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## Foreword

Welcome to the June 2020 issue of the Journal of English as an International Language!

The spectrum of issues, insights and research agendas featured in this issue resonates with EILJ's resolve and remit to foster a plurality of focus and conceptualizations in EIL. Such a bold stance is in keeping with the centrality and primacy of EILJ's declared mission of promoting locally appropriate, culturally sensitive and socially attuned pedagogies and practices. The voice and agency of our contributing authors assume particular prominence and substance in this issue in that they chime in with EILJ's attempts to democratize and dehegemonize the use of English across the cultures and continents of the globe.

Jim Harries' paper entitled, "Is English salvific? Myth-busting God's language" sets the tenor and tone for this issue. The paper attempts a bold problematization of key issues and insights that resonate with the prevalence and patronage of World English (WE) alongside the fixation with native speaker English. In light of this, the author's professional Christian theological background and his intercultural understanding accrued over thirty years of living and working in Zambia and Kenya assume particular dynamism and immediacy in the paper. Debunking and contesting the current incontrovertible "salvific status" of native-speaker English as its standard version, the author points to the insufficiency of prior views that all languages are neutral, equally functional, and extra-contextual. By the same token, the author draws on the evocative potential of his dialectics to flag a host of weighty issues. These relate to: the taken for granted assumptions about WE speakers, native English speakers' inability to understand WE speakers (while pretending to be more intelligent than the WE speakers), native English speakers' reluctance to invest all the detail of human living into their English and the inevitable need for global scholarship to use native-speaker English. Having elucidated the paradoxical and proverbial divide that exists between the WE and native speaker English, the author invokes a Biblical prophecy stated in Chapter 11 of Genesis via the often-heard story of the tower of Babel: God "comes down" and confuses people's language. This, as the author asserts is a "clear biblical injunction in favour of multilingualism". Having alluded to his theological background to urge his readership to perceive the weaknesses in WE as well as the contradictions of native speaker English, he invites his readership to invest in majority world peoples' own languages rather than in English. EILJ is honoured to publish this paper, as it

is the first of its kind to be written by a long-serving Christian theologian, who has spoken so unabashedly on the cultural as well as the spiritual politics of the English language. We then entreat our readership to consider it as a soul-searching exercise in order to challenge and demolish the notion that the socioeconomic mobility associated with the spread of native speaker English is synonymous with its salvific status. Perhaps, such an exercise can help mitigate the significant social, political and economic inequalities suffered by WE speakers by resituating WE in a more amenable paradigm wherein WE and Multilingualism can both enjoy parity of esteem and currency.

The paper entitled, “Comparative Analysis of the Textual Resources in Academic Texts in Philippine and American Englishes from Systemic Functional Linguistic Perspective”, by Hjalmar Punla Hernandez calls for a stronger acceptance and recognition of Philippine English (PhE). It challenges the prevalent norm and notion that PhE is below par with American English (AE). The research methodology used in the paper is so well moored and implemented that it confers a sense of vibrancy and novelty to the study. Using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) lens as his mainstay, the author compares the textual resources: theme and rheme, nominalization, and cohesion as seen in academic texts written in PhE and AE with a view to dynamizing his arguments in support of PhE. Having understood the ramifications and complexities that straddle and intersect the pedagogical implications of WEs, especially in L2 writing, the author challenges the linguistic reservation of conventional ESL scholars, who appear to label PhE as substandard. In light of this, he uses a substantial corpus of academic texts written both in PhE and AE to attempt a wide-canvas analysis of the phenomenon under investigation. The tools and tables used in the analysis and discussions of findings are remarkably congruent with the author’s epistemic stance in that they help untangle the textual metafunctions of the textual resources taken up for comparison. Pointing out the similarities between the texts written by Filipinos and those written by the users of AE, the author defends that the quality of the texts written in PhE is consistent with that of the texts in AE. In light of this, it is indeed gratifying to note that the Filipinos make use of the same textual resources of academic texts that Americans use; thus, both writers satisfy the standards of academic writing. Given this, the author strongly recommends that the teaching of academic writing should draw on the textual features of the discourse that operates in the academic texts written by Filipinos in PhE. This would then need to be factored into the policy and planning initiatives and well-orchestrated in the production of materials for the teaching of academic writing in the higher education domains of the country. Such a move could benefit the Filipinos manifold as

the textual features in question can help them realize that PhE is no less than the preferred native variety, thereby instilling a sense of pride in their acceptance and use of PhE. Notwithstanding his strong defences of PhE, the author feels that studies of similar nature could be undertaken to attempt wider comparisons between PhE and other varieties of English for our deeper understanding as to how these textual resources and themes play out in the various contexts and settings of WEs. We entreat our readership to deduce critical relevance for translating the leads offered by the author for appropriate pedagogical applications in their respective EIL settings given the candour with which the author has argued his case for dehegemonizing an inner circle native variety of English in the Philippines.

Judith Yoel's paper entitled "The Visibility of the English Language in the Linguistic Landscape of Two Teacher Training Colleges in Israel" presents a well-articulated problem posing exercise as it interrogates the "not so encouraging visibility of English" in the general linguistic landscape of Israel with specific reference to two teacher training colleges in the country. The paper notes that despite English not being an official language in Israel, its presence and prestige continue to permeate the domains of media, commerce, industry and science in the country. Given this, one would assume that the same would apply to the domain of higher education/academe in Israel. However, this is not the case given its weak visibility in the Israeli academia despite its mandatory status in the curricular domains of higher education. Against such a curious background, the paper examines all signage in English displayed in the two colleges chosen for the investigation. The ensuing focus directs attention to the forms in which English is displayed: bottom -up, top-down and the types of English displayed for informative and commercial purposes. The inclusion of semi-structured interview data from international students brings in an inviting dose of attitudinal data, which the author deems particularly valuable in coming to terms with the international dimensions of her investigation alongside the poor visibility of English in Israeli higher education. The triangulated interview data points as to how the inadequate English signage limited their accessibility to important information related to classroom changes, absent lecturers and college-wide events, which in one case included an unscheduled evacuation of the college and the cancellation of studies due to a fire in the city. It also mentioned that the international students found it odd to note the strong presence/ready availability of English in spaces areas outside of the college, like malls, bus stops and restaurants, in contrast to its feeble presence in the college environment. More importantly, two interviewees compared the lack of English at the college to their own college in Switzerland, where all signs appear in German, French and English



attesting to the mediating role of English in a multilingual setting. Much to her discomfiture, the author notes that the analysis of signage employed in the study attests to an untenable account of the valuable role English can and should assume in the Israeli academia. Its feeble presence there betrays the Hebrew predominant national linguistic agenda despite a practical and professional need for English as an inevitable international language in Israeli higher education. It then begs the question that if English is stipulated only as a specific course related requirement, how could the students of higher learning attain the desired pragmatic and intercultural competence in it in order to participate in various European academic programs and enjoy the benefits of internationalization. The problem-posing exercise that the author has so far detailed in this paper advocates for an accentuated exposure to English in the linguistic landscape of Israeli academia so as to equip students with the language exposure necessary to develop the English language-related skills they require for linguistic and intellectual enrichment and growth. In addition, it could help address the current paucity of English teachers in Israel by encouraging teachers to specialize in the teaching of English. Given the current rapid pace at which higher education has been globalized with English as its language of realization, the author stresses the urgent need to scale up the visibility of English in the Israeli academic settings.

The joint paper entitled “An Investigation of an Early Bilingual Child: Phonological Development at its Finest?” by Ali Öztüfekçi and Kenan Dikilitaş examines the use of English by a child with a view to track the dynamics and fallouts of early bilingualism. In light of this, the authors believe that the child’s simultaneous exposure to different varieties of the English language and the context in which English is used, could account for the different phonological varieties and the different interaction patterns that occur while communicating in the language. Referring to a host of issues and insights covered by the available studies in bilingualism, the authors point to the need for more definitive research in order to further expand the theoretical understanding of early bilingualism from the point of view of societal factors and therefore, consider their study as one that can help address that aim. In light of this, the participating subject of their study: Ahmet, a four-year-old bilingual child who was born in the USA and who had lived there for a year before moving back to Turkey, constitutes the centrality and primacy of the study and its storied understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. By the same token, Ahmet’s home environment coupled with his nursery school environment assumes particular prominence and substance in their study. While Ahmet used only English at school, in his home environment he used Turkish with his mother and English both informally and formally with

his Western educated father and his two English speaking nannies. The authors have used a mixed method approach comprising quantitative and qualitative elements as they felt that such an approach could yield a more definitive understanding of the key concern of the study via the triangulation that it could possibly support. While the quantitative data came from the questionnaires filled out by two native speakers of English, the qualitative data came from the audio-recordings of naturally occurring interactions/conversations that Ahmet had with his English-speaking nannies. The questionnaires filled out by two native speakers mainly focused on supra-segmental features of English as such features of the language are believed to be relatively more important in terms of phonological intelligibility. The analysis of transcribed speech samples of Ahmet helped the authors determine the common phonetic and prosodic features of the utterances produced by him and the care-taker. In light of this, the authors confirm that a simultaneous bilingual child (like Ahmet) being exposed to English from birth but to different varieties of the language, can resort to differing phonological varieties. Further to this, they confirm that in the process of developing his phonological awareness and inventory, he could sound more like his monolingual English-speaking peers, not to mention that his manner of speaking the language might be more identical to those who acquire the second language in a context where the heritage language exists alongside English. The implications for further research and pedagogical ramifications that the authors have articulated in this paper can be invaluable to anyone engaged in the domains of policy formulation as well its pedagogical implementations. In light of this, our readership should find this paper both appealing and exhorting.

The paper entitled “English as an International Language: Reconstructing EFL teachers’ cultural awareness and perception of teaching culture” by Masoomah Estaji and Maryam Faraji Savarabadi speaks to the role of understanding culture in relation to globalization, contextually-centred sense making, cultural competence, EFL/ELT materials, learners and teachers. In light of this, the authors use their well-informed theoretical resolve to systematically interrogate the conventionally- accepted notion(s) of the target culture as upheld by teachers of traditional EFL/ESL and ELT as well its asocial ramifications. Their chronological and critical examination of the theoretical issues underlying these notions brings a particular sense of primacy and immediacy to their reasoned discourse. This is then well-placed to interrogate and problematize the essentialist notion of target culture that the monolingual native speaker signifies within the conventional EFL/ELT frames. Given the power, potential and promise of EIL across the cultures and continents of the

globe and its ever-increasing currency, the authors underscore the need for coming to terms with the uniqueness of the Iranian context in which the English language is taught. Such a realization, they believe, can bring about a shift of emphasis and attitude with which they can strengthen their resolve to de-essentialize the conventional cultural slant of EFL/ELT and blend EIL dimensions/issues/ insights as well as the local culture with their teaching of English. With a view to understanding the role and relevance of interface between language and culture, the authors used semi-structured interviews and seminar-led course observations as the mainstays of their methodology. The procedures and protocols used in the methodology were meant to investigate the teachers' perception of teaching culture and assess their cultural awareness with regard to English as an international language. The mixed findings of the study appeared to suggest that the 16 Iranian EFL teachers featured in the study despite their good understanding of teaching culture in EFL classrooms, did not confirm any transition from traditional assumptions of ELT in Iran to the new trends of EIL. Notwithstanding this, the findings did point to some discernible attitudinal change in favour and support of the space and synergy available for both reconstructing their perceptions of teaching culture and teaching it via EIL practices. This then, leads the authors to surmise that that the workshop and the materials used to prompt teachers' course observations must have been comprehensive enough to effect an attitudinal change in the teachers' who deemed it necessary to teach a variety of cultures through EIL pedagogies and practices. In closing, the authors believe that questions about EIL, such as whose culture or which English to teach, cannot be easily resolved, but answers can only be gradually obtained and shared by teachers and teacher educators in their specific contexts. It then becomes a constant imperative for English teachers in Iran to develop their cultural competence in order to instil in their learners an awareness of cultural and linguistic differences in a variety of Englishes as well as strategies for handling these differences. While such a position would encourage students to see the worth of their culture as well as other cultures, it will help realize that their focus in the learning of EIL should be on learning it as a means of communication and not simply mastering it as an object of academic study.

Arpita Goswami's paper entitled "Changing Contours: The Interference of the Mother Tongue on English Speaking Sylheti Bengali" examines the phonological differences between Sylheti Bangla (henceforth, SHB) vis-a-vis that of standard English pronunciation (RP) and the attendant issues of intelligibility that accrue out of it. Alluding quite unreservedly to the sociocultural sensibilities prevalent in business, entertainment, arts, advertising and politics, the author reckons that the emergence of various

kinds of English in many of the geographical regions of India are unavoidable linguistic occurrences. By the same token, the author believes that it then becomes a theoretical imperative for her to untangle one such variant of English i.e. Sylheti English, used by speakers of Sylheti, a dialect of Bangla language( SHB) which is primarily spoken in the Sylhet District of Bangladesh, Barak Valley of Assam and North Tripura of North Eastern India. In light of this, the paper makes allusive use of a considerable quantum of issues and insights that constitute the notions of interference and transfer in L2 phonology. It also draws on the affinitive and affiliative aspects of Contrastive Analysis (CA), as its methodological mainstays in order to examine some basic phonological aspects of SHB such as segments, syllable, stress, and intonation and evaluate the interference of mother tongue in Sylheti learners of English. As result, the findings obtained help in the construction of a contrastive picture of SHB and English phonology to understand how the differences create hindrances in the way of SHB speakers' learning of English correctly. The very same process, the author believes, highlights the causes behind the systematic errors committed by SHB speakers. From the analysis of English data spoken by SHB speakers, it becomes verifiably confirmable that while learning English the properties of SHB phonology did interfere with the phonology of English and that this interference accounts largely, if not wholly for the many errors that SHB speakers committed in their spoken English. Notwithstanding the efficacious presence and role of CA-centric methodology in her study, the author believes that it will help us propose an empirical profile of the Interlanguage (i.e. IL) phonology of Sylheti English (henceforth, SHE), a variety of English spoken by Sylheti speakers. Such an outcome is well placed to help them moderate as well as mitigate the problems arising out of the gap between Sylheti English and English (RP). Given this, the author feels that her paper has unfolded theoretical dimensions that can expand on the theory of second language acquisition with a particular focus on learning English by the SHB speakers. In sum and spirit, this paper has opened up a considerable number of "theoretical in-betweenisms" which can translate into agendas for further research on EIL mediated and moderated interlanguage phonologies.

The paper entitled "Babu English Revisited: A Sociolinguistic Study" by Sreeja unmasks the problematic nature one of the most popular varieties of Indian English and its not-so encouraging implications/outcomes from a well-argued sociohistorical standpoint. Fully aware of the questionable definitions that describe it either as pidgin or register, the author factors in a definite need to analyse the stylistic and syntactic features of this variety of English with a view to characterizing it as non-variety. Such an exercise, the author believes

can chart a new route for theorizing the issues of language difference and could possibly dispel the asocial wisdom associated with the conventional assumptions of language fixity replete in its linguistic labelling. The sociohistorical dimensions elucidated in the paper are meant to inform the readership as to how the phrase Babu English germinating in the colonial period referred to: the “funny” English written by English educated Indians, many of whom were clerks working for the English and many of whom were educated men of considerable social standing. By the same token, the referent came to acquire a pejorative sense, which resulted in the British bracketing Babu English with Butler or Kitchen English in their derogation of the English used by Indians. Nevertheless, we are led to believe that in India today the term “Babu” has become an umbrella term signifying any Indian who is/was a clerk and who wrote in officialese English, reminiscent of the laboured writing noticeable in Babu English. The methodology of the paper is predicated on the stylistic and syntactic analyses of miscellaneous specimens written by Indians in English, which were compiled and published in 1890 entitled, “Baboo English” by an Englishman known as TWJ. The author’s robust analysis of these features in the collection and the viable inferences that she draws from them to qualify her premise attests to the novelty and vibrancy of her investigation. In characterizing Babu English, the author notes that its stylistic features are explicated by obsequiousness, verbosity, use of fixed/ready-made expressions (which the writers have used indiscriminately in letters of different situations) and instances of inappropriate or odd use of vocabulary. By the same token, she notes that its syntactic features are explicated by missing or incorrect articles, incorrect auxiliaries, use of transitive verbs as intransitive or vice versa, deviations in the use of tense. In light of this, the author argues that given the varying proficiency levels of the letters as well as the fluctuating levels of competence displayed by its writers confirm the distinct lack of consistency in the occurrence of the different features and therefore, should preclude any epistemic stance which would simplistically characterize Babu English either as a variety or interlanguage in a conventional Selinkerian sense. As such a characterization fails to account for the discursal and cultural aspects of language, which are inevitable to the learning of English in the Indian multilingual context, the author is convinced that Selinker’s (1972, 1992) theory needs to be modulated to accommodate aspects beyond the structural features of a learner’s language so as to reckon with its ever-evolving nature. In reiterating her epistemic stance, the author underscores the need for including the learners’ cultural background(s) into SL classroom pedagogy and its attendant repertoire. The accruing realization should then characterize Babu English as a sociohistorically and socioculturally situated discourse practice. Such a position as argued in the

paper can help mitigate the adverse effects of any use of English predicated on “one size fits all English monolingualism” across our academic contexts and farther afield. The tone and tenor of the paper, especially in regard to the ways and means with which the author has unpacked the ethos of the phenomenon chosen for investigation, provides a fitting finale to this Issue. We, then, fondly hope that our readership would take the invaluable leads offered by the paper and apply it accordingly in their research on EIL practices.

In closing, I wish to applaud the gusto and gumption with which the contributing authors of this issue have signposted their alternate discourses of current reckoning in EIL. Such endeavours are pivotal to EILJ’s declared mission of creating “a heterogeneous global English speech community, with a heterogeneous English and different modes of competence” (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 211). Given this, I am certain that the issues and insights discussed in this issue would serve as a lamp to all of us, who could otherwise be stranded in a “methodological wasteland of EIL”. Read on!

**Dr Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**  
**Chief Editor**

# Is English salvific? Myth-busting “God’s language”

**Jim Harries**

*William Carey International University and Alliance for Vulnerable Mission (AVM)*

“A number of factors have catapulted English into becoming the world's most taught, learned, researched and used second or foreign language.”

(Chowdbury & Ha, 2014, p. 14)

## Abstract

From intercultural experience, and following scholarly analysis, this article blows the whistle on the supposed advantages of the development of diverse “World Englishes.” While native-speaker English is rooted in biblical faith, global Englishes may not represent either good theology, or good sense. The ongoing popularity of native-speaker English as standard amongst Englishes reflects the inadequacy of prior understandings that all languages are neutral, equally functional, and extra-contextual. Native-agency of colonised people historically having raised English’s profile, does not excuse the West from responsibility for subsidising its language globally. English nowadays spreads in a supposedly secular world *as if* it is itself divine, displacing the Gospel of Jesus from its rightful ascendance.

Keywords: World Englishes, Bible, linguistics, religion, globalisation

## Introduction

To find what one has learned in the push and pull of life being authenticated by academics, is indeed wonderful. That is the order in which I have come to know what I want to articulate here.

I am British born and raised, thus a possessor of the apparently “much coveted” inner-circle-native-English.<sup>1</sup> Living in Africa (Zambia then Kenya) from 1988 to date, has given me experience of engaging with various African Englishes. For almost 20 years I taught (theology, part-time) using my English, to Africans. By the end of 20 years, my faith in the value of English had declined. This is for various reasons, some of which I want to discuss below. My preference for African languages has not always made me popular, either amongst fellow Westerners, or Africans.

The following definitions of terms are used in this paper:

- (1) Standard English: “the English that with respect to spelling, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary is substantially uniform though not devoid of regional differences, that is well established by usage in the formal and informal speech and writing of the educated, and that is widely recognized as acceptable wherever English is spoken and understood.”<sup>2</sup>
- (2) Native-speaker English: English of “a person who learned to speak the language of the place where he or she was born as a child rather than learning it as a foreign language.”<sup>3</sup>

### **The prominence of native-speakers of English**

Ha (2016, p. 352) tells us that “colloquial English used by native speakers of English is most often criticised and problematised for being discriminatory and intolerant of other Englishes”. Morrison (2016) makes a very similar point; “native English speakers are the world’s worst communicators” is the title to his article.<sup>4</sup> Other English users dislike native-speakers! These native-speakers may be the main loser to the globalisation of Englishes. It is very difficult for native-speakers of English to contribute intelligent comment to discussion in contexts in which another WE (World English) is dominant. It is difficult for them to understand what a non-native WE speaker is communicating.

