Expanding Horizons, Expanding Pedagogies
Re-thinking Methodologies
within a 'World Englishes' Perspective

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Abstract   The paper aims to stimulate reflection on what learning and teaching English means nowadays in evolving and dynamic social, linguistic and cultural contexts. In the increasingly multilingual contexts which characterize the era of globalization, English becomes a fluid, variable, heterogeneous language, strictly connected to local identities and speakers' linguistic needs. It is therefore suggested to re-examine traditional pedagogies in light of the changes and innovations which have contributed to expand and diversify English globally. A global language, yet with a myriad of different voices which claim to be heard and recognized. A new pedagogical space for English gradually emerges along with more meaningful roles for inspiring teachers, definitely more aware of new perspectives and implications. The paper attempts to offer new insight with the hope to enlarge traditional teaching horizons and practices.

Summary   1 English: One Tongue, Many Voices. – 2 Naming World Englishes: an Overview. – 2.1 Non-native Englishes. – 2.2 New Englishes. – 2.3 Indigenized Englishes. – 2.4 Nativized Englishes. – 3 World Englishes in Scientific Publications. Are Local Standards Possible? – 4 New Perspectives in Language Education. – 5 Re-defining Goals: Developing New Roles for Inspiring Teachers. – 6 Expanding Beliefs, Expanding Teaching Horizons. – 7 Future Directions and Concluding Remarks.

Keywords   World Englishes. Expanding beliefs. Critical pedagogies. Inspiring teachers.

1   English: One Tongue, Many Voices

Global English, as researchers and scholars have drawn attention to, has turned into a myriad of different 'Englishes'. Different names have been given in the last decades to indicate the varieties of English which have emerged from the contact between English and the local languages of the colonized countries during and after colonialism. We talk about 'World Englishes', 'Indigenized Varieties of English', 'New Englishes', 'Non-native Englishes', 'Vernacular Englishes', 'Nativized Englishes' and so on. It is well-known that these 'Englishes' have long been fighting for recognition and acceptance of a different, yet valid and valuable new identity which has struggled to get its voice heard in the linguistic and cultural scenario of a globalizing world (Canagarajah 1999, 2002, 2006; Kachru 1986, 1992;

Rubdy, Saraceni 2006; Svartvik, Leech 2006). In this global context, English, and in particular old or traditional varieties, what Kachru (1986, 1992) calls the 'Inner circle' varieties, have gained a dominant or hegemonic position (Phillipson 1992, 2003; Pennycook 1994). However, alongside the growth of English as a global language, 'nativized' varieties of English continue to emerge and to claim an independent status in the attempt to represent and disseminate local culture and knowledge (Kirkpatrick 2010) as we will draw attention to.

The field of 'post-colonial Englishes' or 'World Englishes' (Jenkins 2009) has been and still is a controversial one. Scholars and researchers have been debating over the status, acceptability, standards and relevance of 'World Englishes' (Anchimbe 2010). However, the present paper mainly aims to highlight that the dialogue is currently enriched by new issues and perspectives which contribute to expand and complexify positions and arguments regarding «politics, policies, pedagogies and practices of English» (Sharifian 2010, pp. 1-2) as we shall see. In the light of new roles and identities raised by the development of 'World Englishes' in so many different contexts, traditional approaches to language pedagogies need to be challenged as we will suggest at present.

2 Naming World Englishes: an Overview

Over 20 years ago, Kachru (1986) was one of the first scholars to fight the battle for «linguistic human rights» on two fronts, against what he called «home-grown enemies» within their nations and against «the foreign conservative native speaker» who was afraid of «seeing his language disintegrate in the hands of non-native users» (Kachru 1985, p. 34). In the following years, other prominent 'post-colonial' scholars such as Afrendas (1995), Singh et al (1995), Mufwene (1994, 2001), Erling (2005) and Anchimbe (2006) have given their contribution in the fight for acceptance of a legitimate identity and have strongly resisted the idea that these varieties were «illegitimate offspring of the native language» (Mufwene 2001). In order to clarify the different terminologies often used, a brief overview of the most common names scholars have been using in 'World Englishes' contexts will be provided.

