An Analysis on World Englishes and Communicative Language Teaching

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Abstract: This study explores implications of World Englishes to communicative language teaching. For this aim, issues of teaching focus on Inner circle only are analyzed from learners' needs, localization and ownership. Based on these, the later section analyzes and present how to integrate world Englishes into communicative language teaching in the classroom setting. Implications consist of exposure to world Englishes, teaching materials as well as assessments.

1. Introduction

English is popularly applied in a large number of countries, viewed as a dominant language in the world. English, as an international language, is applied by a large group of users as an additional language [8], aiming at the successful communication in different fields, such as business, education and medical care. As it is localized or indigenized in the process of spreading in diverse countries, there are many varieties emerged and developed. The term-World Englishes (WEs) consists of all these varieties of English. With the development of world English, it has aroused the attention of the linguistics community. Many scholars study the world of English from the perspectives, such as sociolinguistics, language and culture, and applied linguistics.

Furthermore, there is a gradually aroused interest in the study of the pedagogic implication for WEs. Communicative language teaching (CLT), as a popular approach to language teaching which emphasizes interaction and communication as both the means and the ultimate goal of the study. It seems that there is no direct connection between WEs and CLT, as there are a majority of researches focus on WEs's pedagogic implications for English teaching rather than CLT. For instance, in 1992, Kachru pointed out that teaching WEs ought to be emphasized because of different identities of English [14]. Matsuda [16] illustrated that teachers ought to consider the diverse distinction among different language learners, and have close interaction with them. Bolton [4] mentioned in his book that when teaching English, world Englishes can guide in the analysis of mistakes and errors. Meanwhile, a certain amount of edited collections, for example, the research of Ho & Ward in 2000 as well as Kirkpatrick in 2002 covered a range of Asian Englishes along with implications for their teaching and learning [13]. However, there is no research directly focusing on the WE's implication for Communicative language teaching perspective. Instead, Jenkins [13] in her collection pointed out that methodology of English teaching is suggested to base on the communication needs, while not entirely focused on the communicative language teaching. In addition to it, communicative competence has been proven to be indispensable to WEs due to its emphasis on the role of sociocultural appropriateness in deciding communicative effectiveness [3]. As a result, a question required to be addressed is that is there any implication of WEs for communicative language teaching? In this study, the author attempts to analyze some issues of teaching English without the attention to WEs, together with presenting implications for communicative language teaching in the classroom setting. In particular, it will analyze teaching issues in the outer and expanding circle contexts. Afterwards, the author will discuss to what extent and how the WEs can assist in the teachers' implementation of communicative language teaching.

2. Key Concepts

2.1 World Englishes

The issue of World Englishes was raised in 1978, which aimed to examine concepts of regional Englishes from the global context, due to the wide spread of certain varieties of English (Bamgboe, 2001). The study of World Englishes is in the purpose of identifying varieties of English applied in various sociolinguistic contexts globally and to analyze how sociolinguistic histories, multicultural backgrounds and contexts of function influence the use of English in diverse regions of the world. The most influential model-- three Concentric Circles, was presented by Kachru [14]. It refers to the inner circle (such as England), the outer circle (such as Kenya), and the extended circle of English (such as China). Furthermore, there are many other models to classify WEs, and they are as follows. McArthur [17] proposed another model--the Circle of World English. The center of the model is the Standard English, surrounded by eight standard regional variants, such as American Standard English. Strevens proposed a Dynamic Model of World Englishes in 1989. He divided English into two major branches: British English and American English. Each of them had its variants [22]. In the 1990, GÊrlach presented a similar wheel model. The center of the wheel is International English, and the edges are standard regional variants, such as American English, British English [9]. In general, in accordance with the modals provided, it is helpful for people to understand WEs norm and distinguish the difference between core variation and the non-core variation.