Why are native-speakers of English so disadvantaged? Because non-native speakers of English appropriate English words to their own categories. Native-speakers of English do not understand what they think they understand when hearing or reading WEs. Yet because it is their own language (English) that is being used, they do not have the option of seeking for a translation.<sup>5</sup> In addition, when native speakers of English talk outside of their normal contexts (for example, in foreign countries), they are most likely to make the most serious blunders because:

1. Many of them are monolingual.<sup>6</sup>
2. Others defer to them, because of the precedence given to native-speakers of English.
3. A lot of the meaning they as native-speakers pack into the words they use goes beyond the dictionary definitions that WE learners tend to follow.

One problem in addressing the above issue is quite simply the sheer monetary and material value, or perceived value, of native-speaker English. Native-speaker English continues, despite opposition to this practice, to be the “norm” for WEs to emulate (Ha, 2015, p. 240). An affront to a native-speaker can be considered a very serious offence, when in many cultures around the world,



one does not openly confront the powerful. Hence in inter-English exchange, when a native-speaker can't be "wrong", others either bend the words they hear to fit the truth (the meaning or impact of words is subtly transformed), or if they find the native-speaker simply to be misguided, remain quiet.<sup>7</sup> Making sense is compromised by the interests of economic prospects, leaving the native-speaker of English largely "in the dark".

This is very evident to me in the course of my daily life in Anglophone East Africa. Being now fluent in two East African languages, I have a choice of which language to use in conversations.<sup>8</sup> Should I use English, associations in my language with my country of birth (the UK) result in my saying things in a way that is unfamiliar in East Africa, both in terms of my accent, grammar, and content such as choice of words or concepts. Listening to local people using English forces me to guess ways in which their choice of terms links to the cultural and community reality of their everyday life. Should we use an indigenous tongue, then contrary to the above, I use terms that are clearly rooted in local context, in ways that I have learned locally. I immediately appreciate what a local person is referring to with reference to the local context. Use of English with East Africans comes to be a laborious frustrating imprecise exercise of mouthing terms that people have learned in school but often cannot clearly connect to their daily life experiences.

Affective aspects of language use and word impacts should also be considered. Engaging with people in an African language automatically identifies me as someone on the "inside" of local community, someone who has taken time and made efforts to learn locally, someone who thus cares for people deeply, and so on. Use of English identifies me instead with foreignness and ignorance.

In much of Africa known to me English is preferred in anticipation that the speaker will one day want to "go abroad" (see also Ha, 2015; Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 13). Or they may want to speak to a powerful, influential, wealthy (if ignorant) native-speaker of English who visits them. Time and time again, when I have asked children why English is used in African schools, this is the reason they have given me: they are preparing for the day they meet with a white man.

Non-native speakers of English can speak at cross-purposes with one-another. For example, when terms they use in common have acquired diverse impacts from their differing cultural contexts. (For example, a convention can develop to use a certain English word in one way in one country, but in a different way in another country.) On the other hand, they do not typically invest all the detail of human living into their English. Much detail remains invested into their own languages. As a result, English-usage is typically confined primarily to relatively "simple" exchanges, that do not raise the expectation that something profound is to be understood.<sup>9</sup> English for such people is a "simplified code" that has limited functionality and is appropriate for use only in certain spheres of life.

Native-speakers of English tend to find some non-native speakers they engage with to be surprisingly incompetent (Chowdbury, 2014, p. 9). They can be taken as not-thinking, showing their ignorance by being reluctant to contribute to class debates, and so on. This is taken by native-English speakers, and often more widely, as indicating that the people concerned are somehow not as intelligent as are native-speakers of English. (In many ways, this underlies the assumed negativity of the “other” that fuels racism.) The question should be raised, whether they aren’t just as intelligent with respect to their own languages, and the presuppositions their own people make about their lives and contexts? That is, is intelligence a universal human characteristic, that can be objectively measured using one language? Certainly, it is regularly my experience when engaging with local people using their own African languages, that I seem to be the incompetent one. This suggests that active participation in debates using their own language amongst native-speakers is very difficult for non-native speakers. This is attested to elsewhere in this article. Native English has a necessary logic that learning standard English alone does not impart.

## **The Bible**

Many contemporary studies of WEs (World Englishes) take relatively little cognizance of the Bible, or the Christian faith, or of the impact of both of these on contemporary English. The question as to just *why* English is so popular globally, is often mute. That is to say; it is assumed to be simply a question of economics. (Ha (2015) brings this simple relationship into question by considering imagination, fantasy, and things being “in the air,” see below, but she does not venture far into the field of theology.) Careful observers will note that native-speakers of English are predominantly Western Protestant Christian in background.<sup>10</sup> I suggest that native-speaker English is a product of Western Protestantism.

I will here confine myself to just a few bible passages. My reader should understand that what I present is a simplification of the whole complexity of the Biblical theme in question. Genesis, a deeply foundational book for Christianity and Judaism states, God speaking to Abraham, that: “I will make you into a great nation ... and all people’s on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2a and 3b). Paul picks up this theme in Galatians 3:8, telling us that blessing is acquired by faith. In brief, Christians in general expect that their faithful<sup>11</sup> adherence to the Scriptures, will result in God’s using them to bring blessing to the whole earth. In our secular era, overtly “religious” expression of this theme has tended to be suppressed. The fact that native-speakers of today’s global language English, that is the focus of this article, are extremely deeply influenced by the Gospel and the Bible, over many generations in history even if not

apparently in contemporary society, is widely ignored. The global spread of English can thus be taken as:

1. An expression of the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy.
2. Or, an outcome of a confusion; as instead of the Gospel, it is now the English language that is being spread.
3. A continuation of what was once enthusiasm to spread the Gospel now transferred into global spread of a language, being considered to be in the interests of “global blessing”.<sup>12</sup>
4. An outcome of blessing received by Christian nations, that they would like to share with the rest of the world.

Points 1 to 4 above should together have us ask: is the English language an adequate substitute for the Gospel, as traditionally presented by the church? My own answer would be that no it is not, and that substitution of a language for the Gospel has been an error.

Chapter 11 of Genesis includes the well-known account of the tower of Babel. In this account, God is shown to be highly displeased with men’s efforts at communicating universally through one language (Genesis 11:6-7). God “comes down” and confuses people’s language. This is a clear biblical injunction in favour of multilingualism.<sup>13</sup>

### **Destroyers of Sense**

One response to the today much evidenced ongoing and even growing primacy of native Englishes, is what I can term that of “destroyers.” I use this rather strong English term intentionally.<sup>14</sup> Kachru (1985) is perhaps best known for his view that all-Englishes should be equal (McKay, 2002, p. 50). In his writing, Kachru (1985) insisted that native-speakers of English have lost control of the means of maintaining English’s standard (p. 30). Instead, he perceived of a tomorrow’s world in which there were numerous “Englishes,” with a variety of norms, yet that such a situation would not result in unintelligibility (McKay, 2002, p. 51).

A very similar theme is picked up by De Costa, Park, and Wee’s (2018, p. 3) critique of the neoliberal “audit culture”. This audit culture proposes that English be valued for imparting “entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and sturdy individualism”. It is to be governed, i.e. English’s quality is to be assessed, by quantifiable numerical means. Implicitly this is so as to maximise “business profits”, especially through increasingly popular “global rankings” (De Costa et al., 2018, p. 13) that are resulting in English-fever<sup>15</sup> in Korea (Park, 2009) and presumably also elsewhere. In short from the above, contemporary means of auditing English language quality are driving people crazy in their lust for English. Knowledge of English seems to offer grandeur if achieved, and shame if

not. English, in this interpretation, is the language of “real” authority: “‘authentic’ English ... is considered to be essential ... for ... economic mobility and social distinction in South Korea,” (Lorente & Tupas, 2014, p. 72). Unless or until Koreans and others grasp that native-speaker authoritative English, they consider themselves to be second class! Extant audits, such as CEFR (the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment),<sup>16</sup> “generate what comes to be accepted as knowledge and truth” (De Costa et al., 2018, p. 17). We “must pay attention to the ideological mechanisms through which such truths are produced, so that our resistance to neo-liberalism can focus on undoing their effects” they tell us (De Costa et al., 2018, p. 17), demonstrating their strong opposition to the audit culture that they are describing.

Alogali (2018, p. 55) is a contemporary author who seems to closely follow Kachru (see above). He wants to provide “equal access to discursive power and honouring of the contributions of multilingual scholars”. It’s hard to argue with Alogali’s (2018, p. 56) intentions, based on the understanding that “the hegemony of English takes advantage of many of the same power mechanisms as those used by former colonial powers”. Yet Alogali appears not to have realised that those very former-powers continue to *run* much of the once-colonised world. Without them, I suggest, much would collapse.<sup>17</sup> They are able to do so, because they have a language, English (in the case of Brits and Americans) in which they can understand one another. By forcing “other Englishes” to have the same authority, it is as if Alogali wants to impose glossolalic-style-speech onto native-speakers of English, permanently dummifying their communication systems, so that what they are running fall apart, with nothing to replace it. English should be able to “mutate and morph,” Alogali (2018, p. 69) tells us advocating “nonsense” in the place of what was once sensible communication.<sup>18</sup>

Alogali’s (2018) arguments are easy to reach, given Kachru’s position. This makes it amazing how seriously Kachru has been taken – perhaps more because of a liberal wish or personal audacity than because of scholarly-rigour. “Non-native” speakers of English are at a disadvantage, and Alogali (2018, p. 55) wants to give them “equal access to discursive power” as native-speakers I am questioning the means by which he wants to do so.

WEs, in other words, are not full “languages”. They are a means to enable international inter-cultural communication at a basic level. They are not capable of intercultural communication at depth or with precision. They do not displace indigenous languages, although they may handicap them or reduce their jurisdiction. Non-native-English users of WEs have languages that fill roles that a WE does not fill. Native-speakers of English use the same for this latter role. That is a difference between “standard-English”, and native-speaker English. It is the part of the language that is not picked up in a classroom, but in life-engagement, including the domestic sphere, and people’s diverse customs and traditions. Yet, it

is an essential ingredient for fully functional human communication to happen.

To displace a fully functional language (native-speaker English) with “standard English” as aspired to by WEs is to destroy sense. Even if the global power of English is problematic, it may not be wise to cut off one’s nose to spite one’s face, or to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. An alternative solution, that does not in the interests of “global communication,” destroy the West, should be found. The West’s objective should be to empower others without destroying itself. WEs may well not be the best way to empower the West at all. In my humble opinion, at the end of the day, Kachru talks nonsense.

“Scholars [themselves] continue to debate among themselves using the highest form of English in the rank out there,” i.e. native-speaker English (Ha, 2016, p. 355). In other words, it would appear that even this debate about better and worse Englishes would fall apart if Kachru (who, ironically, himself wrote using native-speaker English) were to be taken seriously.

### **Native Englishes to the fore**

The prominence of native-speaker English is not declining, but rising, globally (Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 15). Perhaps reasons given above have contributed to this increase, and not decrease (to the chagrin of many), widely perceived importance of acquisition of native-speaker type Englishes. This is partly at least due to the rise of media that uses native-speaker standard: Teachers of English seem themselves to be behind if they teach a standard of English other than native-English, when native-speaker English has become more and more immediately available to students by diverse avenues, including the internet (Ha, 2016, p. 354). As we have mentioned above: despite efforts to the contrary that have had very limited real success; respected global scholarship continues to engage using native-speaker English.

### **Languages are rooted in families, not institutions**

Blommaert (2019, p. 1) points out how language planning was, in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, considered to be a state-affair. Many Post-colonial states set up similar policies, that included a formal adoption of a European language. This policy has not had “a long list of successes” (Blommaert, 2019, p. 1). “Some assumptions about how language could work in social environments turned out to be fundamentally flawed and several aspects of socio-linguistic reality turned out to “talk-back” to the[se] carefully designed and energetically enforced policies” (Blommaert, 2019, p. 1). Blommaert (2019, pp. 1-3) identifies three major problems with the above policies. Rationality is not to be found in a language, but instead, it is “found in the normative transparency of [whatever] socio linguistic

regime” (Blommaert, 2019, p. 4). It has been wrong to assume that because English is the “rational” language for its native-speakers, use of it will therefore be “rational” for everyone. Languages do not arise from institutions, such as schools and governments, but are found in families (Blommaert, 2019, p. 5).

Blommaert’s (2019) foreword, cited above, provides us with a radical critique of policies that continue to be “normal” in much of the post-colonial world. Languages turn out not to be as flexible and malleable interculturally as they were once thought to be. The relationship between a language and a culture is much closer than was once thought.<sup>19</sup> This latter realisation should cause one to ask questions about many linguistic situations found around the world today.

### **Languages’ functional inequalities**

Language policies to date have continued on the basis of a faith in “the functional equality of all languages”, and this has been the “anchor” point for spread of Englishes around the world (Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 1). It has created “political and ideological blinkers to the way the English language and its role in the world today have been understood” (Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 1). It has made it “wrong” to consider that English can perpetuate inequality. In actuality Englishes are not equal (Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 3). Hence advocating for or promoting English can be unjust. Many years of effort have not thrown off notions of the “superiority” of native-speaker English. This, it seems to me, is with very good reason.

Language policies implemented post-war in the last century will not “work,” I suggest. The modernist foundations on which they were built have been discredited. The language-policies presupposed Western-style modernism as a norm, yet: “All other [non-Western] modernity’s are ... mimics of a real thing whose full realisation elsewhere is, at best, indefinitely deferred” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004, p. 331).

Languages are not “neutral,” so that they can function equally well in any context. Those who believed that was the case were seduced (Tupas & Rubdy, 2015, p. 2). The English language promotes Western values (Ha, 2015, p. 223). Major advantages of use of English in African countries arise because it facilitates the exercise of control from native-English speakers, i.e. outside-dependency.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that global Englishes have a “centre” has been resisted by scholars, because it is problematic: it implies that English users will continuously privilege that centre. Non-native teachers of English then appear to be second class (Ha, 2015, p. 228). Perhaps there is a balance to be weighed – the advantages that presumably accrue from having a linguistic code that in a basic sense is globally understood, versus the disadvantage that this system leaves the rest of the globe in a “subservient” position to native-speakers. This position

could also of course be in various ways disadvantageous for native-speakers themselves, perhaps leaving them ignorant by comparison to everyone else who also draw on another language (see above).<sup>21</sup> If it is injustices that will enable native-speakers to benefit, that is likely to be two-edged.<sup>22</sup>

Recent decades have seen the emergence of major efforts to promote justice, including in the world of Christian mission.<sup>23</sup> Yet it is ironic, that these very efforts at imparting justice, when (as has invariably been the case) they run on the basis of European languages especially English, are in turn imparting perhaps the largest injustice of all; forcing people to live according to a code that they can neither understand nor control.<sup>24</sup> A second injustice or at least deception pointed to in this article, is the use of English as if it is a “secular” language, concealing those of its roots (and benefits) that are ingrained in Christian practice and in the Bible (Harries, 2015, p. 5).

### **Native-agency in the spread of English**

According to Tupas and Rubdy (2015, p. 14), Brutt-Griffler is rather unique as a scholar, for ascribing agency for the dominance of English in Asia and Africa to native people. From personal experience, points made by Brutt-Griffler are important: It has not always been “policy” that English should be dominant in colonial states, or that it should be widely known (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, pp. 73-74). Pressure to this end has often come from nationals themselves (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, p. 65). The same applies today: When teaching at an English-medium theological college in Kenya, I met major opposition to the use of the East African language Swahili in the curriculum from students themselves (between 2005 and 2010). The students themselves wanted English. In the current climate, threats to the hegemony of global English may meet major opposition in ex-colonial states, both from their citizens, and their patrons and donors.

The above begs the question of responsibility – who was and is responsible for intervention into communities in ways that have young people opt for foreign languages in preference to their own? Even if agency by majority world natives was responsible for much of today’s prominence of English, this does not necessarily absolve “colonialists” of blame.

### **Students’ resentment**

There is, according to Ha (2016), a resentment amongst students, to the dominance of English. This kind of resentment against the hand-that-feeds you, I think can be identified in East Africa, even if at an apparently low level. I am personally convicted that should the truths pointed to in this article become more widely known, this resentment may grow, and as already indicated above, could

result in a reversal: Measures contemporarily known as bringing justice could be seen as harbingers of injustice. English that currently seems redemptive, could be re-interpreted as oppressive.

The creation of desire for students to enrol into “international” study programmes that ignore their own histories (Chowdbury & Ha, 2014, p. 4), is one of the clearer injustices of so-called international education that I have seen clearly myself. I have seen African people with vast ministry experience attend English-language theological education, being treated as “babies,” because the accreditation system required native-speaker English, and supposed church traditions found in the West and not in Africa. Ha (2015, p. 239) tells us of foreign students studying at international universities in Malaysia taking almost no interest in the local people’s, culture, traditions, or language, as they focused all their energies on trying to get what was “international”, i.e. Western.

### **English as divine**

Ha (2016, p. 238-9), apparently inadvertently, but certainly in some ways very clearly, points us back towards the “real” attractive foundation that has led to today’s popularity of English.<sup>25</sup> Ha (2016) points out that international students from Asia, find imagined Westerners to be more attractive than “real” ones, and it is their *imagination* that causes them to dedicate themselves with great vigour to international education that promises quality-English. Turning to theology, human imagination seems to be involved in enabling us to perceive of and know God (McCormack, 1984, p. 452). International students’ perfect Western dream is of an invisible Australian, rooted in fantasy, located “in the air” (Ha, 2015, p. 240). Ha’s (2015) use of terms such as *fantasy*, and *invisible* has her encroach onto the field of religion. Religious belief, unlike secularism, blurs distinctions between “real” and “unreal.”<sup>26</sup> What might in secular terms seem to be “in the air” or “imagined,” have very real impacts indeed for Christians (1 Corinthians 3:18-20). When Ha (2016, p. 349) compares Yoga with global-English she comes even closer to a pivotal conclusion in this article: Englishes’ global attractiveness arises from its having grown amongst historically Christian people. We should recognise that the globalisation of English we now see is an outcome of God’s speaking through Christ to save all people by bringing them to himself (John 11:25).

Markets and institutions are the “all powerful deity or God” of today say Chowdbury and Ha (2014, p. 16). On the contrary I suggest that the all-powerful deity, which has the West be “educator of the other” (Chowdhury & Ha, 2014, p. 15), is not foundationally “markets or institutions” at all, but Yhwh, God, King of kings, Lord of Lords, creator and everlasting father of mankind.<sup>27</sup> Reading the pages of the Bible one perceives how God’s people function to bring others into



the sphere of God's authority, known by Jesus (in English translation) as the Kingdom of God.<sup>28</sup> Native-speakers of English's desirability, whether imagined (see above) or otherwise, arises from their cultures' historical deep rootedness in God's kingdom. People's flocking to English is, I suggest, a reflection of native-speakers of English's ongoing habituation towards evangelism, an urge to bring others into the same fold, now to a language rather than to God. It is as if, English is assumed to be salvific.

In light of the above, the origins, as well as the solutions, to issues caused by WEs, is in a return to the recognition that what is of value to share globally primarily is God's good news in Jesus Christ. This is the origin of today's "faith" in English, the enthusiasm with which Westerners want it spread, and the almost fantasy-like, invisible, imagined image of God seen only "as through a glass darkly" (1 Corinthians 13:12), perceived by Ha's (2016, pp. 239-240) English students in Malaysia.

## **Conclusion**

Only theology can give us a satisfactory resolution to the conflicting ideals that the authors on WEs that this article draws on, present us with. Christianity, not liberalism, has made the world what it is today (Losurdo, 2011; Mangalwadi, 2011). The philosopher kings mentioned by Chowdbury and Ha (2014, p. 5), are "kings" influenced by a Christian vision. It is not English that is divine, it is God, of whom the Christian Scriptures speak. Why have Protestant nations, recently in (secular) denial about God, been pushing English? Their enthusiasm to spread the word has shifted from the Gospel to their language. English is powerful, because it arises from peoples who have in the past taken God's truths very seriously (Mangalwadi, 2011). That truth about the origins of English should be in mind when considering language policies globally. God himself prefers people to use their own languages (see reference to Babel above), so as to be better able to understand themselves and him from the foundation of who they are, not a *superior* European tongue. The idea that globalisation of English will be an equaliser has been shown to be a myth.

In writing this article, I do not aim at macro-government or policy level. Rather at individuals who want to work with people in the majority world today. I hope that my readers will perceive weaknesses in "WEs", and seek to invest in majority world peoples own languages rather than in English. The content that the West has to legitimately share with others around the globe is not English. It is the word of God, that is translatable. Hence the future of intercultural communication, and the way to reach the poor and lost, is through God's plan, which requires missionaries sent by him ready to lay down their lives for others in sharing the Gospel. It is the Gospel of Jesus that is salvific, not English. English is not "God's

language”.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>For Malaysian students, and no doubt those in many other parts of the world, “native speakers of English” provide the “linguistic norms and cultural values [that are] the yardstick against which ideal intercultural communication practices are measured” (Ha, 2015, p. 223).

