my class. The first one is related to the introduction to varieties of English. The second one deals with the notion of the native English teacher fallacy.

The last activity is about the ownership of English and the native speaker fallacy. My reflection on the activities and the students' perception are presented below each activity.

Activity 1: Introduction to English Varieties

1. The class began when I asked my students to answer the following questions:

    a. How many varieties of English can you think of? Can you name a few?

    b. What particular variety of English do you speak?

    c. Which variety or varieties do you think should be considered "proper" and "correct"?

2. Two YouTube videos, namely *"The English Language in 24 Accents"* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dABo_DCIdpM) and "Manglish (Malaysian English)" (https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=qQyjWXTGkcM), *Engrish from Other Countries Website* (http://www.engrish.com/category/engrish-from-other-countries), provide samples of English varieties; and my students were asked to visit these resources. In addition, they also read the following short texts:

More samples of English Varieties:

Istanbul
American Dentist. 2th floor – Teeth extracted by latest Methodists.

In a Romanian hotel
The lift is being fixed for the next days. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable.

> *On a Moscow hotel room door*
> If this is your first visit to the USSR you are welcome to it.
>
> *Iraq*
> Please direct my letter to whom it may concern as soon as it is possible, because, indeed, I am in desperate need. Thanks for your gracious helps; and for your nice attention.

(McArthur, 1998, pp. 18-20)

3. While watching the videos and reading some samples, the students were asked to answer the following questions:
   a. Which variety did you find easiest/most difficult to understand?
   b. Which variety did you find most interesting/amusing?
   c. Which variety would you like to study more?

   They were also required to note the differences in the languages in as many ways as they could. I pointed out that the key variations would be vocabulary, syntactic construction and/or accent.

4. Then I led the class discussion by asking intriguing questions such as:
   a. Why do people use different terms to express the same thing, for example: flat vs. apartment?
   a. What do the differences mean to the speakers of other Englishes? How do you think they feel when they come across such differences?

5. During our classroom discussion, I highlighted some important points:
   a. English, like any other language, is not uniform, in the sense that it is not always used in the same way. Even in the written mode, English can be pretty "irregular."

b. It is easy to associate a language with a particular country, in the same way in which it is easy to associate a flag with a country.

c. A more careful analysis of linguistic features reveals that often two languages to which we give different names are in fact the same language (e.g. Dutch spoken in the Netherlands and Flemish spoken in Beligium), while very different languages are considered dialects of the same language even if they are very different from each other (e.g. Hokkien and Cantonese).

d. Englishes spoken in the USA, Australia, UK, Singapore and many other places are all dialects of the same language. However, some dialects of English are perceived to be more prestigious than others. As a result, people often think that expressions of other Englishes are incorrect and therefore unacceptable.

e. Nativised varieties or "newer" varieties are influenced by local languages and cultures in places where English was not originally spoken. Such varieties of English have "emerged as autonomous local varieties with their own set of rules that make it impossible to treat them simply as mistakes of deficient Englishes" (Kandiah, 1991, p. 275). However, often in many cases, the language acquires distinct local characteristics, while still retaining the main grammatical structures of the "original."

f. It is important to recognize the existence of different varieties of English.

Reflection:

At the beginning of the course, these 11 pre-service teachers stated that American English and British English were the best varieties of English. This is hardly surprising. According to Farrell & Martin (2009), when someone uses the term "English," his/her interlocutors are likely to assume that he is referring to British or American English because "the English that exists in such places as

Africa, Asia, the West Indies, the Philippines and Singapore is not *real* or *standard* English" (p. 2). When these student-teachers were asked to watch videos and read some sample of English varieties, they all laughed and said that these varieties were not English, although somehow they understood what the speakers or the authors were trying to say. As they worked on other classroom tasks, such as analyzing the differences among varieties and discussing other issues related to the existence of varieties, they began to accept the differences and finally came to acknowledge the existence of World Englishes. At the end of the course, none of them considered American or British English as the best varieties. One of them stated the following:

> I have learned that that there are many varieties in this world, not only the American and British English. Even in Britain itself, people in Liverpool have different kind of English compared to the variety used in Manchester. American and British English are popular because of their power (in politics and economics) and the huge number of the users.
>
> (Fefe (pseudonym), 3rd meeting).