2.1 Non-native Englishes

Coined in the 1960s and 1970's the term clearly marks a distinction in the category of English speakers, the native speakers and the non-native speakers. On the one hand, the native speakers were considered as norm-providers and the non-native speakers as norm receivers. The non-

native has been viewed as a permanent learner always trying to attain native speaker competence as ultimate objective, yet always unsuccessful (Mufwene 2001). This term, however, is no longer accurate as 'non-native varieties' now have native speakers of their own varieties, e.g. 'Singapore English', 'Indian English', 'Nigerian English', and so on, which have gained official recognition.

2.2   New Englishes

This term was given to counteract the negative connotation of the term 'non-native' and to reflect the fact that these varieties have only recently become valid objects of research and study as well as achieving recognition of their status. Many decades after, these 'Englishes' are not new anymore. Actually, some of these 'New Englishes' are chronologically older than some 'native Englishes', for instance, 'Indian English' is older than 'New Zealand English'.

2.3   Indigenized Englishes

'Indigenization' affects all languages in new environments. In the case of varieties of English, the term 'indigenized' was created to emphasize the struggle for legitimizing them, «a stand that is consistent with the position that every dialect has its own set of distinctive features and norms by which a speaker is identified as a typical or non-typical member of the community» (Anchimbe 2010, p. 275).

2.4   Nativized Englishes

Kachru (1986, p. 22) has claimed that «nativization must be seen as a result of those productive linguistic innovations which are determined by the localised functions, the culture of conversation and the transfer from local languages». 'Nativization' as 'indigenization' relate languages to their local contexts yet strive for recognition of their own legitimate and valid identity which can adequately express local needs and cultures. In the present paper the term 'World Englishes' (Jenkins 2009) will be used in order to include all the previous definitions under a common lid.

3   World Englishes in Scientific Publications. Are Local Standards possible?

Conservatives insist that standards need to be maintained and refuse to accept alternative standards to the English language drawing on three main arguments; the 'intelligibility', the 'prestige' and the 'degeneration' arguments. In this view, varieties of English are considered as deviations from the standard language, incorrect forms, «illegitimate offspring of the native language» (Mufwene 2001) on the basis of social conceptions and prejudices that have no linguistic substance (Anchimbe 2010). I find relevant the observations raised by Lippi-Green (1997) that discrimination on the basis of language is one of the very few forms of discrimination that is still tolerated. Similar views appear in Snow, Kamhi-Stein, Brinton (2006), which report studies where «native speakers are imagined as having Inner Circle accents, […] accents, like race, are socially organized, are a linguistic manifestation of nativism, and constitute a new and effective form of racism» (2006, p. 266).

A refusal to accept standards of 'World Englishes' means being unable to see the «vitality» and «creativity» (Cogo, Dewey 2012) of the English language, its inevitable variability and fluidity. Languages evolve, modify and need to be adapted according to contexts of uses and needs of users. If speakers «are able to use the language in ways they define as correct and acceptable, then a standard has taken root and should be allowed to flourish» (Anchimbe 2010, p. 278). Most importantly, it is demonstrated that mutual intelligibility, often used as an excuse to reject local standards, is nonetheless maintained. English speakers coming from different «lingua-cultural backgrounds» (Cogo, Dewey 2012) manage to effectively communicate and decode each other's linguistic features without hindering their communicative goals (House 2007; Jenkins 2006a).

Another issue to consider in the light of the present discussion is the acceptance of varieties of English in academic and scientific publications. The emergence of English as the international language for the dissemination of knowledge is widely attested. It is the most important language of scientific and scholarly conferences (Kirkpatrick 2010). Alongside the increasing power of English as the main academic language, many new literatures in English have flourished over recent decades, posing questions and concerns regarding the extent to which these new literatures in English can adequately reflect local cultures. It is interesting to suggest a possible connection between the development of new literatures in English, which attempt to represent local identities and cultures, and a parallel development of new «academic Englishes» to be accepted in scientific publications (Kirkpatrick 2010, p. 255). The point is: if local writers can write novels and poetry in 'nativized' forms of English, can local scholars write academic articles in 'nativized' forms of English? Is local

knowledge expected to be communicated in a vernacular code only? Can local knowledge be communicated through forms which are different from the ones associated with conventional academic practices?