<sup>2</sup><https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Standard%20English>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/native%20speaker>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20161028-native-english-speakers-are-the-worlds-worst-communicators>

<sup>5</sup>An example to illustrate this. Aboriginal English uses the same term, which is often translated into English as “mother”, to refer to someone’s aunts as well as to their mother (Sharifian, 2015). An aboriginal child saying “she is my mother” would erroneously be understood by a native-English speaker as “she is my *biological* mother”. Were the aboriginal person to be translated into English from their indigenous language, a translator aware of both contexts could make an adjustment, for example in this case instead of “mother” to say “the equivalent of a woman who is part of my family in my mother’s generation”. When the aboriginal person uses English, that translation possibility is lost.

<sup>6</sup>Whereas other people around the world are these days increasingly obliged to learn a second language (English) in order to communicate internationally, native-speakers of English, already having English, can see themselves as “getting by” without learning another language.

<sup>7</sup>I draw here particularly on my personal experience in Africa.

<sup>8</sup>I am a fluent speaker of the Swahili and Luo languages.

<sup>9</sup>Something profound may be intended to listeners of the speaker’s own context, but there will be little or no expectation that others will grasp it. (That is how English is used as a second language.) For example, users of English in parts of Western Kenya realise that fellow “locals” will link English words, sentences, or phrases, to key issues, like the avoiding of certain curses (known as *Chira*, (Mboya, 1978)), but know that outsiders will not do so (Harries, 2012, p. 47).

<sup>10</sup>Many churches outside of the West are known as “Protestant”. Without wanting to be splitting hairs, in reality many of them in Africa can only be considered Protestant to a certain extent: A central criteria of Protestantism is that people interpret the bible using their own languages, whereas the theology of many African people is, in formal circles, designed and articulated using not-indigenous languages such as English.

- <sup>11</sup>I am aware of some ambiguity in this English expression. This could mean faithful adherence to the Scriptures, or adherence to the Scriptures, by faith. I consider it to be both.
- <sup>12</sup>Hence “Protestant” America’s self-understanding of its role as having a manifest destiny to lead the world to make it into a better place.
- <sup>13</sup><https://jimsayers.wordpress.com/2016/06/15/babel-nations-and-empire-builders/>
- <sup>14</sup>Although it may be a “strong” term for native-speakers of English, that may not apply everywhere, for example at Mukinge Girls Secondary School in Zambia at which I was once a teacher, the term “destroy” was applied much more liberally. Students would say “you are destroying me” when meaning something like “you are holding me back.” I make this point here as an example, if WEs were to be “disconnected” from native-speaker English, the intention behind use of a term like “destroy” would be so ambiguous, as to risk becoming meaningless. The same applies to other, if not all, terms in English. Hence I consider the notion that WEs might totally displace native-speaker English as close to ridiculous, and frankly, dangerous, or life-threatening.
- <sup>15</sup>A desperate sense of necessity to learn English.
- <sup>16</sup><https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>
- <sup>17</sup>Western organisations setting out to “solve social problems” have “blanketed the globe” according to Bronkema (2015. P. 211). The gross dependency of much of Africa on outside Western control is not easy to reference in the literature because of the many efforts constantly made to conceal it. As someone who has lived on the continent of Africa for over 30 years, I should say it is more extensive than is widely realised, and constantly growing.
- <sup>18</sup>What Alogali advocates, would seem to be a kind of removal of any system of standards in English publishing, in which Journals would be forced to publish whatever came along, which to serious academics sounds ridiculous.
- <sup>19</sup>Lindbeck (2009) considers this with respect to church doctrines (2009). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are amongst the scholars who have contributed to there being much more profound understanding of the relationship between language and its context since the 1970s. This should make it clear, that imposition of a foreign language may not be at all helpful to a community.
- <sup>20</sup>This is evidenced in many ways. For example in Kenya, a telecommunications network originated in colonial times and handed over to locals was beset by multiple issues of corruption. Today’s mobile phone networks avoid this on account of being managed from outside of the continent. Kenya is widely seen as booming economically by comparison with Tanzania. One evident reason for this, is because English is widespread in Kenya, making Kenya much more accessible to Western control than is Tanzania, in which Swahili is more dominant.

- <sup>21</sup>One cannot help but recall efforts made from the 1880s ([http://esperanto.50webs.com/EsrGrammar-1\\_01.html](http://esperanto.50webs.com/EsrGrammar-1_01.html)) to promote Esperanto as global language, which was to have been a language that did not have native-speakers, but which English latterly seemed to overthrow.
- <sup>22</sup>For example, prosperous English speaking countries may be preferred destinations for immigrants, with the pluses and minuses that this entails.
- <sup>23</sup>See for example the IJM, International Justice Mission (<https://www.ijm.org/>).
- <sup>24</sup>Alexander (1999) explains this well.
- <sup>25</sup>See for example the IJM, International Justice Mission (<https://www.ijm.org/>).
- <sup>26</sup>Alexander (1999) explains this well.
- <sup>27</sup>I say “apparently inadvertently”, because of course I don’t know what was in Ha’s head as she wrote. Perhaps she has herself already recognised the way the Gospel of Jesus underlies global English? If not, then she certainly very effectively points towards it.
- <sup>28</sup>I take the term “religion” as referring to Christianity, on which other “religions” are modelled (Cusack, 2015, p. 5). I suggest that the distinction between “real” and “unreal” is an accretion to Christian societies in recent centuries arising from modern dualism (Harries 2016, p. 61).
- <sup>29</sup>These descriptors of God originate in the English-language bible.
- <sup>30</sup><https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kingdom-of-God>
- <sup>31</sup>John 3:16.

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# **Comparative Analysis of the Textual Resources in Academic Texts in Philippine and American Englishes from Systemic Functional Linguistic Perspective**

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## **Abstract**

Due to the rise of World Englishes, one of the principal challenges of teachers of English today is to keep paced with language variation (Crystal, 2013). Such variation influences their choices on the variety of English in instructional texts that they use in teaching ESL/EFL academic writing. Grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics, this study compared the textual resources in academic texts in Philippine English vis-à-vis that of American English. Results showed that academic texts in the two English varieties contain textual resources: theme and rheme, nominalization, and cohesion. Each of these aspects of textual metafunction is discussed in the paper. It can be concluded that PhE texts written by Filipinos are at par with the quality of AmE texts produced by Americans. Pedagogical implications are underscored in the conclusion of the study.

**Keywords:** Textual resources, academic texts, Philippine and American Englishes, systemic functional linguistics

## **Introduction**

As complexities arise on the pedagogical implications of World Englishes (WEs) in second language (L2) writing, using academic texts produced by non-native speakers of English has been treated with reservation by ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers. This qualm stems from the non-Inner Circle variety of English (Kachru, 2005, 1985) that is believed as substandard, deviating from the norms of standardized English. From his WEs paradigm, Concentric Circles of English, Kachru (2005, 1985) avers that English is divided into three circles. First is the Inner Circle where English is used as a Native Language (ENL) and traditionally regarded as standardized. The second and third (which are non-Inner Circle English varieties) are the Outer Circle where English is used as ESL and Expanding Circle where English is used as a Foreign Language (EFL), respectively.

Philippine English (PhE), an Outer Circle English, may be acceptable for Filipino English language faculty, and college students from top universities in

the Philippines (Bautista, 2001; Borlongan, 2009). However, it is still less understood by Filipinos who think that it is poor, colloquial, and broken. Bautista (2001, p. 31) noted that Filipinos might think that they use standardized American English (AmE) “when in fact they are not”. Relatively, many are not aware of new Englishes that non-Inner Circle English speakers themselves use (He, 2015). The lack of knowledge on the pedagogical use of PhE is evident in almost all academic writing courses that use Inner Circle written texts. Thus, academic texts in PhE written by educated Filipinos are hardly recognized by Filipino ESL writing teachers. This dearth covertly originates from the western norm that the Philippine educational system has set forth for its own English language curricula.

To treat this scarcity of using educated PhE academic texts into Philippine ESL academic writing, this study proposes an effort that may cause a positive impression towards academic texts in PhE. Such attempt is a systemic functional analysis (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Halliday, 1994) of PhE academic texts in the hope that they can be verified possessive of academic writing standards at par with that of AmE academic texts. Specifically, the study compares the textual resources of academic texts in PhE and AmE through the lens of systemic functional linguistics.

## **Review of literature**

### ***Philippine English, American English, and ICE-PHI***

Socio-culturally, varieties of English or WEs are real linguistic phenomena across the globe (Hernandez & Genuino, 2017) caused by the development of English as a language of worldwide communication (Sah & Upadhaya, 2016). According to Kirkpatrick (2007), WEs presupposes that variation on and between Englishes is normal and enduring. PhE and AmE differ as the former is an Outer Circle variety; thus, norm developing, while the latter is an Inner Circle; hence, norm providing. AmE is an Inner Circle variety brought by *Thomasites* (American soldiers and teachers) to the Philippines in 1901. Since then, it has maintained its status as the country’s institutionalized language. It was later on realized as not the English used by Filipinos, but Filipino English or PhE, the English variety that Filipinos speak and is acceptable in educated circles (Llamzon, 1969). However, PhE is not confined to educated Filipino circles because Martin (2014) claimed that PhE is actually the English spoken or used by Filipinos across circles of English in the Philippine context (i.e., Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles of PhE). Inner circle of PhE includes educated Filipinos (e.g., Filipinos who earned academic degrees) that consider PhE as a legitimate variety. Outer circle of PhE involves Filipinos (e.g., Filipino English teachers) that are ambivalent of recognizing the language. Expanding circle of PhE covers a majority of Filipinos



(e.g., Janina San Miguel, 2008 Miss Philippines World) who face difficulty in using or accessing the language because of factors such as interlanguage barrier and economic status.

PhE's linguistic innovations compared to AmE have been well-investigated in terms of its lexicon and grammar in spoken and written modes. Bautista (2001) determined the standard grammatical features of PhE from subject-verb agreement to prepositions through the analysis of the Philippine component of International Corpus of English (ICE-PHI) (written mode). ICE-PHI is the first digital corpus of PhE compiled by Bautista, Lising, and Dayag (Bautista 2004, p. 9). It contains one million words of spoken and written English collected from 1990 to 2004 (Bautista, 2004). Designed for comparative studies, ICE-PHI consists of 500 texts where each spoken and written text contains 2000 words. While the spoken corpora are dialogues, and monologues (scripted or unscripted), the written are printed (non-academically and academically written texts in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology (Nelson, 2006) and non-printed ones (student writing, and letters).

### ***Academic texts***

In the ICE-PHI, academic texts are conservative written genres (journal articles, book chapters, and magazine articles). They are contextualized in academic and professional settings, and classified according to *typification of rhetorical action, regularities of staged, goal-oriented social processes, and consistency of communicative purposes* (Bazerman, 1994; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Martin, 1993; Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993, as cited in Bhatia, Flowerdew & Jones, 2008). While academic texts in PhE and AmE are determined by text-external elements, they also contain lexico-grammatical features signaling *conventions and propensity for innovation* (Bhatia, 1993; Bhatia, 2006). Conventions refer to genres as static textual endeavor, while propensity for innovation is the production of innovative linguistic structures in a discourse (Bhatia, 2006).

Considering academic texts for writing instruction is important. Before neglecting written texts in non-Inner Circle Englishes for academic writing instruction, it is needed first to assess whether they possess deviations from the standard writing conventions so as not to divorce their potential for L2 pedagogy. In this respect, as Novianti (2017) argues, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) can aid in analyzing the lexico-grammatical features of texts.

## Theoretical framework

### *Textual metafunction in systemic functional linguistics*

SFL is a linguistic approach in analyzing a text's lexico-grammatical features with respect to its social context where the basic meanings of language can be realized and on which a text is analyzed (Halliday, 1994). Halliday (1994) points out the three types of language metafunction: (1) textual (message), (2) ideational (representation), and (3) interpersonal (exchange) meanings. Each corresponds to mode, field, and tenor as contexts (Table 1).

Table 1

#### *Types of language metafunction*

	Language metafunctions	Language as...	Context of language
1	Textual	Message	Mode
2	Ideational	Representation	Field
3	Interpersonal	Exchange	Tenor

Specifically, textual metafunction (mode) sets the language into coherent and substantial texts (Droga & Humphrey, 2002) represented by theme, nominalization, and cohesion. Theme is the element that gives the main information, while its remainder is the rheme that provides new information in a clause. For example, (Theme) The duke (Rheme) has given my aunt that teapot (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Theme is essential in a clause for it displays the writer's main point, connects it to other sentences, and develops it in the whole text (Halliday, 1994; Schleppegrell, 2000). It can either be topical, interpersonal, or textual. Topical theme can be determined by premodification or postmodification of one of any structural elements: noun, adverbial group, and prepositional phrase. These also function as interpersonal and textual themes which precede or succeed the topical theme (Hasan & Fries, 1995).

Topical theme is demonstrated by (**premodification**) Yesterday and the other day, (**topical theme**) **I** went to the park. Interpersonal theme is illustrated by vocatives (Thank you (**vocative**) **Craig** so much for saying so), modal/comment adjunct (**modal adjunct**) **Certainly**, (**interpersonal theme**) **you** cannot store protein.), and finite verbal operators (**finite verbal operator**) **Did** you go to church today?). Textual theme is responsible for the tie of clauses (Hasan & Fries, 1995). It can be continuative (Oh, I have one every day.), paratactic and hypotactic conjunctions ((**paratactic**) **Baby washes the dishes, and Mariel cooks food**; (**hypotactic**) **As he came to a thicket, he heard the faint rustling of leaves.**), and conjunctive adjunct ((**conjunctive adjunct**) **Furthermore**, the

occurrence of strong depletion was a year-long phenomenon south of 60°s.) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Forming a grammatical metaphor, nominalization is “used for embedding as much information into a few words as possible” (Jalilifar, Alipour, & Parsa, 2014, p. 25) as in “is impaired by alcohol” can be rewritten as “alcohol impairment”. Clause as a message concerns with textual cohesion that bonds related items within a text involving cohesive constituents and other linguistic items it refers to (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). It can be achieved through reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexicon. Referencing is anaphoric or cataphoric. Anaphoric referencing occurs when the author refers back to its antecedent (**this fish** – **it** swims...). Conversely, cataphoric referencing is referring forward (... widely held assumption was **this: man could understand** ...) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 625). Substitution happens when a word is substituted by a more general term (There’s **reefs** around bloody Australia, isn’t there? – Yeah; a **Great Barrier one**, I believe. – It’s a **big one**, I think.) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 640). Ellipsis operates when a writer drops words when they can be repeated (I’ll ask Jenny about laptops and find out whether we have got any [Ø: laptops]). Conjunctions (and, but, for, and so on) relate two clauses, and transitions (however, meanwhile, and so on) add cohesion in texts. Lexical cohesion occurs through repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy. While the first two are typical, hyponymy (tree – oak, pine, elm) refers to the lexical relation in which the “first lexical class of a thing and the second either is a superclass, a subclass or another class at the same level of classification (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 574). Meronymy (tree – trunk, branch, leaf) as the link between words is one part of the whole or whole of a part (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 644). Table 2 gives the summary of the aspects of textual metafunction.

In the Philippine setting, none analyzed academic texts in PhE and AmE through the framework of SFL’s textual metafunctions. This directs the need for further SFL investigations that will describe the textual resources in new varieties of English (e.g. PhE).

### Research questions

As academic texts written by non-Inner Circle users of English are being put into question, this paper hypothesizes that (1) Academic texts written by Filipinos less satisfy the use of textual resources in academic writing compared to those written by Americans; and (2) In terms of textual resources, Americans from the Inner Circle write better academic texts compared to Filipinos from the Outer Circle.

Table 2

*Aspects of textual metafunction*

Aspects	Sub-types
1 Theme	a. Topical b. Interpersonal c. Textual
2 Nominalization	a. Reference b. Substitution c. Ellipsis d. Conjunction e. Lexicon
3 Cohesion	a. Repetition b. Synonymy c. Hyponymy d. Meronymy

These can be tested by answering the following questions.

1. What theme types are Filipinos and Americans using in writing academic texts?
2. What forms of nominalizations are they employing in writing academic texts?
3. How do these writers achieve cohesion in writing their academic texts?

Determining the textual resources of academic texts in PhE compared to that of AmE may give sound appraisals of the quality of writing in the two varieties of English. The academic writing qualities of the PhE variety may pave way for its advancing when it is discovered being at par with AmE in terms of textual resources. Importantly, this paper may inform the Philippine academics and stakeholders on PhE's potential in ESL academic writing instruction in the Philippines.

### **Methodology**

The study qualitatively investigates the textual resources employed by Filipinos and Americans in writing academic texts.

Of the 80 texts, 10% of academic texts (i.e., journal articles, book chapters, and magazine articles) in PhE and AmE of the ICE were randomly selected. Ten percent of the total corpus is sufficient when linguistic items are ubiquitous in a text (S. N. Dita, personal communication, August 19, 2017). Supporting this is Bowker and Pearson's (2002) claim that a relatively small

corpus can be both reliable and representative when exploring domain-specific languages. So the length of corpora is not the most important element in a corpus (Fuster-Marquez, 2014).

The academic texts in the study were written by Filipino and American scholars who have advanced degrees. These texts came from four areas: Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Technology. Each text was composed of 2000 words making a total of 16,000 running words. They were downloaded via <http://ice-corpora.net/ice/index.htm>. Since the corpora are password protected, the researcher obtained the passwords from Gerald Nelson, the ICE Project Leader, online. The researcher also sent the signed ICE License Agreement in using the corpora (see Appendix A for the ICE License Agreement). Having unlocked both components with their passwords, the researcher picked 80 academic texts and opened them one by one. Each of them was transferred to Text Document (.txt).

Auxiliary to SFL framework was UAM Corpus Tool (O'Donnell, 2016), and AntConc (Anthony, 2014) that were used to analyze the texts. The former strives for large corpora in which mood, transitivity, theme and rheme, modality, and tagging can be extracted (O'Donnell, 2016). Conversely, AntConc offers concordance plot, file view, clusters, collocates, wordlist, and key wordlist (Anthony, 2014). Through these, specific key words to draw clauses representing textual metafunctions were efficiently located in, and their frequency counts were easily calculated.

## Results and discussion

Table 3 gives the physical description of academic texts in PhE and AmE. There is a small difference in terms of physical aspects, that is, tokens (single occurrence of a word form or parts of speech in a sentence or corpus), sentence length (total number of words in a sentence), and types (unique word forms or parts of speech in a sentence or corpus) (Brezina, Timperley, & McEnery, 2018) between the two English varieties.

Table 3  
*Physical description of academic texts in PhE and AmE*

	Physical Aspects	PhE	AmE
1	Average number of tokens per sentence in a corpus	13.12	16.96
2	Average sentence length per corpus	22.11	24.73
3	Total number of tokens per corpus	90,059	85,972
4	Total number of types per corpus	12,012	11,860

On average number of tokens per sentence in a corpus, academic corpus in AmE is somewhat more complex as it contained 16.96 tokens than that of PhE (13.12). On average sentence length per corpus, academic corpus in AmE is slightly lengthier having 24.73 average sentence length than that of PhE (22.11). On total number of tokens per corpus, academic corpus in PhE is relatively lengthier as it contained 90,059 tokens than that of AmE (85,860). Similarly, academic corpus in PhE contained somewhat more types per corpus (12,012) than that of AmE (11,860). Themes, nominalizations, and cohesion were evident in academic texts in both varieties. Themes and rhemes are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

*Theme and rheme in PhE and AmE*

Clause Component	PhE		AmE	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Theme	786	48.71%	814	50.49%
Rheme	369	22.88%	367	22.60%

PhE had 48.71% (785 occurrences) which approximates the 50.49% (814 cases) in AmE. Likewise, rhemes in PhE had 22.88% (369 occurrences) which is so close to the 22.60% (367 cases) of rhemes in AmE.

***Theme types: Topical, interpersonal, and textual themes***

Filipinos and Americans used the three themes. The majority of themes in both varieties were frequently topical followed by textual, while the minority ones were interpersonal as summarized in Table 5. Topical themes in PhE (21.30% - 343) were relatively close to that of AmE (21.60% - 352). Subsequent was textual theme in PhE, that is, 17% (68) that was slightly different from that of AmE, 5.37% (80).