2.2 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

It was Noam Chomsky's theory in the 1960s, focusing on competence and performance in language learning, that gave rise to communicative language teaching, but the conceptual basis for CLT was laid in the 1970s by linguists Michael Halliday, who studied how language functions are expressed through grammar, and Dell Hymes, who introduced the idea of a wider communicative competence instead of Chomsky's narrower linguistic competence [11]. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), interaction-oriented, has been regarded as a gradually popular teaching methodology for a second language or a foreign language. Different from the Audio-lingual Method, CLT attempts to assist students to achieve the communicative competence as well as successful self-expression, other than acquiring prescribed grammar rules, accuracy or the native accent. CLT pedagogy focuses on helping students apply the target language in a variety of contexts and gain the insight of the use of functional language. CLT is occasionally considered as a teaching theory rather than a teaching method [25], since it does not regulate or control the class and requires for a large amount of drills, instead, there are several general guidelines and instruction to facilitate the task engaged by students. In the task, the teacher functions as a role of the facilitator rather than an expert, who guides the students to complete the task other than teaching and repeating in a controlled way [21]. Furthermore, there is a generally accepted description of CLT's features, made by David Nunan [19] who proposed that characteristics of communicative language teaching are as follows: (1) focus on interaction with target language; (2) applying real-world task into the class; (3) provide opportunities for students to focus on the language and learning process; (4) students' self-experience is as a very significant part of classroom learning; (5) try to link classroom learning with language outside the classroom. In order to effectively implement CLT, classroom activities are widely acknowledged for students to develop communicative abilities in the target language (TL). For example, role plays, interviews or group work are applied to enhance learners' collaboration, fluency and effectiveness.

3. The Issues of Teaching Focus on Inner Circle Only (Focus Onform)

If the Standard English is employed to internal-environment users, it can be an appropriate course which allows learners to adapt to the environment as well as smoothly communicating. However, it seems to be improper to impose learners who are in other circles to attain the Standard-English-only and form-focused courses [5], since their language environment is not consistent with the inner circle people. In addition, whenteaching in the other circles' contexts, it ought to take account of the real language needs of learners, English's localization as well as empowering the learner with ownership of English.

3.1 Learners' Real Need from the Outer and Expandingcycle

From the perspectives of a majority of English learners in the outer and expanding cycles, they have rare opportunities to contact with native speakers (in the inner circle) or have a period of time living in English speaking countries. Furthermore, the demand and purpose of studying English differ from learners. Some of them eager to achieve further study, and others may hope to practically apply it into daily life, as well as other aspects, such as business or medical care. Therefore, they do not be required to learn standard and prescribed English and only, not allowing errors made in the sentences. In addition, exposures to English varieties, to some extent, can help them gain an insight of English from the comprehensive perspective. However, if there are only limited exposures of different Englishes in the classroom, it may result in students' misunderstandings and confusions when they are confronted with other English learners who from other areas of the world. Hence, in the class, teachers ought to focus on raising students' awareness to diverse English varieties, together with study demands, other than only focally emphasizing on accuracy and dominant English--American English or British English.

3.2 Localization Ofenglish

English's localization, a type of language localization, is regarded as the process of adapting to a different context, which is a specific area or country. It is also regarded as the second phase of language globalization, after the internationalization [18]. As the historical and political issues, colonialism, power inequalities as well as global development [19], English spreads worldwide and develops diverse identities in accordance with various contexts. Specifically, changes in English, to some extent, are taken from forms to the language users. Although localization of English leads to some distinctions compared with the Standard English, it facilitates theworldwide leaners' adaption to English and its culture. The inner-circle-oriented course ought to associate with local contexts consisting of cultural, policy, local language as well as a variety of language learners, other than form-oriented prescribed English. In other words, several elements of the local contexts tend to contribute to English learning, such as indigenous language serving as a medium in language acquisition through the process of localization [14].

3.3 The Ownership of Each Country

It is universally acknowledged that English is taken as an international language [6]. It is not allowed to be delivered its custody to other nations. However, retaining the custody without any other varieties of English involved, to some extent, can undermine the development of English as well as its status in the global context.

Furthermore, the use of English is not exclusive among native speakers or between native speakers and non-native speakers, but also among non-native speakers [10]. Additionally, there is no denying that there is a dominant number of English users are non-native speakers [24], who are not from the Englishspeaking nations use. Hence, the understanding of non-native speakers' role can influence English's development.

However, the assumption of SE's authority implies that teaching the native speaker based varieties positions the other variants of English to the inferior. In fact, other varieties of English are equal with standard English in the linguistic perspective, since all of them possess a set of systematic rules. The peripheral attention towards other varieties of English, to some extent, undermines language learners' motivation as well as the confidence of English learning. For instance, some Asian students always feel embarrassed at their accented spoken English together with not the authentic use of expressions when they are informed of the authentication as well as the privilege of standard English accent. In addition to that, it is acknowledged that English serves to satisfy the needs for communication and communality [2]. English varieties, with diverse forms as well as functions, are generated and gradually developed so as to achieve the successful communication. Furthermore, ownership of English to other communities presents the demographics towards learning English as a second or a foreign language.

