

Cultures, Context and World Englishes (Kachru & Smith, 2008)

Introduction to Applied Linguistics

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Facts:

- English is EVERYWHERE, about 2 billions speakers (Graddol, 2006 cited in Renandya, 2012). About 25% of earth's population uses English for some purposes.
- English as a lingua franca = the global function



Kachru (1985) Three Concentric Circles

- Inner Circle: traditional historical and sociolinguistic bases e.g. UK, USA, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand
- Outer Circle: former colony of Britain and the USA. English has been adopted for intra-national purposes of administration, education, law etc. e.g. India, Singapore, Nigeria, the Philippines



Conts...

- Expanding Circle: English is primarily used as a medium of International communication e.g. China, Europe, Japan, the Middle East.
- Where are we (Indonesia) ?



Verbal Interaction and Intelligibility

- Interaction as cooperation
- context of culture
- parameters of politeness
- Intelligibility and interlocutor

[See Kachru & Smith, 2008]



Sound, Sentence and Words

- Sounds and rhythm
- Phrases and sentences
- Words and collocations

[See Kachru & Smith, 2008]



Conversational and Writing Style

- Conversational Interaction
- Interaction in writing
- Contextualizing World Englishes Literature

[See Kachru & Smith, 2008]



Two Diasporas of English

- The 1st diaspora: Inner circle, a monolingual English speaking population movement was responsible for bringing language to new locations from the mother country e.g. Australia, New Zealand, North America etc
- The 2nd diaspora: outer and expanding circles → the language was transplanted to new locations



Numerical Strength and Status:

- 800 millions English speakers in Outer and Expanding Circle Compared to 300 millions in Inner Circle (Todd and Hancock, 1986)
- Outer circles are multilingual and multicultural, English has official status



The Function of English in Three Circles

- See (Kachru and Smith, 2008, p.7)
- OTHER ISSUES:
 - a. ownership of English
 - b. emerging varieties
 - c. standards
 - d. purpose of learning

» [Renandya, 2012]



Contested issues:

A. Inner Circle Perspective (Core): a uniform standard world-wide is essential in maintaining world/International/global English as a viable means of communication (a lingua franca). Acceptance of multiple norms would lead to fragmentation of the language and leave us again without a common language for interaction across culture. [See. Kachru & Nelson, 2006]



Conts...

- There are already varieties that have been codified after extensive and intensive research and other Englishes have yet to be codified.
- The relationship between language and culture is organic and all this talk of nativization and acculturation does not change the fact that English necessarily reflects British and/or American culture.



Conts...

- ...British and American Literatures are considered as Canon while other literatures are periphery.
- Regional norms such as South East Asian, African reflects “liberation of linguistics’ ideologies” and is motivated by consideration of power.



Contested issues:

B. Outer and Expanding Circle Perspective (periphery):

- acculturation of language to new contexts is unavoidable
- languages do not owe their existence to codification, they exist because they are used by people

- Users of English keeps enlarging, and the language becomes acculturated and transforms itself into localized varieties...



Conts...

- ...the question of the organic relationship between American or British Culture and English become moot.
- Ultimately, the issue of standard has more to do with power and ideology than language.
- Our multi-dialect “would simply extend to meet the fresh demand of the international scene...as most people are already “multi-dialectical to ‘a greater or lesser extent’”.



Concluding Remark!

- All users of English have to develop sensitivity to more than one variety of English
- Accommodating variation is the key to success in communication across cultures in varied context of use of language for achieving common goals.
- Attempts to promote constructs “English as Lingua Franca” are bound to end up as prescribing another unitary norm.



References

- Kachru, Y. & Smith, L.E. 2008. Cultures, Context and World Englishes. NY/London: Routledge
- Kachru, Y. & Nelson, C.L. 2006. World Englishes in Asian Context. Hongkong: Hongkong University Press.
- Renandya, W. A. 2012. Global English and its implication in ELT. In the Proceeding of "Language in the Online and Offline World", PCU Surabaya.