Table 5

*Theme types in PhE and AmE*

Theme Types	PhE		AmE	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Topical	343	21.30%	352	21.60%
Interpersonal	2	0.13%	5	0.27%
Textual	68	4.17%	80	5.37%

The premodification and postmodification in most topical themes of the two varieties could be attributed to the simple and terse nature of academic texts. They need not match descriptions and spatial imageries. In this respect, PhE

matches AmE. Evidences of topical themes from both varieties are explained below.

In PhE clause, the topical theme, **Net income** (nominal group), involves **Net** as noun premodifier introducing the main idea of the clause, **Net income** itself, while its rheme, **was derived by deducting production costs from gross returns**, gives message to it. Similarly, the AmE clause is headed by the topical theme, **Victor Hess** (nominal group). A new information about this topic is directly expressed by its rheme, **studied this phenomenon by taking electrometers onto lakes where there should have been less contamination (no change in leakage) and into caves (leakage disappeared)**.

More than these, both varieties involved multiple topical themes. Multiple themes are any complex phrases or groups that form one independent element within the clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). As can be seen in Extract 1, both multiple topical themes in PhE (**Perez and Juliano**) **reported that AC correlates positively with ...** and AmE (**Government and banks**) **were used to resolve this crisis; intervention eased ...** carry the conjunction **and** which ties the two topics into one entity.

#### Extract 1

PhE		AmE	
Perez and Juliano (1988)	reported that AC correlates positively with puto height and hardness, ...	Government and banks	were used to resolve this crisis; intervention eased capital switching from primary to secondary circuits.
Topic Theme	Rheme	Topic Theme	Rheme

Conversely, there were also other clauses that were locatable by postmodification through adverbial group. For instance, the adverbial, **though having its origin in highly industrialized nations**, modifies **This concern**, forming the topical theme, **This concern, though having its origin in highly industrialized nations**. Such complexity makes one whole constituent distinct from the rheme as evidenced in Extract 2.

### Extract 2

PhE	
This concern, though having its origin in highly industrialized nations,	has reached other areas of the globe as well, particularly those countries which, like the Philippines, have a plethora of natural resources in danger of depletion.
Topical Theme	Rheme

Besides nominal and adverbial groups, themes also consist of prepositional phrase (sometimes complex) to form one structural element. A case in point was the PhE extract “The perception **of the magnitude and depth of impact on the world.**” The underlined part is a complex prepositional phrase. This is composed of three phrases: (1) “of the magnitude and depth”, (2) “of impact”, and (3) “on the world”. The same was present in AmE, for example, “The magnitude of predation” involves “of predation” that is one prepositional phrase. These sentences are labeled accordingly in Extract 3.

### Extract 3

PhE		AmE	
The perception of the magnitude and depth of impact on the world	has led man to appreciate more keenly his relatedness to nature, and to become wary of his cumulative effect upon it.	The magnitude of predation	has been difficult to measure,...
Topical Theme	Rheme	Topical Theme	Rheme

Importantly, these topical themes showed the Outer and Inner Circle writers’ important points that were developed in the rest of the texts. While most of the themes were found as topical in both corpora, textual themes are another.

Textual themes in PhE and AmE connected two or more topical themes to establish thematic development. Textual themes are continuative because they signal moves in discourse, and conjunctive as they relate clauses for expansion. They are also conjunctive adjuncts as they can be adverbial groups or prepositional phrases which link clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Conjunctions and conjunctive adjuncts were apparent in both varieties, while continuatives were absent.



#### Extract 4

PhE		
Furthermore,	surveys conducted by the group	indicated that the infection was autochthonous or indigenous to the area.
Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

Regarding the above sentence (Extract 4), it is important to note that through the textual theme in PhE that is [Textual theme] **Furthermore** (as the conjunctive adjunct), the writer was able to connect the meaning of the new topical theme, **surveys conducted by the group** with the topic of the previous clause, which is “In 1952, the World Health Organization fully funded a five-year research project (Santos 1976) which marked the beginning of the fight against schistosomiasis in the country”. The same purpose was examined with However in the succeeding example in the AmE corpus as can be seen in Extract 5. Used to make some projection of contrast, it (i.e. However) adds details in relation to the topic of the previous clause, i.e. “Predators were collected primarily with a boat electroshocker”.

#### Extract 5

AmE		
However,	a semiballoon bottom trawl (9-m headrope) and multifilament bottom gill nets measuring 60 x 1.8 m with meshes (stretched measure) of 8.9, 10.2, 12.7, or 15.2cm	were used for 1-h sets at all stations except John Day forebay to collect walleyes and channel catfish.
Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

Both varieties used conjunctions as illustrated in Extract 6. *But* is used to connect two different topical themes in PhE, *The creation of man...* (but) *this peculiar creation account...*, and AmE *The figure...* (but) *the details of the two...* It is also used to conjoin two different sets of clauses headed by the two topics. Hence, *but* in PhE is paratactic as that of AmE.

**Extract 6**

<b>PhE</b>				
The creation of man	thus appears in continuity with that of the rest of creatures;	but	this peculiar creation account	indicates that the human being cannot be considered...
Topical Theme	Rheme	Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme
<b>AmE</b>				
The figure	shows the general inverse correlation between solar activity and terrestrial cosmic rays,	but	the details of the two phenomena	have only partial relationships.
Topical Theme	Rheme	Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

Moreover, both varieties used hypotactic resources as can be seen in Extract 7. For example, “If” (PhE) and “While” (AmE) make hypotactic connection between the topical themes they precede and the rhemes they succeed. “If” in PhE signals the condition, that is, “man is not peace with God”, secondary to the main clause, “neither will the world itself be at peace”. Similarly, “While” in AmE signals that the topical theme, “agents like builders, developers, realtors, and local governments relates with tenant groups, block clubs, and neighborhood associations work to create a livable and humane urban area” (main clause). These subordinate clauses introduced by “If” and “While” contained some lower degree of importance in the whole clause, but they still established a hypotactic bind with the two clauses.

**Extract 7**

<b>PhE</b>				
If	man	is not at peace with God	neither	will the world itself be at peace
Textual Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme	Topical Theme	Rheme
<b>AmE</b>				
While	agents like builders, developers, realtors, and local governments seek		tenant groups, block clubs, and neighborhood associations work	

	to implement incentives conducive to investment,		to create a livable...
	Theme		
Textual Theme	agents like builders, developers, realtors, and local governments	seek to implement incentives conducive to investment,	Rheme
	Topical Theme	Rheme	

By these textual elements, cohesion in both academic texts was achieved. More of paratactic and hypotactic conjunctions are presented in the section on cohesion of this paper. Conversely, interpersonal themes were also apparent in both varieties.

Modal/comment adjuncts were found in the texts as demonstrated in Extract 8. As for PhE, “perhaps” makes an interpersonal theme as it suggests probability of the meaning being communicated by the topical theme, “it” in relation to its rheme, “did begin in time, with a bang (or oscillates eternally between the states of nothingness and somethingness)”. Regarding AmE, “Often” signals the frequency of the fix provision of “a multidisciplinary approach” (topical theme) in connection to its rheme, “provides an easy fix because it does not demand the same degree of theoretical and methodological integration ...”.

#### Extract 8

PhE			AmE		
Perhaps	it	did begin in time, with a bang (or oscillates eternally between the states of nothingness and somethingness) ...	Often	a multidisciplinary approach	provides an easy fix because it does not demand...
Interpersonal Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme	Interpersonal Theme	Topical Theme	Rheme

Vocatives and finite verbal operators in both texts were not found. This suggests that academic texts in PhE and AmE maintain academic register as there

is the absence of the two informal features typically used in spoken and informal discourse.

***Nominalization: Nominal and pronominal groups***

Relative with theme types is nominalization. Filipinos and Americans employed both nominal and pronominal groups. Table 6 shows all nominalizations in the texts.

Table 6  
*Nominalizations in PhE and AmE*

Nominalizations	PhE		AmE	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Nominal Group	2662	20.02%	2481	18.79%
Complex Noun Phrase	179	1.34%	144	1.15%
Nouns	2501	18.80%	2355	17.78%
Pronominal Group	65	0.50%	74	0.60%
Total	5407	40.66%	5054	38.32%

Both groups of nominalization were employed by Filipinos and Americans. The nominal group at 20.02% (2662) in PhE and at 18.79% (2481) in AmE occurred more frequently than the pronominal group at 0.50% (65) in PhE and at 0.60% (74) in AmE. These nominalizations in both varieties must be proportional to the amount of lexical density that is contained in written discourse (Lu, 2013). Academic texts in PhE had 40.66% (5407) nominalizations, while AmE had 38.32% (5054). These contrasts between the two showed a slight difference between PhE and AmE implying that both varieties displayed close proportion between their nominalizations. As nominal and pronominal groups are features existing in both Outer and Inner Circle academic texts, it can be affirmed that PhE academic texts are similar to that of AmE in terms of nominalization. Both varieties in their written form exhibit high nominalization level, a natural propensity of academic texts (Lu, 2013).

As shown in Extract 9, nominalizations in both varieties encoded different processes as in the case of “beginning” (In the beginning God created...) from “begin”, “restructuring” from “restructure” (...and distribution of local restructuring), “collection” (the frequency of snail collection may account) from “collect”, “speculation” from “speculate”, “contamination” (This leakage led to speculation about possible undiscovered...) from “contaminate”, “production”

(...from the seed production) from “produce”, and “distortion” (...creates a large “distortion” of the magnetic field...) from “distort”.

***Extract 9***

<b>PhE</b>	<b>Verb to Noun</b>	<b>AmE</b>	<b>Verb to Noun</b>
In the beginning God created ...	begin - beginning	...and distribution of local restructuring.	restructure- restructuring
as well as in the development of strategies ...	develop - development	Conflict over development in the political...	develop - development
the frequency of snail collection may account	collect - collection	This leakage led to speculation about possible undiscovered radioactive contamination ...	speculate - speculation; contaminate- contamination
... from the seed production	produce - production	...creates a large distortion of the magnetic field ...	distort - distortion

The nominalized verbs ending with *-ing* such as *beginning*, and *structuring* are still in their verb forms; however, they functioned as nouns. *Development* from *develop* and other nominalized verbs through using *-tion* like *collection*, *speculation*, *production*, and *distortion* served as nouns as they mean “state or quality of” in relation to their original forms as action verbs. Instances are *development* as the state of developing, *collection* as the state of collecting, *speculation* as the state of *speculating*, and so on. It can be inferred that these nominalizations in both PhE and AmE academic texts denoted activities which were embedded in their nominalized forms. They contributed to the cohesion in both texts.

***Cohesion: Conjunction, reference, ellipsis, substitution, and lexicon***

Filipinos and Americans achieved cohesion by using conjunction, reference, substitution, lexicon, and ellipsis. These resources established connection among ideas in both PhE and AmE texts. Paratactic and hypotactic conjunctions are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7

*Textual conjunctions in PhE and AmE*

Conjunctions	Paratactic						Hypotactic					
	PhE		AmE		Total	%	PhE		AmE		Total	%
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%			<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%		
and	327	53.17	288	46.83	615	31.23						
or	31	16.76	154	83.24	185	9.40						
nor	3	75.00	1	25.00	4	0.20						
either	5	50.00	5	50.00	10	0.51						
neither	2	66.67	1	33.33	3	0.15						
but	17	42.50	23	57.50	40	2.03						
so	2	14.29	12	85.71	14	0.71						
for	94	61.44	59	38.56	153	7.77						
when							3	23.08	10	76.92	13	0.66
while							6	33.33	12	66.67	18	0.91
before							6	75.00	2	25.00	8	0.41
because							3	13.04	20	86.96	23	1.17
since							2	50.00	2	50.00	4	0.20
that							44	30.34	101	69.66	145	7.36
Total	481		543		1024	100	64		147		211	100

Regarding paratactic conjunctions, both texts had “and” (PhE – 53.17%; AmE – 46.83%), “for” (PhE – 61.44%; AmE – 38.56%), “or” (PhE – 16.76%; AmE – 83.24%), and “but” (PhE – 42.50%; AmE – 57.50%) as the most frequent. As for hypotactic conjunctions, both texts used “when” (PhE – 23.08%; AmE – 76.92%), “while” (PhE – 33.33%; AmE – 66.67%), “before”, (PhE – 25.00%; AmE – 38.46%), “since” (PhE – 50.00%; AmE – 50.00%) and “that” (PhE – 30.34%; AmE – 69.66%) as the most occurring, among others. As both varieties similarly used these conjunctions, it can be construed that both Filipinos and Americans use these resources in making ties between the important meanings in the texts they write. Equally importantly, both writers used those conjunctions in varying levels of frequencies. Americans used more paratactic (“or” and “but”) and hypotactic (“when”, “while”, and “before”) conjunctions. This can be attributed to the rhetorical modes of discourse such as exposition, description, and so on that call for using specific conjunctions. PhE academic texts, nonetheless, possessed similar conjunctive features of AmE texts as illustrated below (Extract 10).

#### Extract 10

	PhE			AmE		
1	The average monthly specific growth rate (SGR) (Fig. 1) of G. ... the yield ranged from 72 to 660 dwt g m <sp> - 2	and	these were significantly different over time ...	... the active sun greatly intensifies the solar wind,	and	the external particle flux increases, ...
2	Interviews with these people, ... the questionnaire prepared	for	the activity was no longer necessary.	Wolff puts some of the blame	for	this lack of real interdisciplinarity on the weight given scientific ...
3	The remaining 224 samples ... either showed no findings	or	had no information about age.	The energy density of cosmic rays is very high, more than I MeV/m <sup>3</sup> , ...	or	else the mass/energy balance of cosmology ...
4	Puto volume was higher	but	PSB Rc 12 had the	The figure shows the	but	the details of the two phenomena

	for the high- AC PSB Rc 10,		lower softness index ...	general inverse correlation ... cosmic rays,		have only partial ...
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Both varieties used “and”, “for”, “or”, and “but” as the most occurring paratactic conjunctions to juxtapose two related independent clauses. The conjunction *and* (1, 2) in PhE and AmE combined two main clauses since both of them carry equally significant meanings. In other words, *and* in both texts hints that the second clause carries additional information that enriches the substance of the first. Regarding “for” (3, 4), both texts employed it for indicating causes of the happening being conveyed in the second clause with respect to the effect being carried by the first clause. “Or” (5, 6) denotes two alternative messages of the same importance in both clauses, while “but” (7, 8) signals contrast between the two conjoined related clauses. Conversely, hypotactic conjunctions used in both varieties are shown in Extract 11.

#### Extract 11

	PhE	AmE
1	... <b>when</b> <i>G. bailinae</i> was grown vertically at different depth levels ..., the seaweed demonstrated a much higher...	<b>When</b> this gap is most pronounced, investment flows back to ...
2	The average monthly specific growth rate (SGR) (Fig. 1) of <i>G. bailinae</i> expressed... <b>while</b> the yield ranged from 72 to 660 dwt g m <sup>-2</sup> ...	Theoretical concepts of culture refer to..., <b>while</b> concrete studies of cultures refer to ...
3	Tempering the three milled rices at 16%, ... <b>before</b> dry-milling can improve PSI of the flour (Table 2).	The Northwest Power Planning Council (NPPC) adopted a ... <b>before</b> any dams were built (NPFC 1986); ...
4	The Eucheuma fixed-bottom long line technique of Doty ... <b>because</b> it is cost effective.	<b>Because</b> of this broad coverage ..., we pooled data or used averages across months, years, or stations to increase ...
5	It does not mean absolute dominion, <b>since</b> man is not the radical ...	This form of thinking outside the box ... <b>since</b> each new problem or question requires ...
6	Man has the mission of so ordering nature <b>that</b> it may fulfill its primordial function ...	... these particle streams are usually of such low energy <b>that</b> they are not detected ...



As paratactic conjunctions in PhE function in the same way as that of AmE, the above hypotactic conjunctions, “when”, “while”, “before”, “because”, “since”, and “that” in PhE texts, behave without discrepancy to that of AmE texts. Unlike the paratactic ones, these conjunctions conjoin the main clause containing the primary message, and the subordinate clause headed by any of the conjunctions that conveys secondary message. “When” (9, 10) signals time action as a cause prior to an occurrence related to the action. “While” (11, 12) makes a contrast between the two clauses that it conjoins. The first clause is less significant, while the other is more important. “Before” (13, 14) also means temporality on the clauses, while the main clauses on which it depends pose central points. “Because” (15 & 16) relays causal relationship between the more important clause and the one in which it is involved. “Since” (17, 18) links the existing condition communicated through the clause where it is used, and the main clause. “That” (19, 20) makes some justifications conversed through its clause in connection to the main clause that carries the main point of the sentence. Beyond these resources, cohesion in both PhE and AmE academic texts was attained by other elements as discussed in the next sections.

Both texts used anaphoric and cataphoric references to achieve textual cohesion and thematic progression. The former is illustrated in Extract 12 where the use of third person nouns, pronouns (it, they, them), relatives (which, that, whose), and demonstratives (this, these) manifested in the texts.

#### Extract 12

PhE	AmE
Anaphora	Anaphora
The narrative of the creation of man and woman in the second chapter of Genesis ... It (i.e. referring to The narrative of the creation of man and woman) states that Yahweh ...	The following discussion illustrates the need to develop theory ... It (i.e. referring to The following discussion) documents the need to ...
Rough rice samples were obtained from the seed production ... After at least 6 months in storage (aging), they (i.e. referring to Rough rice samples) were dehulled by ...	... northern squawfish are opportunistic feeders that prey both ... fishes (Eggers et al., 1978). They (i.e. referring to northern squawfish) feed primarily on the ...
The proponent had earlier proposed ... of the town folk, and the services provided to them (i.e. referring to the town folk) in terms ...	This does not mean breaking down the walls between the disciplines ... talking across them (i.e. referring to disciplines) to see how ...

Cataphoric referencing in both English varieties was not always unidirectional but tended to be bidirectional as in the case of “this”, and “these”. For example, the relative pronoun “this” and “these” can be

understood as directing to either right or left direction of the clauses or both directions. These references are in all caps below.

### Extract 13

PhE	AmE
... such tragedies often lie selfish motives and disordered interests, which give higher priority to economic or power ...[THIS] realistic picture, of man as sinner, ...	Each year more efforts are made to reconnect scientific and artistic knowledge through projects ... But [THIS] recent trend is often untheorized ...
in the area may be of a mixed species, <i>Ancylostoma duodenale</i> and <i>Necator americanus</i> ... [THESE] two human forms of ...	... not differentiating clearly between conceptual and concrete meanings of culture can lead to a falsifying attempt to integrate [THESE] two definitions, ...

Apart from these references, ellipses were also common. As shown in Extract 14, ellipsis in the two varieties economizes the clauses to maintain their grammaticality. The dropped elements in both Outer and Inner Circle English clauses are their topical themes that could have been either repeated with appropriate words, but were made elliptical to attain direct approximation between the themes and rhemes. The line in each extract represents the place for each omission, while the ones enclosed in parentheses are the possible elements.

### Extract 14

PhE	AmE
All things, ..., have been reconciled through Christ, __ (and) pacified with the blood of his Cross.	...when a cultural historian asks what daily life was like in Romantic period London, and ____ (when he) draws on, ...
the Schistosomiasis Team in Digos conducted a survey ... in Demoloc and Kilalag, and ____ (they) found no ...	..., the city provided construction subsidies in the form of tax abatements, ____ (and it) reduced land prices, and ...
Vegetative thalli of <i>Gracilariopsis bailinae</i> ...were tied... and ____ (they) were observed to grow at 30 d interval for 9 months.	Maule and Horton (1984) documented that walleyes eat young salmonids..., but ____ (they) concluded that the impact of...
... batter mixed for 1 min. batter ( 40 g) was poured into ... aluminum pans...and ____ (it was) steamed for 30 min, ____ (it was) cooled ____ (for) 1 hr in the open, and ____ (it was) placed in ...	It includes all hadrons, and ____ (it) also has a significant contribution from muon capture processes (described later).

The succeeding clauses (Extract 15) contain “one” (boldfaced) as the general word that substitutes the more specific words such as “concern”, “man”, “scholar”, and “culture” (italicized).

#### Extract 15

PhE	AmE
<i>Concern</i> (more specific term) for ecology is <b>one</b> (more general term) of the signs of our times.	the <i>scholar</i> (more specific term) must be open to all ... allows for a flexible practice <b>one</b> (more general term) that resists the ...
... the Christian faith from other ..., which count <i>man</i> (more specific term) as simply <b>one</b> (more general term) more animal ...	... <i>culture</i> (more specific term) itself is a hotly debated <b>one</b> (more general term), its meaning ranging from ...

Lexicons for cohesion were also found. In the study, they involved repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy as shown in Extract 16.