One issue raised is that of identity loss for non-native English writers who are expected to submit articles to scientific journals following Anglophone-oriented styles and norms. On the one hand, non-native English writers feel disadvantaged in having to conform to linguistic standards different from their own, and on the other hand, there is the idea of knowledge itself being altered «if it has to be reframed to fit Anglo rhetorical patterns» (Kirkpatrick 2010, p. 258). This controversy is well expressed in the following quotation «How can one go along with the use of English without exposing oneself to the risk of being anglicised in one's mental structures, without being brainwashed by the linguistic routines?» (Phillipson 2006, pp. 68-69). However, Belcher (2007) has raised the possibility of editors accepting new standards of text conventions and different varieties of English. Ammon (2000, p. 114) calls for a «new culture of communication» and Flowerdew (2001) found some evidence of tolerance for non-Anglo styles, as a percentage of the journal editors he interviewed were understanding of the problems facing non-native English writers, though most of them were editors of *Applied linguistics* journals, including *World Englishes* journal.

Scholars and researchers argue that it is time to reverse traditional directions and expand the academic scientific community to include scholars who should be allowed to express their knowledge through their own codes (Kandiah 2001). Nonetheless, whether or not 'World Englishes' may be accepted as official academic languages in scientific publications is still an ongoing object of inquiry and many questions remain unanswered.

4   New Perspectives in Language Education

If we agree that traditional goals and beliefs should be revised to better fit new socio-cultural realities and values, language pedagogies will have to be re-examined as well to gain new meanings and roles. In the light of the present discussion, I believe it is important to underline that rather than on linguistic norms alone, languages are very much embedded in the socio-political context which surrounds them, they are «social constructs» (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010, p. 166) which are shaped by ideologies and power relations at different levels. The global spread of English has shifted applied linguists' attention from an exclusive concern with cognitive and linguistic factors to more ideological, ethnographic issues; for instance, issues of national, regional, ethnic identities, unequal power relations, identity loss, marginalization, bottom-up, micro-perspectives in language policy and planning. Becoming aware of these new perspectives is the first step educators and language professionals must take to start developing

«critical pedagogies» (Ramanathan 2002). However, this would entail extensive practitioner-oriented research to rethink current methodologies and teaching priorities. In other words, practitioners and teachers may become 'agents of change' starting from their language classrooms. Language educators have the opportunity to experiment with new possibilities in their teaching practices and gain new roles if they accept to challenge the idea that a homogenous standard language, which often informs languages policies and curricula development, is the only possible solution.

For decades, West-based TESOL has been dominated by Anglophone teaching practices and needs. Only recently, MA TESOL programmes in the West have been trying to incorporate perspectives related to the meanings and implications of global/international English and to the complex relationships established between its speakers worldwide. Teachers, teacher-educators, policy-makers, administrators, researchers are becoming aware of the importance to address the English language needs of speakers belonging to geographical areas that so far have remained distant» and «marginal» (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010, p. 154) but that nonetheless need to come closer. Implementing teaching methodologies «sensitive to local socio-cultural beliefs» (Canagarajah 1999, 2005; Kumaravadivelu 2001; McKay 2002) cannot be considered as something extra to be added in the curriculum if there is time and space, rather it should become a meaningful, valid aspect to be taken into consideration in language policies and practices.

An issue that has been drawn attention to recently is which variety of 'World Englishes' to teach. Matsuda (2003, 2005) emphasizes that curricula should include multiple varieties of 'World Englishes' with the objective to provide students with the necessary skills to successfully interact with speakers from different cultural backgrounds. Instruction should therefore focus on 'communicative effectiveness' rather than 'grammatical accuracy' which has always been dependent on 'Inner circle' norms as well as integrate contents which represent a wider variety of needs, beliefs and purposes for using the language.

5   Re-Defining Goals: Developing New Roles
    for Inspiring Teachers

A step further in a newly revised pedagogy would entail a more direct involvement of teachers in language policy and planning. Teachers may achieve a more meaningful role as language instructors if they become aware «that language policies shape classroom practices and practices, in turn, shape policies» (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010, p. 161). Policies should not be decided by administrators and outside experts alone, rather by top-down and bottom up forces together. Therefore, developing «critical

pedagogies» (Ramanathan 2002) in language classrooms means training and motivating practitioners who can contribute to challenging old notions and achieve active roles in pedagogical practices.

A new curriculum may include, for instance, courses which look at the teaching of grammar, lexicon, pronunciation as shaped by extra-linguistic factors (mainstream politics, economics, ideologies). A proposal could be introducing contents which aim at problematizing the presumed benefits of a global language and its effects on local languages and cultures. Stimulating teachers and students to formulate research questions that would encourage critical perspectives on a variety of issues connected with 'World Englishes' and language policies (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010) may represent a novelty aspect to be pursued. Raising students' awareness of the innovations and challenges that have occurred within the English language alongside its wider socio-political implications should have a key role in language practices at different educational levels.