Activity 2: Introduction to the Native English Teacher Fallacy

1. At the beginning of the class, my students were encouraged to reflect on their experiences as learners of English and answer the following questions:
   a. Why are there many schools or language courses seeking and employing native speaker teachers?
   b. What are the advantages and the disadvantages of having native speaker teachers?
   c. What are the advantages and the disadvantages of having non-native teachers?
   d. Who is your favorite English teacher? Why do you like him/her?

An advertisement article entitled *"Why You Should Teach Abroad on Your Gap Year"* (http://www.onlinetefl.com/tefl-blog/2011 /04/26/why-you-should-teach-abroad-on-your-gap-year/#. UM7ta6y8AQI) and the following online advertisement (http://www.ibcampus.org/FAQRetrieve.aspx?ID=39077) were used to activate students' schemata.

Source: http://www.ibcampus.org/FAQRetrieve.aspx?ID=39077

2. Some further key issues discussed by the students were:
   a. Today, about 80% of English language teachers in the world are non-native English-speaking teachers (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2001). However, native speakers are often judged as the best teachers because it is believed that native speaker teachers have better pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Is it true that native teachers are better than non-natives?
   b. How do you think the non-native English-speaking teachers would feel when they are judged as being inferior

to native teachers? How would you, as an English teacher, feel?

3. Related to the issue of the native English teacher fallacy, an article that I shared with my students was *"The Myth of the Native Speaker as a Model of English Proficiency"* (Todd, 2006). The article basically is a report of a study done in Thailand. A corpus of informal native-teacher writing, which was comprised of 12,000 words collected from bulletin boards concerning ELT in Thailand, was observed. The findings showed that while appropriate word selection was not a problem spelling was, Related to grammar, it was found that there were some problems with commonly-confused words and apostrophes. The study concluded that though most errors did not interfere with comprehension; however it indicated that native teachers do not always provide a "good" model of English. Another argument shard with my students was Johnston's argument that native speaking teachers are "often judged not so much on the basis of their specialized knowledge (and much less their teaching ability) but on their own skill in using the language" (2003, p. 16). The expression "native speaker" is often associated with a higher degree of language proficiency, which is not supported by reality. Furthermore, in many countries, native English speakers without teaching qualifications are more likely to be hired as language teachers than qualified and experienced non-native speaker teachers (Braine, 1999). It was interesting to see my students try to differentiate the following:
    a. "Using the language" and "Knowing the language"
    b. "Knowing the language" and "Ability to explain the language"

4. Finding out the strength or advantages of being a non-native teacher and suggesting ways to improve the quality of non-native teachers were the next steps of the classroom discussion. I emphasized that English language proficiency, teaching

experience, and professionalism should be assessed along a continuum of professional development.

5. Finally, I also introduced my students to more neutral terms, i.e. "bilingual or multilingual teacher" (Jenkins, 2003). These two terms are more appropriate for the EIL era. The terms "native English-speaking teacher" and "non-native English-speaking teacher" somehow "perpetuates the dominance of the native speaker in the ELT profession and contributes to discrimination in hiring practices" (Maum, 2002, p.1).

Reflection:

At the beginning of the *World Englishes* course, the 11 pre-service teachers involved in this study believed that the best teacher of English was a native speaker. Sonia (pseudonym) for example wrote in her paper:

> I believe that the best teacher of English is the native speaker of English (American, British, Australian). They speak using that language everyday so automatically they know that language well. Sometimes when I see a native speaker, I think I can learn many things from them about their language even though they are not language teachers.
>
> (Sonia, Initial Reflective Paper)

During our classroom discussion, two important facts, namely (1) the majority of English teachers nowadays are non-native speakers, (2) both native and non-native teachers have strengths and weaknesses, were highlighted. Surprisingly these student-teachers were at first unaware of these important facts. However after finishing our class discussions, they then admitted that they had more confidence as non-native speakers that would become language teachers in the future. One of the participants (Sonia—pseudonym)

stated that "Everybody can be a good English teacher too as long as he/she has fulfilled all requirements needed" (Sonia, 8th meeting).