#### Extract 16

Types	PhE	AmE
Repetition	... yield were determined and a cost and return analysis of the <b><i>culture</i></b> system was made. ... seaweed was significantly different (P=0.05) over <b><i>culture</i></b> month... ... annual production cost of Php 5,860 were calculated from the <b><i>culture</i></b> system.	... part of the confusion in how to define <b><i>culture</i></b> lies in the hazy distinctions often made between conceptual and concrete understandings of culture. Theoretical concepts of <b><i>culture</i></b> refer to broad..., while concrete studies of <b><i>cultures</i></b> refer to <b><i>culture</i></b> as practice, <b><i>culture</i></b> <quote> not [as] a...
Synonymy	Incorporating the <b><i>cosmos</i></b> in his own adoration and praise, man elevates it above itself and lets the <b><i>universe</i></b> render God...	... various <b><i>agents</i></b> promote two processes, These <b><i>actors</i></b> are place entrepreneurs who strive for...
Hyponymy	Some <b><i>environmental parameters</i></b> like <b><i>water temperature</i></b> and <b><i>salinity</i></b> were monitored...	..., various agents <b><i>promote two processes, socioeconomic differentiation and subsidized tax base redevelopment.</i></b>
Meronymy	<b><i>Dry-milled and semidry-milled flour particles</i></b> are fragments of <b><i>rice grains and wet-milled flour particles</i></b> are clusters of <b><i>starch granules</i></b> ...	<b><i>Culture, politics, and individuals</i></b> should be crucial components in any <b><i>materialist model</i></b> that purports to....

Repetition is the needed duplication of words to retain the thought which bonds the clauses as in the case of “culture” in both texts. Synonymy is using two or more words sharing the same semantics. This was demonstrated in PhE with words “cosmos” and “universe”, and AmE with “agents” and “actors”. Hyponymy, conversely, is the use of lexical items of which one is a general category, while the second is its specific. In PhE, “environmental parameters” is the general term, while its specifics are “water temperature” and “salinity”. As for AmE, “two processes” makes a general idea and its kinds are “socioeconomic differentiation” and “subsidized tax base redevelopment”. Relatively, meronymy is the relation between two words from whole to parts, or vice versa. In PhE, “Dry-milled” and “semidry-milled flour particles” are fragments of “rice grains” and “wet-milled flour particles” are “clusters of starch granules” [Parts to whole]. In AmE, “culture”, “politics”, and “individuals” should be crucial components in any “materialist model” [Parts to whole].

## Conclusion

This study compared the textual resources in the academic texts in PhE and AmE from the SFL perspective. Having examined the two corpora, the study found that both varieties employed similar textual resources. It can be concluded that PhE academic texts are of equivalent textual quality as that of AmE academic texts. These findings do not support the two hypotheses. Filipinos write with the same textual resources of academic texts as that of Americans; thus, both writers satisfy the standards of academic writing. Generally, these seem to compete against Kirkpatrick’s (2007) argument that variation in WEs is regular and persistent. These points must be further affirmed in the following.

The notion that PhE is substandard is proved untrue at least in the case of PhE academic texts. In essence, no variety between PhE and AmE is superior or inferior; that there is no space for linguistic reservation. These claims further affirm the feasibility of investigating the text-internal resources particularly lexico-grammatical features of academic texts in PhE and AmE. At par with AmE academic texts, PhE academic texts were possessive of theme and rheme, nominalization, and cohesion resources. While textual and interpersonal themes both operated in the texts, topical ones were the most occurring that is natural in academic writing. Its dominance matched with the occurrence of usually verb-to-noun nominalizations proportional to the lexical density contained in both texts. Such nominalizations made productive and well-written PhE and AmE academic texts. Textual themes, contrariwise, established a link between clauses to achieve cohesion. Cohesion in both academic texts was maintained by paratactic and hypotactic conjunctions, anaphoric and cataphoric referencing, substitution, ellipsis, and lexicon. Lexical cohesion was proved evident through repetition, synonymy,

hyponymy, and meronymy. Due to these, PhE academic texts achieved thematic development and logical relationship as that of AmE texts.

By implication, the textual resources revealed here are principles of academic writing that are taught in ESL writing classes in the Philippines. These resources for teaching academic writing should be based on academic texts in PhE. As these are possessive of apt textual resources, a Filipino ESL writing teacher can employ them as models to illustrate or instill textual features that an exemplar academic written discourse must exhibit. Selecting these texts for ESL writing instruction deserves careful planning. An official and a strong language policy and planning, however, is necessary to meet this implication more than PhE's promulgation in Filipino ESL textbooks (Bernardo, 2013) and recommendation to be taught in Philippine ESL classes (Bautista, 2001). Neglecting academic texts in PhE as instructional materials would mean abandoning its textual features worthy of using and nurturing by Filipinos who are themselves native users of the variety. Using them may help increase the recognition of PhE in the country. It must be proclaimed that academic texts in PhE must be largely integrated into Philippine ESL academic writing. This may cause for the withdrawal of what Platt, Weber, and Ho (1984, as cited in Bautista 2001) noted as "the teachers' dilemma".

Similar to other studies, this paper had its limitations. First, academic texts in general were the ones scrutinized in the study. Hence, more particular and conservative written genres (e.g., research articles) from different disciplines should be cross-analyzed so that marked PhE textual resources from various fields may be realized. In addition, only two English varieties were analyzed. Comparing PhE with other English varieties (e.g., British, Singapore, and Korean Englishes) can make a more comprehensive comparative analysis. Also, textual resources in academic texts were examined in general in the study. Future studies can focus more specifically on uses of textual resources in academic textbooks in PhE and other varieties. Next, only mode was examined in the paper; thus, it is strongly recommended that field and tenor of academic texts in PhE be analyzed as well. Moreover, the quantity of academic texts examined in the study may be insufficient; therefore, larger corpus should be considered and analyzed so results can be more generalizable. Comparative studies such as this shall make doors more open and futures clearer in using PhE academic texts in ESL academic writing classes in the Philippines.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares no conflict of interest in the conduct of this research.

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### **Note on Contributor**

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## Appendix A

ATTN: G.NELSON

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# **The Visibility of the English Language in the Linguistic Landscape of Two Teacher Training Colleges in Israel**

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## **Abstract**

This research examines the visibility of English in the schoolscape of two Israeli teacher training colleges. English in Israel is part of a complex, multilingual reality. Not an official language, it carries prestige and is common in media, commerce, industry, and science. In higher education, its presence, however, is limited, despite being a mandatory, curricular subject. This study examines all signage in English posted in two colleges, focusing on the forms and types of language displayed, informative, commercial, and educational. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with international students. No student is accepted without testing in English, nor are students granted a degree without successfully attaining nationally-set standards, yet English displayed in the colleges is predominantly of the top-down type and does not stem from the institutions themselves. Furthermore, visible English is mainly for informative and commercial purposes, not educational. Educational English is often accompanied by a commercial agenda. Research confirms that the presence of English in one's surroundings not only exposes students to linguistic information but has practical value. The findings of this research reveal limited visibility of English, due perhaps to the perceived threat of English to the Hebrew language.

**Keywords:** English, linguistic landscape, schoolscape, signage, visibility

## **Introduction**

It is an unattested fact that English is a globalized language and the *lingua franca* of certain domains in Israel (e.g., business, science). English is prominently displayed by commercial ventures in order to reach out to multiple sectors of a diverse population. The strong proclivity towards English comes to the forefront in research about language use in the environment” (Backhaus, 2007). Names of local businesses presented in English carry positive connotations. Cenoz and Gorter (2006, p. 269) state that English, worldwide, is associated with cosmopolitanism and modernity, and with “international orientation, future orientation, success, sophistication,” and Yeh (2019) notes that “proficiency in English is the pinnacle of academic and professional achievement.” A combination of factors make English attractive to Israelis, for Hebrew alone is of little use abroad. English offers social and professional mobility with strong ties to popular culture and global

communication. This research examines the presence of English in an academic setting, at two Israeli teacher training colleges. The aim of this study is to determine the extent to which the English language is visible in two institutions of higher education and the purposes for which English is displayed. It is posited that the display of English affects those required to study English.

Israel, as a nation, possesses a strong language ideology. There is a strong connection between people's attitudes about Hebrew and their linguistic behavior. Most Israelis believe that Hebrew has been successfully revived and it is the main uniting factor of a gathering of exiles that makes up the Jewish nation today. Hebrew is central to a common Jewish culture (Fellman, 1973). Friedrich (1989) asserts that one significant characteristic of language ideology is rationalization, and in Israel, the use of Hebrew is rationalized as a core element of society. Support for linguistic homogeneity in Israel underlies linguistic practices, social discourse, and influences attitudes about English.

Spolsky and Cooper (1991) observe that language use is representative of the attitudes of a given population. In Israel, English is not an official language. As a *de facto* language, it has a growing presence. The status of English in academia, however, is less straightforward. On the one hand, English is considered the *lingua franca* of a larger community of academia and it is a national curricular requirement for students and academics alike, while on the other hand, there is a clear preference for the local language. This has direct implications on attitudes towards English and for the instruction of English as a Foreign Language in Israel.

## **Literature review**

Due to the increasing significance of English, largely due to globalization and a globalization of the English language, this research examines the linguistic landscape – the use of language in the public sphere (Bourhis & Landry 1997) – of two Israeli colleges. Linguistic landscapes reveal the vitality of a language, its role and importance, as language in the public sphere can serve “as a prism through which various sociolinguistic realities can be understood and interpreted” (Shohamy & Abu Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012, p. 95). This research examines the visibility of the English language, its display in relation to Hebrew, the areas and manners in which English is used and the relation between visibility, language attitude and ideology. Gorter, Marten and van Mensel (2012, p.11) describe visibility as a “carnival mirror,” that offers one insight into language as it is used by society. It is acknowledged that in other Israeli, academic institutions of higher education, this reality may be quite different. In this study, an examination of the visibility of English reveals that visibility refers to more than just what is observed by the naked eye, but also to what is invisible.

### *Signage in the linguistic landscape*

Signage is examined for its form and function in research in linguistic landscapes, focusing specifically on factors such as the manner of translation, “monophonic,” if only one language is used, and “homophonic,” (Backhaus, 2007), also referred to as “polyphonic” by Coupland (2010), and whether signs are multilingual. Additional factors are noted, such as the difference between translation and transliteration (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991).

Spolsky and Cooper (1991, p. 33) outline three conditions of signage. The first is that signs are written in languages that people know; secondly, signs are posted with the expectation that people will understand them, and lastly, signs have “a symbolic value condition” and appear in a language that people wish to be identified with. Shohamy (2010) adds that signs also indicate which languages are locally relevant or in the process of becoming relevant. In light of this, one might expect to see signs in English in academia in Israeli colleges.

Research about signs frequently categorizes them, prompted by the work of Landry and Bourhis (1997) into “public signs (i.e., government-promoted signs) and “private signs” (i.e., commercial signs) respectively, or top-down and bottom-up signs, (Huebner, 2006; Rosenbaum et al., 1977); some researchers present different terminology, like “code preference” and “regulatory signs” (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 147). One sign may fit into several categories simultaneously. Huebner (2006) explains how a sign in an elevator of an office building can be top down, as required by the national government, and simultaneously bottom up, as posted by the management. Acknowledging the problematic nature of this division, he posits that there exists a cline, with language used for official and unofficial purposes of varying degrees. A common feature is an initial and basic distinction to indicate which signs are displayed as a result of a required policy, and which involve an element of choice. Spolsky (2009a) proposes that in the place of top-down (in adherence to official policies) or/and bottom-up (“more autonomous actors”) (Spolsky 2009b, p. 49), researchers refer to “the sign makers” and the “sign readers.” Categorization of signs is frequently connected to the domains to which signs belong, as they relate to traffic, public needs, heritage and historical buildings (Barni & Vedovelli, 2012), and prohibition and warning, declaration of ownership, tourism, building names, and signs intended for foreigners (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991).

### *Schoolscapes*

This study falls within the field of schoolscapes, which focuses specifically on the reality portrayed by the landscape of an educational environment. Institutions of all types display formal and informal discourse in hallways, classrooms, offices and common areas. Faculty, students and administration, who are visually literate, read not only signs, but read the messages sent by

their environment. Just as the design and architecture of an educational setting can influence a learning environment, so can messages – explicit or implicit. Different aspects of schoolsapes have been the subject of much study; Martin-Jones and de Costa Carbaral (2011) examines language policy, Gorter and Cenoz (2014) focus on multilingualism, Cassels Johnson (1980) examines nation-state discourse, Brown (2012), looks at on ethnography, and the research of Kahn and Troiani (2015) and Szabo and Liahonen (2015), the language in private and public institutions. In numerous studies (Liahonen & Todhar 2015; Szabo & Liahonen 2015), the English language lies at the center of research into schoolsapes. Orikasa (2017) examines exposure to English at a public university in Japan. Biro (2016, p. 11) notes that “Studies of the signage in schools can lead to a better understanding of what goes on inside schools and as such better contribute to educational research.”

Studies into schoolsapes illustrate that the environment reflects educational, cultural and linguistic values, at micro and macro levels. Todar (2015, p. 529) states that the “[S]igns, boards, and displays encountered, including symbolic elements, can reveal much about the linguistic profile and the linguistic character of a given place, the status of the languages used and the value system of a given place.” With schoolsapes inseparable from language ideology, linguistic practices, and literacy, Brown (2012, p. 282) argues that schoolsapes are “the school-based environment where ... [the] written (graphic) and oral constitute, reproduce and transform language ideologies.”

Language policy may require that English be taught, but this does not always dictate what occurs in reality. Cooper (1989) examines the role of the French Academy in unifying France, focusing on the differences between linguistic policy and reality. Spolsky (1989) examines Maori bilingualism in New Zealand for policy and practice, and research has been conducted on French immersion schools in Canada (Cooper, 1989). Although there is a great deal of research in an Israeli context about linguistic landscapes (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, & Trumper-Hecht, 2006; Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Spolsky & Cooper 1991; Spolsky, 2009a), most examines the interplay of Hebrew, Arabic and English in the environment. A limited amount of research examines schoolsapes in Israeli context. The research of Amara (2018) focuses on Palestinian schools, “where Arabic is the language of personal, cultural, and national identity [and where] Hebrew is important for social mobility, higher education, and shared citizenship” (Amara, 2018, p. 7). Examining the order, distribution and function of languages, he concludes that Arabic is most prevalent, and that Hebrew is widely-spread, but that English, while of value to students, “barely features.” Waksman and Shohamy (2009) examine the schoolscape of colleges in Israel, specifically in relation to a transition of the language of social protest and injustice from public spaces to institutional spaces.

### ***English in the Israeli educational system***

Israeli academia is, to a certain degree, largely in English; academics read in English, present at international conferences, carry out collaborative research and often publish in English. The study of English is mandatory from approximately age eight until the completion of a university degree, with it being almost impossible for learners to be exempted from the study of English. Students accepted into higher education are tested to ascertain that they meet national standards, which if not achieved, require further study. The Council for Higher Education lays out specific guidelines, at a national level, for all colleges and universities regarding the teaching and learning of English. The content of courses in Hebrew is often based on concepts and terminology originally from English and includes required reading in English. Although there is a great deal of variation from one institution to another, all aim to create a positive and professional image by branding themselves as well-respected and worthy institutions and the study of English is often linked to high standards. Despite the indisputably significant role of the English language in educational settings, the English language is not as physically visible in education as one might imagine. In other words, while the curriculum requires English, there is limited exposure to English in an academic environment.

English plays an additional and unique role in Israel – that of a neutral language that is neither Jewish nor Arab, neither Hebrew nor Arabic. This neutral language can be used to mediate and negotiate tension and conflict. Given this useful function and the limited opportunity to use the Hebrew language outside of Israel, combined with the increasing need for globalized English, it might be expected that English would be visible. And while it is an unattested fact that English exhibits vitality on a daily basis within greater Israeli society, its use is that of what has been termed “the outdoor media” (the brevity with which a product can be conveyed, in English) (Crystal, 1997, p. 159). It does, however, not necessarily exhibit the same level of visibility in institutions of higher education.

### ***The linguistic landscape and the learning of language***

Barni, Kolyva, Machetti, and Palova (2014) note that while it is difficult to “isolate the effect of the linguistic landscape on language learning, ... it is important to take into account that exposure to the L2 [second language] can take place in different ways outside the classroom and this is the case even more so when English is the target language” (cited in Cenoz & Gorter, 2008, p. 273). They examine how English in the environment heightens and promotes language awareness, which in turn, provides motivation to learn languages. Cenoz and Gorter (2008, p. 277) confirm the pragmatic significance of English in the environment, “for signs that are viewed, read, and interpreted require linguistic competence, application, sociolinguistic

knowledge and the knowledge of discourse. From a psycholinguistic perspective, key [reading] components, such as word identification, parsing, syntactic-semantic representation, text representation, and understanding.” are involved in the processing of information in visual displays of language (Tokowicz & Perfetti, 2005). Aided by semiotic and metalinguistic cues, other features, such as illustrations, aid the reader in formulating thoughts and drawing conclusions. The presence of English contributes to the input required to develop second language literacy skills, and some incidental learning is likely to occur as a result of exposure to English in public spaces (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008).

### ***Linguistic ideology***

A display of language, specifically English, provides not only an additional learning context, but also contributes towards economic capital, as research indicates that higher education correlates positively with national wealth. In other words, from higher education, eventually, stems an educated work force, and bilingual and multilingual individuals who prosper in today's globalized world (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008, p. 273), as supported by a knowledge-based economy and higher education (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007). English conveys status and is of substantial value.

Re-established as the national language with the founding of the State in 1948, Hebrew remains a source of national pride and is subject to conscious language policy and planning. Hebrew is the main language of higher education. While English may be used as a tool in the preparation of academic content, English does not always reach the students as such. In other words, lecturers translate concepts and terminology originally in English into Hebrew for students. Likewise, they limit the reading of required texts in English, many of which have Hebrew translations. Frequently, relatively few English resources are listed in the bibliographies of course syllabi for fear that students will encounter difficulty, not fare well in the course, reflecting negatively upon lecturers in ensuing student evaluation. The completion of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is largely a formal, administrative requirement, in that having to pass English, does not necessarily mean that one has to know and be able to use English.

### **Methods and procedures**

Both colleges studied in this qualitative research, referred to as College A and College B respectively, are teacher training colleges that grant various degrees, (i.e., B.Ed., B.A., B.Sc., M.Ed., M.A., a Teaching Certificate). Both are also home to English Departments, where native speakers of Hebrew, Arabic, English and other languages train to become teachers of English, and where graduates of other fields can retrain. Both colleges are presently establishing and maintain strong international ties, and are active participants

in student, faculty and administrative exchanges through the European Erasmus Program. College B administers a large-scale, cross-cultural educational project that promotes multicultural education and children's rights, developing curriculum in 21 academic institutions across seven different countries. Internationalization and cooperative endeavors overseas are of significance and conducted almost entirely in English.

The aim of this study is to determine the extent to which the English language is visible in two Israeli colleges, and the purposes for which English is displayed, and to examine how the display of English may affect those who are required to study English. The researcher took still pictures of all signs, of all types (e.g., permanent educational displays, advertisements) posted in English on both campuses, including those partially in English. All signs displaying English were included in the data. The two linguistic landscapes were monitored for one full semester, a period of six consecutive months, beginning with the academic year, in September 2017, until the end of March 2017. Data were collected twice weekly at each institution. All signage in English was photographed, initially using a digital camera, and subsequently with an iPhone, with analyses conducted on photographs. Duplicate signs were recorded, noting information such as location. Unlike some previous research in the field (Backhaus, 2006), the total number of signs was not calculated to determine a numerical percentage of English signs, because the data were not meant to represent the entire landscape of the college, rather shed light on where and how English appears. A data-driven approach examines the form and function of signs, in relation to the targeted population. Separate data bases were for maintained for each college. During the time that the visual data were collected, foreign students enrolled in the colleges were also interviewed in partially-structured interviews about the visibility of signage at the college and their personal, language-related experiences on campus.

The data were downloaded and categorized into bottom up and top down categories. Top-down signs include those that all educational institutions are required to post, such as standardized safety regulations (e.g., traffic arrangements). Bottom-up signs include those that the college chose to post, such as signs for specific services and internal advertising. There is further division, as driven by the data, into three, main sub-categories, namely, (1) informative signs,-- those whose prime purpose is to relay information, (2) commercial signs -- those whose function is to promote a product or service, and (3) educational signs -- those that bestow knowledge.

While the purposes of signs in general are to communicate information, identify objects, and persuade people to become consumers, this study may bring to light additional issues, including overlapping functions of signs, the marking of linguistic dominance and linguistic ideology. Also included is students' exposure to English and the implications this may have for their attitude and motivation. While there is no argument as to the importance of English in Israel, the results of these specific academic environments may suggest otherwise -- that while English is present in greater



Israeli society, its presence in these schoolsapes is limited.