Hence, it is essential to allow other English's varieties, which does not indicate releasing the custody of English to other nations, while the permission of English possession-- ownership of English variants.

4. World Englishes in Clt Classroom

As World Englishes and communicative language teaching share the similarity in purpose, namely learners' real needs and communicative effectiveness, rather than form and rules focused. Diverse varieties of WEs are developed mainly due to the local adaptation and enhance the communication effectiveness. Communicative language teaching aims to achieve the communicative competence, and enable learners to effectively use language for real-world needs [15], rather than prescribed English rules (focus on form). WEs tends to imply the implementation of communicative language teaching on the following aspects, such as requirements, teaching materials as well as assessments.

4.1 Exposure of World Englishes to Learners

In order to achieve the goal of effective communication other than focusing on form, consistent with principles of CLT, teachers are suggested to introduce the varieties of English in a comprehensive way, which, to some extent, can facilitate their fluency and develop confidence. In addition to introducing various English types, one effective approach is to design a task for students in the classroom to have a conversation or interaction with people of other English varieties but with a certain level of fluency in speaking. For example, some foreign visitors can be invited to engage in the class to communicate with students, which can not only provide the opportunity for students to practically interact with foreigners, but also positively enhance their understandings towards English varieties. They can gain an insight that speaking English does not require learners to possess England or American accent together with no mistakes made in their utterance. If it is challenging to achieve the face-to-face conversation, alternatively, teachers can leave the task for students to complete after class, that is, learners are required to have an online communication or writing e-mails with international English learners, which also can assist in familiarizing the varieties of English.

4.2 Teaching Materials

Teaching materials are able to facilitate communicative language teaching incorporating World Englishes. For instance, textbooks can involve several characters from other circles in the role-playing part, or in the reading content, which can reflect that the increasing number of learners from other outer or expanding circles, together with gaining a general understanding of learners from non-English speaking countries, and its cultures and traditions. Furthermore, the presence of other-circle learners appearing in the dialogue and successfully communicating with native speakers presents that English users are not required to have a good command of English the same with native speakers or with in the similar level [23]. In addition, teaching content can include the reasons of why there are a variety of Englishes, and WEs' historical as well as political issues, which may deepen their understanding towards English learning. When implementing some tasks, teachers can provide students with the context of international issues, such as environment, cultural diversity and power inequality, in order to lead to discussion and cooperation among students.

4.3 Assessments

In traditional English teaching classrooms, assessments examine how close learners conform to standard English norms, such as British English norm or American English norm, without focusing on other varieties of English. Regarding the communicative language teaching pedagogy, it focuses on meaning, and communication rather than accuracy of language use. However, assessment forms of communicative language teaching are not various and impeccable, since its focal attention is on the task guidance and facilitating in order to develop students' communicative competence. There are multiple assessments appropriate for CLT classrooms, consisting of presentations, portfolios or

role-playing form. These forms of assessment tend to encourage students to focus on communicative effectiveness, reduce the pressure to prepare focus-on-form examinations. In addition, these means of assessing fairly fit the communicative language teaching mode. Furthermore, the assessment rubric applied in the Test of Speaking English can be taken as a way to evaluate learners' English proficiency [7]. However, this assessment rubric is based on the British or America English, which cannot be proper enough to assess English proficiency in the international contexts (Lowenberg, 1992), without considering English varieties. In order to address this issue, teachers can slightly make some adjustments in accordance with local contexts.

5. Conclusions

In the introductory part, a question is raised and required to be addressed. That is, is there any implication of World Englishes for communicative language teaching? Primarily, it seems to be that there is no relation between World Englishes and communicative language teaching, and there is almost no researcher seek for the association and implications between them. Only Jenkins in 2006 illustrated that the significance of communicative needs when carrying out English teaching, and Burns in 2019 presented that communicative competence is proved to be indispensable to WEs. Furthermore, an analysis is based on the features of World Englishes with an eye on three circle theory and the concern with the local contexts, from the perspective of the real need for other-circles (except inner circle) learner, English's localization and right of English ownership. There is a finding that the essence of the development of WEs is based on the communicative needs in order to adapt into the local contexts, which is consistent of the aim of communicative language teaching. In the latter part of the essay, there are several implications of World Englishes to the implementation of CLT class, which are presented on the aspects of exposure to WEs, teaching materials as well as assessments.

In general, incorporating World Englishes into communicative language teaching requires much more detailed and deeper research. In the long run, there tends to be better and more comprehensive understandings of WEs and CLT, together with more implications to communicative language teaching.

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