Activity 3: Introduction to the Ownership of English and the Native Speaker Fallacy

1. At the beginning of the class, I asked my students the following questions:
    a. Who is native speaker?
    b. Can the speakers of a nativised variety of English, for example Singaporean English and Indian English, be considered native speakers of English?
    c. Can someone that looks Chinese be expected to be a Chinese native speaker?
    d. Can someone that was born in Indonesia be considered as an Indonesian native speaker though he lives in Australia?
    e. How do you define *native*?

2. Then the students were asked to observe whether they knew someone that fit the following description and to decide who should be considered as a "native speaker" of a language:
    a. Someone that was brought up using a particular language and then later in life became so detached from that language that he/she partially loses it, and replaces it with (an)other language(s);
    b. Someone that has acquired two languages with the same level of proficiency;
    c. Someone that uses one language at home, one in the city where he or she lives, one in other parts of the country, and one when he or she goes outside the country.

3. My further classroom discussions shed light on the following points:

    a. The expression "native speaker" is often linked to ethnicity and associated with particular countries rather than the actual use of the language.

    b. If "nativeness" is connected to the sense of "being brought up with English," then native speakers of English do exist in Singapore, in India, in Nigeria, as well as in the UK and the USA.

    c. The term "native speaker" is often associated with the possession of a language; for example, if someone is a native speaker of English, it means that he/she owns English as his/her language.

4. The term "native speaker" was discussed since it is potentially ambiguous and is not appropriate in the EIL era.

    a. It should be emphasized that we do not own a language but merely use it.

    b. More neutral terms that transcend countries and ethnic groups were introduced by Jenkins (2003). The emphasis of the new terms is on:

        • whether English is the only language that a person is able to use,
        • the level of proficiency of the user.

    The terms introduced by Jenkins (2003, p. 83) are

        • "for speakers of English who speak no other language: Monolingual English Speakers (MES),
        • for proficient speakers of English and at least one another language, regardless of the other in which they learnt the languages: Bilingual English speakers (BES),
        • for those who are not bilingual in English but are nevertheless able to speak it at a level of reasonable competence: Non Bilingual English Speakers (NBES)"

Reflection:

A native speaker of English is "someone who has been speaking English since the day he/she was born" (Yuni, Initial Reflective Paper). A similar point of view was also expressed by other pre-service teachers at the beginning of the course when I asked them to describe or define "a native speaker of English." During our classroom discussion, I challenged my student-teachers to critically assess their thoughts about the idea of native speakers. The first two stages described above helped me a lot in stimulating students' critical thoughts. After a series of classroom discussions, at the end of our class meeting, I introduced these student-teachers to more neutral terms that we all can use, namely, Monolingual English Speakers (MES), Bilingual English speakers (BES), and Non Bilingual English Speakers (NBES) (Jenkins, 2003). Positive responses were given by these 11 pre-service teachers. The following statement is typical of their revised views about native speakers: "I never thought that it was difficult to define the notion of a 'native speaker'. But yes, the terms introduced by Jenkins seem to be more neutral and cover all things that we had discussed in our meeting" (Via (pseudonym), 11th meeting).

Conclusion

There were of course a few students that had very strong resistance about letting go of their old beliefs about English. In that case, I provided more discussions based on (1) some key readings that I had selected for my students and (2) the students' own experiences. I realized, however, that I could not expect everybody to agree with me; however, I hoped that by having more discussions, I would put something valuable in my student-teachers' minds that they could think about. I find that having more discussions is very effective.

According to my observation, the activities described above were effective in terms of introducing the EIL concept to pre-service teachers because the activities provided them with systematic opportunities to reflect on and articulate their beliefs. The student-

teachers were asked to refer to their own experiences, examine and reflect on their own beliefs, and finally to detect possible "flaws" in their previously-held beliefs. I found that having discussions as well as detecting incongruences within one's beliefs and comparing and evaluating them were very important for general conceptual change.

Acknowledgments

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