## **Results**

### ***Schoolscapes***

English has limited representation in these colleges. In spite of the fact that English is a part of Israeli curriculum, and a mandatory subject of instruction with clear pedagogical aims, it does not have a significant, visible presence. The requirements of the Ministry of Education and the Council of Higher Education to study English generally do not come to light. Bulletin boards that post information about EFL/EAP courses (e.g., lecturers, location of classes, updates) are entirely in Hebrew, as are the signs announcing the location of the offices, as well as the two English departments. In fact, nowhere is the name of either of the college displayed anywhere on campus in English (This later changed in one college), despite the aforementioned strong and currently-developing, international presence.

### ***Top-down signage***

In an examination of signage in public places, a strong Hebrew ideology emerges. Hebrew is the dominant language, as reflected both in top-down and bottom-up signage. In the former, a policy of the homogenization of language is evident, even on signs, stipulated as a legal requirement, where it is required that English be posted. Often text in English is limited, summarized or only partially translated from Hebrew. In one such sign, posted on a cupboard, details are provided, in Hebrew, outlining the location and the different types of firefighting equipment located within, as well as what type of equipment should be used on different types of fires (e.g., electrical, flammable liquids), but, in English, a single word appears – FIRE. In a similar sign, the location of the main electrical circuit is marked in Hebrew and a sign warns of the danger of electrocution, while a single word appears in English – DANGER. English appears where required, in minimal form, and where it is not required, it is not always evident. More than twice as many signs of a top-down nature (34 signs) displaying English were observed in comparison to those in English of a bottom-up nature (16 signs).

### ***Bottom-up signage***

In the bottom-up signage posted by the colleges, English makes an appearance mainly in two domains, the first being advertising and marketing, and the second, technology. Beyond college walls, in commercial settings, the use of English language is abundantly evident because English sells. On these two college campuses, English is used to advertise businesses on campus, the cafeteria, named “daily” and the campus store named “arta” (both in lower

case letters). There is additional, extensive advertising across campus, often on permanent and temporary easel-like display boards erected specifically for this purpose. Advertised are businesses off campus which target students, offering them services and discounts at restaurants, wedding halls to rent, and holiday travel packages.

English is evident in a bottom-up manner in the advancement of technology. This type of advertising includes the promotion of iPads, a brand that has a standing agreement with one college. Each new student who enrolls is provided with an iPad. The same company also stands behind many seemingly unrelated advertisements in the hallways of the college, including inspirational messages painted on structural columns in a common area. In Hebrew, all of the words are nouns, while in English, words are both nouns – *future, leadership, vision* and verbs – *inspire* and *explore*, implying that the English has been directly translated from the Hebrew. Placed in classrooms, next to lecturers' computers are mouse pads, with the same words that appear on the pillar, in school colors. Another structural pillar in the college displays the name of the college, and slogans such as *Start up*, with the word *it* inserted between the words, to read *Start it up*. This same slogan appears in the form of a large, mat-like sticker at various locations throughout the college, including the main entrance, where the English is accompanied by Hebrew text that translates as *technology and progress for teaching*. A large sign posted at the entrance of the college comprises of a student working on an iPad and it reads *iB* (the name of the college). While such ads appear – at first glance – to be advertising for the college, in actuality, they advertise the joint venture between the college and a specific computer company. This use of English, which on the surface is technology-focused, is motivated by a commercial interest. At College A, the use of English in technology is evident in the advertising of the college radio station whose posters read *On Air* – in English.

#### *Informative signs*

Informative signs are most often monolingual and do not display any English. All facilities, such as offices, washrooms, services, and facilities (e.g., elevators), on both campuses, are marked only in Hebrew. When visitors from overseas arrive, they are frequently personally escorted on campus tours, thus eliminating the need for English signage. The exception to this is when a delegation that is of what the college considers to be of a substantial size (e.g., conference participants), a sign at the entrance of college A is hung on the fence, at the main gate, and in college B, an internet-generated message on a television monitor in the main lobby welcomes guests – in English. For such visits, additional temporary signs and free-standing bulletin boards direct visitors to venues and activities. Informative signs are accompanied by symbolically represented information, thus avoiding a need for English. Next to a computer room, a sign announces computer lab in Hebrew, followed by the widely-recognized symbol of prohibition, a red circle with a line through the circle, around a fork and knife, and likewise with a mobile phone.

Although viewers clearly understand that food, drink and phones are prohibited, it is not immediately apparent that this is a computer lab.

Informative signs are evident in one other domain – artwork. At College A, the art department routinely advertises exhibitions and events in Hebrew, English and Arabic, (the only Arabic visible on either of the two campuses). Displays of art that stem from the college art department feature Hebrew titles, translated into English, and full or partial translations and/or explanations accompany all work exhibited. In one art installation a painting of flower blossoms is accompanied by a Haiku poem about flower blossoms in Kyoto, Japan, in English only. The college also hosts a program for gifted children and their art exhibitions displays too are multilingual. At College B, where there is no art department, framed prints line the walls of the halls near the administrative offices; as well as the main hallway, the entrance to the college, has been transformed into a public art gallery. Artwork is accompanied by tiles in Hebrew and English, and additional information is often included (i.e., the artist, the name of the piece, the medium used, and in the case of the prints, the museum where artwork is on permanent display) in English too.

Throughout both colleges such displays of English can also be found on commercially printed information. Such notification most frequently warns of imminent danger in the environment, the location of dangerous substances, where drivers must slow down and where floors have been washed recently and are wet. Scattered throughout the college is similar and standardized, commercial use of English denoting information such as transparent, glass doors that must be pushed to open. Quite often information that appears in Hebrew is not accompanied by any English but is instead accompanied by the aforementioned iconic symbols. At College B, the words “women's washroom” appear in Hebrew, with no translation to English. A sign sporting a standardized symbol of a woman wearing a white dress, on a red background was later added under the Hebrew words (after the data for this study were collected). Similarly, at College A, Hebrew accompanies a silhouette of a female head; there is no English. One international student interviewed explained she left a class to go to the bathroom but had to wait for 15 minutes outside the bathroom door before another woman entered and she was sure that it was in fact the women's washroom and not for men.

The only exception to where information is disseminated in both colleges to students and faculty in both Hebrew and English is technology. English makes an appearance in computer-generated conventions shared with staff and students alike, in messages that read *Save the date, infolio* (a portfolio of information related to technology), and *SimTeach*, a computer-generated program for simulated teaching, all of which are followed by detailed information in Hebrew. English is, in this case, used as an attention-grabber. In rare cases, English makes up some of the content. Most often, its use does not extend beyond individual lexical items or short expressions, like *Zumba* (aerobic exercise) or *Move in House* (a fitness class).

### ***Commercial signs***

The function of advertising lies behind the majority of signs in the college that display English. Advertisements for Coca Cola and Fanta appear alongside advertisements for Italian-made coffee and Nestle ice cream. There is English on vending machines, on ATM machines and taxi services located at the front desk. English is a common language of marketing in Israel. Even the formerly used scripts of Coca-Cola in Hebrew and Arabic that once held large appeal for tourists have been rewritten in English. The globalization of the English language holds a particularly strong position in marketing. Signs of a top-down type used for the marketing of a commercial nature make up the bulk of signs in English observed in this research.

Advertising on college campuses is often specifically geared towards students, products such as Rescue Remedy, (a natural substance to reduce stress), and computer equipment (i.e., external hard drives), and offered to students at discounted prices. Students enrolled at the colleges are given college agendas with all college events pre-marked, and pages of advertising for local businesses (e.g., food services). Bulletin boards around campus, one near a café and others on the landings of stairwells post information. Originally intended for college-related information, these have been taken over by commercial advertising with commercial ads slipped in under the display glass, so that they outnumber school-related events. At College A advertising is even located inside individual washroom stalls. Different stalls within the same washroom promote two different commercial English courses, both which advertise the exemption of students from the study of English, upon completion of the courses offered. One such business increases accessibility by providing a telephone number on post notes which can be conveniently torn off. More commercial signs (18 signs) were observed than another type of signs. (In comparison, there were 16 informative signs, and eight signs of an educational nature).

### ***Educational signs***

A limited number of signs of a top-down and educational nature are visible at both colleges. At College B their participation in the European Erasmus/Tempus program is announced on a variety of large, laminated signs, posted at various locations throughout the college, including the main entrance. Although these signs are of different sizes and designs, they are all in the same colors, display the name of the program, its logo, slogan and a flag of the European Union. At the other college, which also participates in this program, this activity is not visible.

At College A information about academic conferences is displayed, but not at College B. The posters are all, without exception, limited to the field of science (e.g., Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and mathematics, and most are in English, with limited use of Hebrew, used only for local conferences. These

conferences – in developmental plasticity and the molecular basis of evolutionary change, and a meeting of the Meteorology consortium – are aimed at faculty, not at students. They disseminate information to faculty, as confirmed by their location in the faculty lounge, an area off limits to students, and the corridor leading towards the faculty lounge. While the overall message is a positive one – that one needs English to advance professionally – this goes unnoticed by students, to whom such posters are irrelevant and/or inaccessible. Even at the annual, college-wide researcher's conference, an event where lecturers share their work with one another, the use of English does not extend beyond a translation of the name of the conference and the titles of the individual presentations, printed in the conference schedule, the latter often translated literally from Hebrew to English, and displayed with margins written from left to right, like Hebrew. At College B, faculty shares their publications in a glass display case adjacent to the library. All publications are in Hebrew, with the only exception being the work authored by native speakers of Arabic, who, it seems, may prefer to publish in English. Although native speakers of Arabic may publish in Hebrew and native speakers of Hebrew may publish academic work in English, no such publications are displayed. This could be, in part, due to who is represented. This voluntary display of publications is mainly that of junior faculty, who are more likely to publish in Hebrew, while experienced and more senior lecturers and professors, who may publish in English, no longer feel a need to display their achievement.

It is the bottom-up signs of an educational nature in English that are of particular significance to this research because they reflect the extent to which English plays an important role in these specific institutions. The choice of signage reflects the institution's attitude and the attitude of the administration towards English. The frequency and purpose of signs posted in English also determines the message that is relayed to students about English in higher education. The administration decides what it posts, the languages that signs are written in, what information is translated and what is not, while deciding on other factors as well (e.g., order of languages, size of font).

Both institutions exhibit some permanently displayed information of an educational nature in English. The physics department at College A has erected a permanent installation at the entrance to a building, of Foucault's Pendulum with explanations in Hebrew and English. Permanent displays of publications by biology department members are on display in English and Hebrew, located next to a brief biography of each lecturer. (Since the data collection, these have been replaced with short biographies of each faculty member in Hebrew only, and there are no longer samples of their publications in English). At the same location, are two samples of student papers, two of which (out of a total of four) are in English.

English, as used for technology, is also on permanent display and frequently appears on signage as it relates to education within the domain of technology, but what comes to light in these signs is that while on the surface

they appear to be of an educational nature, they often fulfill a commercial purpose as well. This includes an entire hallway at college B, where all of the décor (including a comfortable work station), a classroom of the future (that houses the college robot and virtual reality technology), and colorful signage on the walls, is sponsored by a specific, commercial computer company that works in tandem with the college. Signs promote the use of technology through a variety of inspiring quotes and interactive activities, including letters that can be moved around a fixed board to write what the students wish (in Hebrew only), and white, plastic hand-held bubbles of text that they can hold up around their faces to pose for selfies, most of which is Hebrew text, but some of which are in English and sport expressions such as “Technology is awesome” I [heart] technology” and “My favorite app is...” The signs that line the walls include expressions like “don't bury your failures let them inspire you,” “Here we must run as fast as we can just to stay in place – And if you wish to go anywhere you must run twice as fast as that. Lewis Carroll,” and “I have never tried it before, So I am sure I can do it. Pippi Longstocking.” Adherence to the conventions of capitalization and punctuation are inconsistent with English conventions. Additionally, words in English, randomly line this corridor, words painted on the wall to resemble internal computer components, such as EXPLORE, DREAM, BELIEVE, and SHARE. Additional displays of English, while seemingly random, read “When clicked...repeat...wait \_ secs...Show...clear...Turn> \_\_\_degrees...repeat.” This hallway, sponsored by one specific company, brings forth a vitality of English not experienced elsewhere in either college. The message relayed here is that English is the language of technology, but further examination reveals that this technology is related to business. In examining the relationship of educational signage to commercial ventures, the former number of educational signs – eight – doubles in number to 16 signs.

Temporary, educational displays are apparent only at College B. These consist of poster presentations, and samples of student work displayed in a common area. This work is the culmination of a multi-disciplinary course, where the work prepared by students in the English department is entirely in English, while that prepared by native speakers of Hebrew and Arabic is in Hebrew, with some English, used for titles and definitions of main concepts, alongside Hebrew, in a polyphonic manner. Whether aimed at faculty or students, whether of a permanent or temporary nature, signs which use English for educational purposes are most often related to science or technology.

### ***Interviews with foreign students***

Interviews with students about signage add a deeper dimension and an external view of the linguistic landscape. Interviews with four international students who rely on English to navigate their way around the school provide insight into the effect of the colleges' dominant Hebrew policy. In semi-structured interviews conducted with visiting, international students at College

B, they expressed surprise at the lack of visible English. They observe how necessary English is, even for basic functions, like entering the college website. They stated that they had expected to see some signage in English but did not see any at all. One student said, “We just learned our way around because nothing at the college – nothing – is explained in English. Even the restrooms are labeled only in Hebrew.” They mention how the lack of English signage limited their accessibility to important information, such as classroom changes, absent lecturers and college-wide events, which in one case included an unscheduled evacuation of the college and the cancellation of studies due to a fire in the city. They also mentioned how odd the lack of English is in comparison to areas outside of the college, like malls, bus stops and restaurants, where information in English is readily available. Furthermore, two interviewees compared the lack of English at the college to their own college in Switzerland, where all signs appear in German, French and English.

## **Conclusion**

In analyses of visible signage in English at two specific teacher training colleges, the status of English comes to light. While English is a language of academic and curricular significance, it does not appear to be so on a pragmatic level, at either institution, which is at odds with the colleges’ visions and goals of internationalization and participation in various European academic programs. In other words, the results reveal some discrepancy between the stated educational importance and role of the English language and its visibility, display and use in the immediate environment. The two colleges studied remain very much monolingual institutions. English exists, in so far as that it is taught behind classroom doors, as regulated by the authorities, but its use rarely extends into public areas, with the exception of that which fulfills specific purposes, most commonly to advertise commercial ventures and promote technological innovation, one of which is related to the other. The one exception to this is the field of math and sciences, where while there is some use of English, but the intended audience is not one of learners, rather the faculty. English makes an appearance in these college settings mainly as a language advertising and business. English sells – so it is visible. The other reason for its presence is due to the adherence to regulations by external bodies (e.g., the local municipality and health and safety regulations). There is limited use of English for educational purposes, and even in some instances, where on a surface level the function of English appears to be educational, further, critical examination reveals that its purpose is twofold, a combination of educational and commercial functions simultaneously.

While globalization is reflected in Israel on a wide scale, particularly through the use of English, this is less applicable to education, where it is used mainly for commercial purposes, and is limited to specific domains. The signage in the linguistic landscape of higher education is still very much guided by a national linguistic agenda and it remains predominantly Hebrew,

despite a practical and professional need for English. The message relayed to the students by the schoolscape is that English is a specific-course related requirement; it does not portray English as a language of growing need and usefulness today.

What is observed in this study is linguistic ideology, an ideological perspective where Hebrew serves as the dominant language of Israeli academia. English has limited visibility, and exposure to English in the environment appears within a narrow scope. The role of English is marginalized by ideological belief and through “iconization” (Irvine & Gal, 2009, p. 404). There is, to some extent, too, what Irvine and Gal (2009, p. 404) term the “erasure” of language, in this case of English. As noted in this study, at both colleges the English departments (two English Language and Literature departments, English for Academic Purposes and English as a Foreign Language) are practically invisible. With the current number of native speakers who choose to become English teachers declining, with strong students of English opting for more lucrative professions, leaving the field manned by those of a lower level, and a national shortage of English teachers, these departments cannot afford to be invisible. There is a need for English to be present in an academic arena. It is not visible even though the former, national idea of 'one nation, one language' has become obsolete in today's present educational climate and Israeli linguists (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999) attest to the fact that the English language does not threaten Israel's national or cultural identity in any way. Reshef (2008, p. 754) confirms that “English seems to pose no real threat to Hebrew as the base language of Israeli society.” Knowledge of the English language is a necessity and knowledge can be enhanced by visibility, which in turn affects the attitude towards English and increases motivation to learn. Thus, exposure to English in the linguistic landscape of academia would not only send the message that English is important, but it would provide students with the language exposure necessary to develop the language-related skills they require for linguistic and intellectual enrichment and growth. Furthermore, the need for increased visibility of English has implications for favorable decisions of language planners and policy makers to promote the academic use of English.

The one place in which English does seem to have a presence is in the commercial sphere. Commercial ventures in educational setting are abundant. Researchers (Backhaus, 2006; Cenoz & Gorter, 2008; Gorter, 2006) show that the learning of English is enhanced through exposure. The use of English promotes products and services that are of educational value, can encourage students to confront and overcome reservations they may have about learning English, increases motivation and allows them to experience success. The translation of top-down, informative signage into English, for instance, while a minor change, would not only expose students to the language they must study, but also convey the important message that English is of pragmatic value. Likewise, it would be beneficial to aim educational content, in English, specifically at students, and make such material accessible. It would be



beneficial to expand the dissemination of information in English beyond the specific fields of science and technology, so that it extends other fields, such as the humanities.

No effort is spared to ensure that Hebrew remains a language of linguistic vitality in Israel. But this need not, in any way, influence or detract from the recognition of the English language as a globalized language of growing and practical significance. A more visible presence of English as it relates to education, academia and specific areas, such as internationalization and education, would highlight the necessity and value of English. Such an awareness and effort should extend beyond the classroom to include the linguistic landscape and schoolscape in order to provide students with necessary exposure, and language-related skills. Whether students enter a profession or continue onto graduate-level studies, English is a necessary requirement in present day Israeli society. With further professional activity in English comes subsequent knowledge, advancement, and opportunity. English today is not visible to the extent that it is of benefit to students, yet there is no debate that it must be a required element of a student's academic knowledge and experience. Higher education in Israel is inseparable from the present global era and the ensuing globalization of education, an era in which the English language is the unattested globalized language of education; hence, the visibility and use of English in the academic settings needs to be promoted and enhanced.

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### **Note on Contributor**

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# **An Investigation of an Early Bilingual Child: Phonological Development at its Finest?**

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## **Abstract**

The main purpose of this study is to explore and examine an early bilingual child whose use of English might be different on the account of the context the child uses English. Specifically, it was sought to find out if the child resorted to different phonological varieties as well as different interaction patterns while communicating. The relevant data were collected through spontaneous speech samples while the bilingual child was playing games with one of his care-takers and through a questionnaire filled out by two English-speaking native-speakers, where they intuitively judged the child on a phonological basis. The scrutiny of the data revealed that there were times where the child sounded more like his monolingual English-speaking peers; however, there was also evidence claiming the opposite, meaning the child used the language in different ways and accommodated to his Philippine nanny. Also, the questionnaire completed by the native-speakers indicated that there were some cases where they thought the bilingual child was closer to the near-native end of the spectrum and vice-versa.

**Keywords:** Early bilingualism, phonological development, bilingual accommodation, L2 alignment, different varieties of English

## **Introduction**

When learning a new language, although it is thought to be significant not only to learn its words and grammar, but also to learn its sounds, and, as the frequent errors both in perception and production prove (i.e., the unattainable near-native competence in pronunciation), this is not an easy task. Relying on work on second language learning, especially studies involving adult learners, we come to know that, when listening to L2 speech, inexperienced learners seem to use the phonemic categories of their L2 to impose phonemic structure on it. To this end, dual language acquisition in early childhood may be said to differ from adults' learning in that in adults all categories are fully specified, whereas, children may still be able to modify their initial construction. Thus,

in the phonological domain of language acquisition, the question of how phonemic categories, which are different from child's maternal language, are fixed is an important one. More specifically, if a child learns the values of a certain phoneme in his/her maternal language, what happens if he or she learns two languages in which that phoneme has different physical properties is a question to be posed and how it is affected by some societal factors both at macro and micro levels is yet another issue needing to be dealt with meticulously. Such being the case, delving into the issue and gaining more insights into how this process happens, a simultaneous bilingual child's phonological acquisition would have to, if none, provide information that might help perceive early bilingualism more thoroughly.