A very relevant example comes from Ramanathan and Morgan (2010, pp. 162-63) who suggest courses which aim at awakening student-teachers to local policy and ideological issues on their own through term pair-projects. For instance, in a second language writing seminar, students are paired in groups of three or four, they are asked to download a list of academic institutions, pick three or four and get as much as policy-related information as they can from the websites (textbooks used, placement exams, syllabi, courses, attendance, etc.). After this first step, they get in contact with a few instructors teaching in the chosen institutions and interview them either by phone or get responses through questionnaires. The questions are co-constructed in class and deal with the student population, the instructor, policies in the institution, pedagogical materials, examination constraints and so on. At the end of the term they write abstracts to submit to the local TESOL conference. A project like this is very interesting because it contributes to enlarge, on the side of student-teachers, traditional visions about pedagogical practices, to critically reflect about policy issues and conceptualize their own positions and roles in the wider context.

Offering new types of courses which link concepts to concrete settings and practices and entail socio-political as well as language policy issues may better equip students and teachers to understand what intercultural communication actually means, the difference between «their own and others' discourse styles», how «discourse style affects interaction» (Snow, Kamhi-Stein, Brinton 2006, p. 266). Furthermore, the attempt to understand language policy issues connected with English and local languages would help teachers and students becoming critical thinkers and uncover underlying issues that have not been yet considered. Ultimately, it would entail giving to the teacher-researcher a more active, dynamic role and a major involvement in the decision-making process and in his/her professional development.

6 Expanding Beliefs, Expanding Teaching Horizons

I believe that fostering the idea that languages cannot be separated from their socio-political-cultural contexts would contribute to expand the horizons of traditional teaching methodologies and practices. This is, in my view, necessary to enlarge our vision of what teaching and learning a modern language means nowadays in order to reflect the new changing socio-cultural contexts from a genuine, true perspective. Teaching a language means understanding and reflecting its social contexts and uses (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010). In this light, the globalization of English poses new questions to new scholars and practitioners who are called to embark on a stimulating journey and engage with new linguistic and cultural roles. They are not supposed to passively accept a static vision of language practices and adopt what theorists have decided for them. On the contrary, they are asked to critically re-examine methodological approaches and programmes in the light of a newly acquired awareness and knowledge.

Even in West-based English teaching contexts, language educators need to be aware that language practices are to be revised and redesigned to reflect new models of communication. This should start from the bottom, from the people directly involved in the teaching processes, e.g. classroom teachers, language professionals, researchers and then moving upward to curricula developers and administrators.

> As moral agents, transformative intellectuals, cultural workers, perhaps even global citizens, the avenues currently available for creating meaningful and inspiring classrooms seem greater now than at any time, if the required resources and a modest degree of teacher autonomy are made available (Ramanathan, Morgan 2010, p. 166).

7 Future Directions and Concluding Remarks

Recent developments and research on English have challenged 'constructs' such as competences, linguistic competence, communicative or intercultural, and therefore both pedagogical goals and teacher education beliefs. Standards and models provide a sense of stability and make teachers and students feel safe. But language learning goals and uses are not straightforward at all, they are unstable, completely variable and context-dependent. Encouraging teachers and learners to overcome their scepticism towards the new and reconcile the perceived conflict in their practice between standard language norms and variable international English goals, is key to the acceptance of more realistic, more appropriate forms of pedagogy and teacher education. The extent to which teachers

engage with these ideas will strongly affect any chance for a revised language teaching and learning more widely. This, I believe, is an area worth of further exploration, which may provide interesting insights in the light of a newly acquired knowledge of what learning a global language means. Most of these issues remain unanswered at present. However, they are meant to stimulate further discussion and lead to future research. What we know is that research in the field of 'World Englishes' has attempted to challenge the concept of superiority of homogeneity, a «homogeneous grammatical system, a homogeneous speech community, a homogeneous competence» (Canagarajah 2006, p. 211). What the reality is now is a «heterogeneous global English speech community, with a heterogeneous English and different modes of competence» (2006, p. 211) and we definitely need to come to terms with it from a broader range of perspectives.

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