## **Literature review**

### ***Phonological development of early bilinguals***

Whether bilingual individuals acquiring two languages simultaneously develop one mixed or two completely independent linguistic systems has attracted much scholar attention in bilingual acquisition literature (Bhatia & Ritchie, 1999; McLaughlin, 1984). The possibility that bilingualism may have facilitating impacts on children's metalinguistic awareness development was first proposed by Vygotsky (1962). Much research to date has explored this idea, laying a particular emphasis on children's word awareness and syntactic awareness. The results have been mixed, but the majority of published studies have reported an advantage for bilingual children (Bialystok, 1986, 1988; Bowey & Patel, 1988; Cummins, 1978; Edwards & Christophersen, 1988; Galambos & Goldin-Meadow, 1990; Yelland, Pollard, & Mercuri, 1993). Similarly, a growing number of children all across the globe grow up being exposed to more than one language, yet the course of language development in bilingual children is not well-described or understood (McCardle & Hoff, 2006). A large body of research has refuted the once-held view that dual language exposure confuses children (e.g. Haugen, 1987). That said, children exposed to dual languages simultaneously can actually learn them with no difficulties and can differentiate these languages with ease in terms of their two varying phonological, lexical, and morphological systems (Kovacs & Mehler, 2009; Petitto et al., 2001). Nonetheless, it is not clear whether children exposed to the two languages typically acquire them at the same rate and pace as their monolingual peers learn one. Another issue vis-à-vis simultaneous bilingual development is the notion that whereas the child's linguistic systems are developed separately, one language might as well influence the other (Yip & Matthews, 2007; Soriente, 2007), which is referred to as cross-linguistic influence (Adnyani & Pastika, 2016), that is, transfer and interference are also factors affecting the process of language development of bilinguals.

When it comes down to phonological development, it would have to

be rather wise to state that findings are best regarded as tentative owing to “the relative paucity of studies in this domain” (McCardle & Hoff, 2006, p. 50) and the diversity of issues examined by existent studies in the literature. Studies with simultaneous bilingual children in the verbal stage of development indicate that they exhibit language specific patterns of production (Johnson & Lancaster, 1998; Paradis, 1996, 2001). A study by Brown and Copple (2018) investigating the phonological development of early Spanish-English bilingual speakers sought to elucidate whether these speakers develop a separate phonological system for English, and, if so, the role of primary and secondary cues in development of the second language. In this regard, the researchers analysed the phonetic realisation of the voiceless stops /p/, /t/, /k/ amongst three groups: early Spanish-English bilinguals; L1 English speakers who are late learners of Spanish; and L1 Spanish speakers who are late learners of English. The participants engaged in a reading task and a conversation task in each language during a single recording session. Following the data collection, there were 1,578 tokens of /p/, /t/, /k/ and they were analysed using acoustic software. Upon finishing up the analysis of the relevant data, it was seen that two phonological systems develop amongst early bilingual speakers, with varying degrees of assimilation to the phonological systems of the native speakers of each language.

### ***Bilingual accommodation***

In the context of dialects in contact, it is well recognized that speakers may adapt their speech in differing ways in response to the varieties spoken by other interlocutors around them. Speakers may alter their rate of use of particular phonetic variants in a way which allows them either to bring their own frequency of use closer to that of their interlocutors or, conversely, to increase the difference between them. As is discussed in more depth within the relevant literature on Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) (e.g. Coupland, Coupland, Giles, & Henwood, 1988; Giles, 1984), such alterations and changes might as well be seen as demonstrating the speaker’s wish to converge with or diverge from their interlocutor(s) in order to “seek approval” or demonstrate social psychological distance respectively (Llamas, Watt, & Johnson, 2009). To be precise, CAT was introduced by Giles in 1971 as a development of “social psychological research on similarity attraction” (Giles & Powesland, 1975, p. 233). Individuals can gain favourability with others by converging to their speech style, intentionally speaking more like the other; they can create distance by diverging from the other, intentionally speaking differently from the other; or they can maintain their status by continuing in their normal speech patterns (Vincze, Gasiorek, & Dragojevic, 2017). In a bilingual setting, however, convergence, divergence and maintenance are most clearly seen in the language that the speaker chooses to use. When applied to bilingualism, this theory suggests that someone’s



language choice may be influenced by one interlocutor trying to make him- or herself seem either similar to or different from the other interlocutor by intentionally choosing to use or not to use the other's preferred language.

CAT was first applied to bilingualism following the theory's origination in 1970s in a study where it was sought to examine the impact of the perceived motives of accommodation between bilingual speakers (Simard, Taylor, & Giles, 1976). The researchers found out that if the listener thinks that the speaker adopts the language of him or her, this is likely to evoke positive attitudes and the listener can make an effort to accommodate back to the initiator; however, if such accommodation is attributed to external pressures, then it is unlikely for the individual to return the accommodation (Simard, Taylor, & Giles, 1978). Recent research into bilingualism in situations that have a majority and a minority language bears similarities to other studies which revealed that language competence often thwarts someone's efforts to converge or diverge (e.g., Gasiorek & Vincze, 2016; Vincze, Gasiorek, & Dragojevic, 2017).

### *Alignment in L2 dialogue*

Alignment is defined by Costa, Pickering, and Sorace (2008) as the process of aligning with the structures, sounds and lexis as used during the verbal interaction between two interlocutors. Such being the case, there might as well be examples of alignment in a second language learning context where interlocutors from varying backgrounds are present, meaning non-native speakers of a language speaking the same language might align with each other at any linguistic level in the hopes of, possibly, feeling more comfortable. With respect to linguistic alignment at the level of pronunciation, researchers have shown that native-speaking interlocutors converge on common phonetic realisations of sounds in individual words, with such convergence occurring early on in the conversation and persisting for at least one week after the initial conversation (Pardo, 2006). Native-speaking interlocutors sharing the same dialect are also more likely to converge on common phonetic and prosodic speech patterns than interlocutors with distinct dialects, suggesting that convergence is facilitated when interlocutors share a common linguistic background (Kim, Horton, & Bradlow, 2011; Pardo, Jay, & Krauss, 2010). Alignment can occur even for speech that is only seen, with listeners showing convergence for words that they heard and for words that they lipread from a silent video recording of a speaker (Miller, Sanchez, & Rosenblum, 2010). Alignment in native speakers thus seems to be a rapid interactional phenomenon, reflective of a human perceptual system which easily adapts to recent experience (Samuel & Kraljic, 2009).

However, linguistic alignment at the level of speech and pronunciation is not solely a cognitive phenomenon. For example, according to accommodation theory, interlocutors converge (or diverge) on shared

linguistic behaviours during social interaction as a function of their beliefs, attitudes, and sociocultural conditions (Giles & Ogay, 2007). In this regard, despite the overall interest in alignment as a conversational phenomenon, there is still paucity of research investigating alignment in non-native communication. This might be because existing studies of alignment in non-native speakers have predominantly involved interactions between native-speaking interlocutors and L2 learners, showing that extent of alignment may depend on L2 learners' degree of accent (Kim et al., 2011) and individual differences in their cognitive abilities (Lewandowski, 2009). For instance, compared to learners with either strong or weak accents, only moderately-accented learners appear to show convergence in pronunciation with a native-speaking interlocutor (Kim et al., 2011). Assuming that accent ratings capture some aspects of L2 speaking proficiency, phonetic convergence may depend on learners' mastery of the L2 phonetic system and their perception of the interlocutor's communicative needs. Simply put, individuals whose accents are particularly non-native may not have the linguistic means to align with their interlocutor, while those with native-like accents may not perceive the need to align because communication is not compromised (Kim et al., 2011).

Based upon the literature reviewed above, to the best of our knowledge, there is not much research examining early bilinguals whose use of English might be different on the account of the context the child uses English (e.g. societal factors), viz., in order to find out if early bilingual children resort to different phonological varieties as well as different interaction patterns while engaging in communication. Such being the case, the purpose of the current study is to investigate if the child resorts to a mechanism enabling him to interact with English-speaking people in an informal setting (e.g. his home environment) in differing ways. To this end, the study might contribute to the theoretical understanding of early bilingualism.

### **Aim of the study**

Based on the impetus for the study discussed above, the primary purpose of this study is to investigate an early bilingual child whose use of English might be different on the account of the context the child uses English. Specifically, it was sought to find out if the child resorts to different phonological varieties as well as different interaction patterns while communicating with people whose use of English presumably differs from each other. To this end, this study might as well help re-define bilingualism owing to the aforementioned discussion. In line with this goal, the following research questions are addressed:

- (1) To what extent does the early bilingual child use prosodic features effectively?

- (2) How does the use of these features interact with exposure to multiple varieties of language use?

## **Methodology**

### ***Research design***

A mixed method approach employing quantitative and qualitative elements was utilised in this study. Given the purpose of the present study, the rationale for such a design is to provide a deeper comprehension for and to triangulate quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire and with qualitative data gathered through audio-recordings.

### ***Bilingual context of the child***

The participating child, Ahmet (a pseudonym), is a four-year-old bilingual child who was born in the USA and lived there for one year and who, then, moved back to Turkey. He is enrolled at a nursery school where he is taught exclusively in English. More specifically, Ahmet is the first-born child of a Turkish family; however, his father completed most of his studies abroad (i.e. the UK & the USA), whereas, his mother received formal education in Turkey and her command of English, compared to her husband, is relatively lower. In this regard, Ahmet has been exposed to both English and Turkish from birth, that is, he might be thought of as a simultaneous bilingual. For the time being, he is being exposed to English both formally and informally; in his home environment, he has got two nannies (one Philippine, one American) and his father whose command of English might be considered to be rather good and all these people speak with him in English.

### ***Data collection procedures***

For the purposes of the current study, the relevant data were collected both through audio-taped, naturally occurring interactions/conversations that the participating child had with his Philippine-origin nannies and through a questionnaire filled out by two native-speakers, one of whom is originally from the USA, whereas, the other one is from the UK. More specifically, the audio-taped data included spontaneous speech samples collected while the child was playing with toys in the company of his care-taker.

As for the questionnaire, the native speakers i.e. Ns1, Ns2) were asked to fill out a Likert-type scale ranging from one to five (i.e. 5 standing for “near-native”) on an intuitive basis by listening to four different speech samples chosen by the researchers. These native speakers are from the UK and the USA respectively, who have been involved in English Language Teaching both in EFL and ESL settings. Having completed their undergraduate and graduate studies in English Language education, both have

worked in a variety of countries (e.g., England, America, Japan, China, Spain, Turkey) at different levels (e.g., secondary & tertiary mostly) with students from various backgrounds. As such, they are qualified to evaluate the participating child's phonological features. In the questionnaire we mainly focused on supra-segmental features of English given that such features of the language are thought to be relatively more important in terms of phonological intelligibility (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011; Dikilitaş & Geylanioğlu, 2011). Specifically, the questionnaire consisted of items evaluating the child's speech samples, such as "the speaker produces vowels ...", "the speaker produces the consonants ...", "the speakers produces the -s endings ...", "the speaker produces -d endings ...", and the like, all of which are concerned with supra-segmental features of English.

### ***Data analysis procedures***

The qualitative data for the current study came from audio-recorded spontaneous speech samples collected while the child was playing with his toys in the company of his Philippine-origin care-taker. The audio-taped speech samples were 98 minutes in length and contained 578 utterances produced by the child. The speech samples then were transcribed into textual forms to be studied using an inductive approach to data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An iterative process of reading through the data was initiated by both of the researchers so as to thickly describe the data at hand as it is known to be usual to move back and forth between data collection, data analysis and data interpretation (Dörnyei, 2007). As such, the transcribed speech samples were analysed with the help of International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) by listening to the samples as well as transcribing these samples using IPA with regard to common phonetic and prosodic features of the utterances produced by the child and the care-taker. Having analysed the relevant data individually, we negotiated the final form of categories through peer debriefing, sharing our thoughts regarding the interpretation process in order to ensure validation as well as establish the credibility of the study (Spall, 1998). We also asked two native English speakers, each of whom are respectively from the UK and the USA, to listen to the chosen speech samples so as to ensure the sounds they identified were similar to what we had identified. Detailed coding and analysis were performed until after it was felt that no further useful categories would emerge within the data. To this end, the themes fell into two main categories; near-nativeness and non-nativeness and the relevant samples were analysed and introduced by referring to the IPA.

As for the analysis of the quantitative data, responses to the questionnaire were entered to SPSS version 22.0. Moreover, so as to find out if the data were normally distributed, the Shapiro Wilk Test was deployed on the responses provided by the native-speakers and the relationship between two continuous variables (i.e. both native speakers separately) was

investigated utilising the Spearman's rank correlation test.

## Results

The study aimed to find out how a simultaneous bilingual child exposed to different varieties of the English language are affected by phonological diversity. Therefore, through the detailed analysis of the audio transcripts, it was revealed that the child actually resorts to different varieties of English.

### *Bilingual child's production of prosodic features*

To begin with, the Shapiro Wilk Test was deployed on the responses provided by the native-speakers so as to find out if the data were normally distributed, and the relationship between two continuous variables (i.e. both native speakers separately) was investigated utilising the Spearman's rank correlation test. Significance level was set to  $p < 0.05$ .

Table 1

*Native-speakers' perceptual judgement on the child's use of prosodic features*

Item	Ns1 (N=9)						Ns2 (N=9)					
	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum	IQR	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum	IQR
Score	4.00	0.707	4	3	5	0.5	4.22	0.972	5	3	5	2

As is evident from Table 1, the average of the mean scores and deviation based on the responses given by the Ns1 was found to be ( $\bar{X}_{T1} = 4.00$ ;  $SD_{T1} = 0.707$ ). However, the average of the mean scores and deviation based on the responses given by the Ns2 was found to be ( $\bar{X}_{T2} = 4.22$ ;  $SD_{T2} = 0.972$ ), which means the Ns2 rated the bilingual child to be on the "near-native" end of the spectrum compared to the Ns1.

Figure 1 revealed that the item for which the Ns1 scored more than the Ns2 was "the speaker speaks in a natural rhythm". Both of the raters scored the same in 4 other items, which are "the speakers produces the -s ending (e.g. Americans, relationships)", "the speakers uses emphatic stress to indicate key words, contrasts, etc.", "the speaker's tone rises and falls in appropriate places", "the speakers pauses at commas and other appropriate places". However, it was also seen that the Ns2 scored more in all the other items. To this end, the results also revealed that the participating bilingual child produced prosodic features appropriately at a suprasegmental level and there is considerable variability in his ability to mark such features as was reflected by the native-speakers' perceptual judgements.

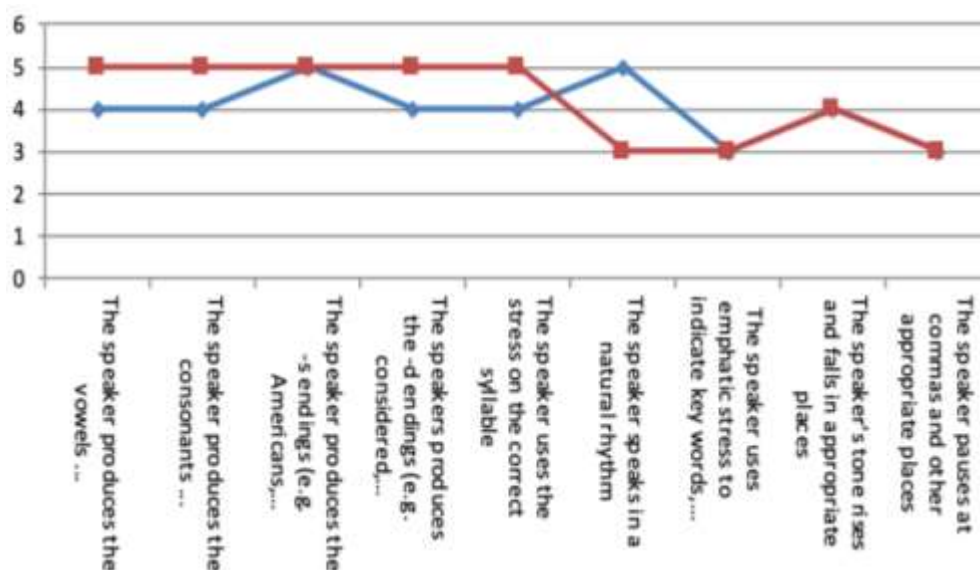


Figure 1. Distribution of items by the raters

### *Exposure to multiple varieties of language use*

The findings of the transcribed speech samples were analysed under two main categories, namely, near-nativeness and non-nativeness.

#### *Near-nativeness*

Ahmet used a number of phonological processes common to monolingual English-speaking children. To be precise, there were suprasegmental elements evident in his speech, such as the rising and falling intonation, stress, and word juncture. However, one thing that was quite surprising was that Ahmet pronounced some words like an individual from the UK would do so, whereas some others like an individual from the USA would do as can be seen in the following:

*But all is 10 liras, even the sheep and the goats*  
 [ / bʌt ɔ:l ɪz ten 'lɪə.rəz, 'i:.vʌn ðə ʃi:p ənd ɡoʊt / ]

As is obvious from the above given example, Ahmet made use of different phonological processes pertaining to different varieties of the English language, which indicates that being exposed to various Englishes might have an impact on the way he speaks the language.

Moreover, it was quite apparent that Ahmet produced some sounds that might be thought of as challenging for his monolingual Turkish-speaking peers who learn the target language successively as is seen in Excerpt 1:

#### Excerpt 1

... *if you press this button, it'll go very high.*  
[ / ɪf jʊ pres **ðɪs** 'bʌt.ən ɪt.əl goʊ ver.i haɪ / ]

Based on the above given phonetic transcription of the sentence, it was seen that a fricative consonant sound known as /ð/ and which is also considered to be a rather difficult sound for Turkish-speaking individuals to produce is pronounced quite appropriately by Ahmet, which is also supported by the findings gathered through the questionnaire.

The spontaneous speech elicited when Ahmet was playing a game with his caretaker unearthed that he acquired approximants and nasals as well as the schwa sound in a manner that his monolingual English-speaking peers would do so as can be seen in Excerpt 2:

#### Excerpt 2

... *a little bit naughty that's why he makes his daddy fall down*  
[ / ə lit.əl bɪt 'nɔ:.ti, ðæts waɪ hi meɪks hɪz dæd.i fɔ:l daʊn / ]

Excerpt 2 shows that Ahmet is adept at acquiring the phonemes accurately and can actually produce these sounds while speaking in English, that is to say, his articulatory distortion of sounds like /ə/, /ð/, /æ/ was quite identical to those of English-speaking children, which is also supported by the responses provided by English native-speakers to the questionnaire.

The findings also reported that Ahmet pronounced some words with an American accent whereas some others with a British one as is seen in Excerpt 3:

#### Excerpt 3

... *then the goat die on the water.*  
[ / ðen ðə goʊt daɪ ɑ:n ðə 'wa:.tə/ ]

The way Ahmet said “water” was completely similar to those who speak the language with an American accent, which proves that he has been influenced by his care-taker and his teachers at school who are from the USA. This finding also reveals that Ahmet resorts to different phonological varieties when speaking in English.

#### *Non-nativeness*

Another apparent finding revealed from the transcriptions and audios was that Ahmet drew on some other varieties of the English language. Specifically speaking, he has been exposed to the language spoken by different interlocutors all of whom have got their own way of uttering sentences and producing relevant sounds. Such being the case and given that Ahmet spends most of his time with his Philippine-origin care-taker, it was quite obvious

that this affected his pronunciation in a way which can be referred to as non-native. Excerpt 4 demonstrates the aforesaid finding:

Excerpt 4

*They are making a song. They are singing a song.*  
[ / ðeɪ ɑ:r 'meɪŋk ə sɑ:ŋ. ðeɪ ɑ:r sɪŋŋk ə sɑ:ŋ / ]

Ahmet seemed to have acquired the nasal / ŋ / in a way that his care-taker produces the sound itself, to wit; rather than omitting the /k/ sound at the end of “making” and “singing”, in both cases he pronounced the words as /sɪŋŋk/ and /'meɪŋk/, meaning not only does he resort to what is known “Standard English” per se, but he also produces sounds pertaining to different varieties of the language, which, in this case, is Philippine-oriented English as is in Excerpt 5 by Ahmet’s care-taker:

Excerpt 5

*... I’m going to have so much fun*  
[ / aɪ'em ɡoʊŋk ,tə hæv sɒ mʌtʃ fʌn/ ]

Excerpt 5 illustrates how Ahmet’s care-taker produces the nasal / ŋ / with which Ahmet seems to have aligned with in the hopes of possibly feeling more comfortable to keep the conversation going. Yet another finding revealing that Ahmet at certain points sounded more like a non-native English speaker was related to the pronunciation of long / i:/ and short / ɪ / as is exemplified in Excerpt 6:

Excerpt 6

*Ahmet: But you put like this?*  
[ / bʌt jʊ pʊt laɪk ðɪ:s /]  
*Care-taker: Yes, we put it like this.*  
[ /jes wi pʊt laɪk ðɪ:s /]

The way Ahmet pronounced the word “this” was quite similar to his care-taker’s way of pronouncing the same word – the short /ɪ/ becoming a long one. This finding brings to the light that Ahmet being exposed more than one variety is affected by what he hears around him, which also indicates that he is still in the process of developing his phonological awareness and inventory and he accommodates to other interlocutors speaking the same language.

To conclude, scrutiny of all the data and the careful analysis of the findings suggest that a simultaneous bilingual child being exposed to more than one variety of the English language is affected what he hears spoken around him both in informal settings (e.g. his home environment) and formal settings (e.g. school environment). Besides, given that he is still in the process of developing his phonological awareness and inventory, he resorts to different phonological varieties as well as different interaction patterns. In this



regard, it might as well be concluded that the child developed a mechanism which enables him to shuttle between differing varieties of English. To this end, the findings of the present study might imply that the phonological development of bilingual children can be reconsidered with reference to the interlocutors interacting with them and the phonological varieties these interlocutors are adopting and using.

## **Discussion**

### ***Bilingual child's use of prosodic features of English***

The first research question of the present study aimed to examine the extent to which the bilingual child, Ahmet, used prosodic features effectively. Based on the findings, first and foremost it might be argued that a bilingual child exposed to two languages since birth in the social surrounding might hear English-speaking people resorting to different phonological varieties. By the same token, given that the child himself is still in the process of developing his phonological awareness and inventory, it was apparent that at some points he sounded more like his monolingual English-speaking peers and every now and then the way he spoke the language was more identical to those who acquire the second language in a context where the heritage language is another language other than English. This might indicate that a bilingual child being exposed to both languages in differing ways resorts to a kind of mechanism enabling him to use the language accordingly and which concurs with a body of relevant research studies (e.g., Adnyani & Pastika, 2016). These studies also argue that bilingual children's phonological use of language might be influenced by cross-linguistic differences and the interlocutor use of differing phonological sound system. Also, it would be befitting to suggest, if not evident, that Ahmet's use of English sheds light on the issue that he develops the phonological aspects of English similar to those of his monolingual English-speaking peers, which echoes the findings of some other studies existent in the literature (e.g. Kovacs & Mehler, 2009; Petitto et al., 2001). The findings of the present study also suggested that the child had difficulties in variation in some vowel sounds. As is pointed out by Swan and Smith (2001), /i:/ as in *key* which is often pronounced like the diphthong /ɪə/, or in a closed syllable as /ɪ/ by Turkish speakers, there was related evidence as regards how the child mispronounced some words containing the sounds /i/, which echoes what Swan and Smith (2001) discusses. Also, Swan and Smith (2001) claimed that because voiceless /θ/ and voiced /ð/ do not occur in Turkish, they give a great deal of difficulty and learners often replace them by over-aspirated /t/ and /d/ which was also supported by Demirezen (2003; 2004) who claimed that these two sounds are rather difficult for Turkish EFL students to acquire appropriately; however, it was not the case with the participating bilingual child of the present study, that is, he was quite adept at producing these two sounds unlike his monolingual Turkish-speaking peers.

### *Exposure to multiple varieties*

As for the second research question focusing on Ahmet's exposure to different varieties of the language, the findings of the present study also showed that Ahmet accommodates to other interlocutors (e.g. his care-taker) by converging to their speech style possibly to gain favourability. As such, at the time of speech samples being recorded, Ahmet and his care-taker were playing games and Ahmet might have wanted the game to last even longer, which concurs with a body research studies existent in the literature (e.g. Vincze, Gasiorek, & Dragojevic, 2017). Therefore, it was obvious that Ahmet made use of different prosodic features of the English language

Considering the differences, albeit to a certain degree, in Ahmet's use of English, it might as well be argued that his acquisition of plosives happened to be in a pattern different from monolingual English-speaking children. To be precise, it was seen that Ahmet acquired voiced plosives before their voiceless counterparts, which is why he was observed to be having difficulties in producing voiceless plosives at certain times. However, monolingual English-speaking children usually acquire voiceless plosives prior to voiced plosives (Prather, Hedrick, & Kern, 1975), which might confirm that him being exposed to different kinds of the English language affects his overall phonological attainment. In a similar vein, rhythm, stress and intonation received explicit ratings from the participating native-speakers, all of which indicated that the bilingual child slightly accented guises with more variation in intonation patterns and near-native rhythm were rated more positively by both of the native-speakers, thus; suggesting that nuclear stress and rhythm might actually be instrumental in characterising what is meant by "near-nativeness".

Alignment is defined by Costa et al. (2008) as the process of aligning with the structures, sounds and lexis as used during the verbal interaction between two interlocutors. Such being the case, there might as well be examples of alignment in a second language learning context where interlocutors from varying backgrounds are present, meaning non-native speakers of a language speaking the same language might align with each other at any linguistic level in the hopes of, possibly, feeling more comfortable. That said, there was evidence of alignment in the joint dialogues that the bilingual child had with his Philippine care-taker. As has already been given, alignment can occur at any linguistic level, whether it be lexically, semantically, syntactically, and/or phonologically, making sure that the interlocutors present in the dialogue understand each other with no communication breakdowns (Costa et al., 2008). In this case, the bilingual child presented in this paper might as well be thought to align with his care-taker on a phonological level. Specifically speaking, there were examples of him pronouncing one of the oft-cited sounds of the English language, which is schwa, quite similar to the way his-care taker produces the same sound, which concurs with a body of relevant research into the issue (Kim et al., 2011) who

claims that interlocutors align with respect to their lexical, syntactic, and phonological choices.

However, there are also some limitations that have to be pointed out. This study is limited in its scope since it focused only on one bilingual child without any comparison to any other simultaneous bilingual children acquiring dual languages at the same time. This limitation should be considered in future studies. Besides, it was observed that a deeper appreciation and understanding of bilingualism requires a lot more than what is thought to be explored and/or exploited sufficiently. An early bilingual child being exposed to different varieties of the L2 might also experience some challenges due to cognitive complexity of such exposure; therefore, future studies might as well take this aspect into consideration and examine the challenges experienced while a child is-exposed to different varieties of a language. Simply put, even though there is confidence in the emergent findings of the current study, much research is deemed to be necessary to be able to investigate the issue in more depth thereafter offer more concrete suggestions.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the present study aimed to examine an early bilingual child whose use of English might be different on the account of the context the child uses English. In this respect, the findings presented that a simultaneous bilingual child being exposed to English from birth but to different varieties of the language resorts to differing phonological varieties. Better still, given that the child still processes his phonological awareness and inventory alike, it would be rather unwise to gloss over the fact that the more he is exposed to the language in different ways, the more differentiated linguistic repertoire (e.g., phonologically) he might end up with in the future, viz., in order to better see how things change or would be prone to change, much investigation is required. In a nutshell, it would be rather befitting to suggest at this juncture that in the hopes of honing our understanding of early bilingualism and phonological development of bilinguals, much research into the issue is *sine qua non* for more reliable and generalizable results.

## **Implications**

Our study of early bilingual phonological variation is intended to contribute to the respective fields of early bilingualism in monolingual contexts, deepening our understanding of what factors are associated with a simultaneous bilingual child's exposure to different varieties of the English language. The main conclusion drawn from the study is that a simultaneous bilingual child is likely to make use of different phonological features (e.g., mostly at supra-segmental level) if exposed to different varieties of either of the spoken languages. Such variation can be closely attributed to linguistic repertoires of the bilingual child stemming from linguistic exposure. This particular finding

suggests that investigations in early bilingual phonological development could further examine the processes of alignment and accommodation and emphasize the importance of incorporating prosodic features of bilingual children's phonological variation. Similarly, language-specific prosodic sensitivities are apparent in the phonological production of a bilingual child, and thus indicate that bilingual children can accommodate to other interlocutors by making use of their differentiated suprasegmental features. Therefore, there is paramount relevance to the literature focusing on how bilingualism affects children. While acknowledging potential individual differences, we argue that a theoretical model needs to consider the specific monolingual contexts in which bilingual children are raised or educated.

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# **English as an International Language: Reconstructing EFL teachers' cultural awareness and perception of teaching culture**

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## **Abstract**

The spread of English all around the world has raised the need for English instructors to be aware of the new trends of English as an International Language (EIL) in order to enable their students to communicate internationally. In this Qualitative study, which aimed to examine the cultural awareness of EFL teachers with regard to EIL, 16 Iranian EFL teachers were selected. To collect data, a semi-structured interview was conducted to investigate the teachers' perception of EIL and teaching culture at the outset of the study. Afterward, some intensive workshops were held and after two weeks, the semi-structured interview was conducted again to explore the extent to which the teachers' perceptions have undergone changes. The results of the first interview indicated that the teachers' instructions were mostly in tune with traditional approaches in ELT and the emphasis was on teaching the target culture. The participants were found highly familiar with the concept of EIL; however, the relevance of EIL to ELT in Iran was denied by the participants. After the workshops, the vast majority of the teachers highlighted the instruction of varieties of culture instead of merely the target culture.

**Keywords:** Cultural awareness, English as an International Language, teachers' perception, teaching culture

## **Introduction**

During the last two decades, the spread of English all around the world either as a second or foreign language has led to the emergence of different varieties of English and because of the interwoven nature of language and culture, this salient growth of English has prompted linguists and anthropologists to investigate the underlying relationship between varieties of English and their related cultures. It was Malinowski (1923) who first began to include culture in language pedagogy. However, the interrelated nature of language and culture has made it difficult to teach language not considering the cultural setting in which the language is being used.

In the literature, the term culture is always referred to one variety of target culture (American or British). However, target culture seems to be losing its importance due to the mobility of English language learners and



appearance of novel trends of EIL. As Sharifian (2014) argues, the traditional approaches in ELT are no longer sufficient to respond to the needs of language learners since their focus is on developing fluency in one or both varieties of English, British or American English, which fails to enable learners to encounter the sociolinguistic reality of the language use in the 21st century.

Immigration, continuing education, job opportunities, and commercial purposes are all reasons for learning English today, making it necessary for all language learners to be competent enough not only at linguistic and sociolinguistic level but also at inter-cultural level. In ELT classrooms in Iran, the native speaker model is still prevalent and learners are mostly exposed to American and British English varieties. These learners fail in their communication with non-native-English speakers owing to their lack of intercultural knowledge and competence which enables them to survive in intercultural contexts. Hence, EFL teachers in Iran should change their teaching world view in order to meet the learners' needs.

The way teachers perceive of teaching culture affects their teaching methods and decisions for classroom practices. Gonen and Saglam (2012) point out that "teachers in different classrooms in different parts of the world still ignore the importance of teaching culture as a part of language study" (p. 26). Therefore, we are in dire need of research on identifying factors which can change the teachers' beliefs regarding teaching culture through EIL. In particular, more qualitative studies are required on EFL teachers' perceptions of EIL teaching (Mai, 2018a) and learners' beliefs about the impacts of EIL teaching approach after taking a course (Mai, 2018b) to triangulate the results.

To respond to the changing sociolinguistic reality of English (Galloway & Rose, 2015) and preserve intercultural relationships at international scale, this study has attempted to examine the extent to which Iranian EFL teachers are aware of inter-cultural norms and new trends of EIL and whether or not they consider this phenomenon essential to be incorporated in ELT classes in Iran.

## **Literature Review**

The increase in the number of varieties of English is a proof for the salient growth of English all around the world. Since international interaction in English is mostly between nonnative speakers with no presence of native speakers, English has gone beyond its borders and by its massive spread it has become localized in a variety of contexts for different objectives (Canagarajah, 2005). English as an International Language (EIL) can imply the use of English in lots of communities around the world (Alsagoff, Hu, McKay, & Renandya, 2012). From the perspective of Matsuda (2017), EIL refers to the "function that English performs in international, multi-lingual contexts, to which each speaker brings a variety of English that they are most familiar with, along with their own cultural frames of reference, and employs various strategies to communicate effectively" (p. 13).

McKay (2002) was one of the pioneers of EIL, who criticized the traditional assumptions in ELT in the light of the use of English for international communication. In her study about appropriate EIL pedagogy, McKay (2003) argues that EIL should be based on a totally different set of hypotheses than traditionally informed ELT pedagogy. She maintains how two changes – a significant increase in the number of non-native speakers of English and a change in the cultural basis of English – have dramatically altered the nature of English. In her view, the pedagogy for teaching English must change as well. Similarly, Matsuda (2017) has highlighted that EIL pedagogy should be incorporated into teacher education and ELT classrooms.

Different scholars have introduced different models for EIL; among them Kachru's model is the most prominent. In fact, the position of English has been most effectively described by Kachru (1985) as three concentric circles. Based on Kachru's (1985) three concentric circles, representing the use of English in different countries, people living in inner circle countries such as the UK use English as their native language (L1). Outer circle includes countries where English is used as a second language (L2) such as India, and expanding circle is comprised of countries in which English is used as a Foreign Language (EFL) such as Iran, China, Singapore, Korea, and most of Europe. Arguments concerning the use of English in the outer and expanding circle were an introduction for the recognition of English as an International Language (EIL), World Englishes (WE), and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Likewise, glocalisation links the local communities to global resources and creates positive social change in the domains that affect them most directly (the Glocalization Manifesto, 2004).

In the domain of EIL, many studies have been conducted nationally and internationally. To begin with, Young and Walsh (2010) examined the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding the usefulness and appropriateness of varieties of English such as EIL and ELF, compared with native speaker varieties of English. Results of the study showed that teachers would teach regardless of any specific idea of "which English" was the target. In addition, teachers reported a pragmatic view on the varieties of English, with a need to rely on its "standard" form, which does not agree with the reality of Englishes which are in use worldwide.

Matsuda and Freidrich (2011) also examined the key features of EIL classrooms and particular pedagogic notions, and whether or not integrating these features in an appropriate way can lay out a blueprint for EIL curriculum. Some critical components, such as "the selection of the instructional model(s), ensuring exposure to Englishes and their users, facilitating strategic competence, providing appropriate cultural materials, and increasing awareness of the politics of Englishes" (pp. 343-344) were identified for an EIL curriculum.

In a recent study, Lee, Lee, and Draji (2019) have compared the preservice English teachers in Indonesia and Korea in terms of their perceptions of EIL. Based on the results, Indonesian preservice teachers

claimed to have a higher capacity than their Korean counterparts in the use of effective cross-cultural communicative strategies. Likewise, they presented a higher level of ownership over their own English accents. However, Korean preservice teachers were found unwilling to use non-native English accents in ELT listening materials, although they believed in the existence of non-native varieties of English.

To delve into the subject more deeply, examining the language users' attitudes and perceptions of teaching culture through EIL is required since any analysis of EIL would definitely require the analysis of teachers' perceptions of language, culture, and culture teaching. To achieve the purpose of the study, the following research questions were posed.

- (1) What are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of teaching culture before receiving explicit instruction considering English as an International Language (EIL)?
- (2) How does explicit instruction on EIL change Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of teaching culture?

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

The participants were 16 Iranian EFL teachers, aged 23 to 45. They were both male and female, who were mostly teaching at advanced level in different English language institutes in Tehran. The participants were selected based on purposive sampling. According to Bernard (2002), through purposive sampling technique, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience. As for the quality of the participants, they have all been teaching English at least for three years and no novice teacher was included in the study since their teaching experience was a prerequisite for data collection. They were MA graduates or PhD holders and had all majored in English fields: English Translation, English Literature, or Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The researcher took advantage of the same sampling technique for the second phase of the study.

### ***Instrument***

In order to gather data in this study, different materials and various kinds of instruments were applied which are introduced in the following sections.

#### ***Semi-structured interview guide***

A semi-structured interview guide was designed by the researcher and its content reliability was approved by three language experts in terms of

language and content appropriateness. The interview was divided into two sections. In part A, which included four questions, the interviewees were asked about their teaching experiences and the way they preferred to teach culture in their classes. In part B, which contained 20 questions, the main questions investigated the teachers' perception of teaching culture and assess their cultural awareness with regard to English as an international language. The interview took around 20 minutes per interviewee and it was recorded using a Digital Voice Recorder (DVR).

#### *Course observation scheme*

In order to get detailed information on the behaviors observed and how the participants reflected on new information given during the workshop, an observation scheme was used. The observation scheme was a revised version of Teaching Observation Scheme of John Moores University, and its content validity was approved through the expert judgement approach.

#### *Course materials*

After interviewing the participants, an eight-hour workshop was held, in which the researchers talked about EIL and relevant issues and the way it has changed the place of target culture in English language curriculum. The whole sessions were video recorded in order to be observed later to see how participants reflected on new information they were given and how they discussed it. The workshop was interactive and the participants exchanged their ideas and talked about their own experiences. The instructions were presented through slides and in the form of a lecture. The lecture content was designed based on research papers, textbooks, and some videos and workshops and seminars shared on the internet related to EIL and culture. One of the main sources employed in this study was a textbook titled *Tips for Teaching Culture*. This book was used mostly for designing the pamphlet and handouts. The handouts contained a checklist asking the participants about different techniques they used in their classes in order to teach culture more effectively. They were also asked to give their suggestions on issues pertaining to EIL and culture.

#### *Data collection procedures*

The data in this study were collected by the means of two semi-structured interviews and course observations. To this end, first of all, the interview questions were piloted by asking three language experts to judge if there were any ambiguities or problems considering its language and content. Then 16 EFL teachers were interviewed for the first phase of the study to determine their perceptions of teaching culture before attending the course and receiving explicit instruction. As it was mentioned before, each interview took 20 to 30

minutes to be conducted and all interview sessions were voice recorded during which the researchers took minimal notes. Afterward, an eight-hour workshop session was held to raise the teachers' awareness of EIL and relevant issues by means of giving lectures, showing power point slides, and distributing handouts and checklist among the teachers. Before holding the workshop sessions, a consent letter was sent to all the participants to get their agreements for participation. During the workshop sessions, which took around 8 hours, all the participants were active and it was found totally interactive. The sessions were held with the presence of two eminent researchers and professors in the field of Applied Linguistics.

The whole sessions were video recorded in order to observe the participants' reflections on the presented materials. In fact, the participants were asked to share their ideas and talk about their own experiences in their classrooms. It is worthy of note that the content of the materials, which were presented during the workshop session, was approved by two eminent professors of the field in advance. A checklist was handed out among the teachers during the workshop to explore their perception, the way they preferred to teach culture in their own classes, and whether they had any EIL concern or not. In addition, a handout was distributed among the participants for enriching their information on further techniques they can employ to teach culture. The observation scheme was filled out by the researchers immediately after holding the workshop sessions by means of watching the video recorded file and analyzing the notes taken during the course. Two weeks after the workshop was held, the second semi-structured interview was conducted to explore if the teachers' perceptions of teaching culture changed as a result of workshop instructions. The same interview questions, raised in the first phase of the study, were asked from the participants of the study. Once more, the interviews were recorded to be transcribed, summarized, codified, categorized, and analyzed.

## **Results**

### ***Teachers' perception of teaching culture prior to receiving explicit instructions***

The themes from teachers' responses to interview questions were analyzed and reported in Table 1. In responding to the second interview question regarding the relationship between language, communication, and culture, all the participants (100%) were of the belief that there is a firm relationship between language, communication, and culture. They unanimously believed that culture is not separable from language. In particular, the vast majority (81.25%) believed that culture is a prerequisite for teaching a language. However, two of them (12.5%) claimed that it depends on the students' level of proficiency and their enthusiasm about learning cultural points. Likewise, one of them believed that it depends on the aim of teaching culture.

Table 1.

*Teachers' perceptions of teaching culture prior to receiving explicit instruction*

Interview Question	Responses/Themes	Frequency	Percentage
Q2: Relationship between language, communication, and culture	Yes	16	100%
	No	0	0
Q5: Teachers' beliefs about teaching culture	It is a prerequisite for teaching language	13	81.25
	It depends on your class level and student's enthusiasm	2	12.5
	It depends on the aim of teaching culture	1	6.25
Q6: Teachers' objective of teaching culture	To raise cultural awareness	13	81.25
	To enable them to communicate easier	2	12.5
	Both	1	6.25
Q7: Is culture relevant to ELT in Iran?	1. Yes, completely	6	37.5
	2. To some extent	5	31.25
	3. Not at all	5	31.25
Q8: Whose culture should be taught in ELT and why?	1. Local culture	1	6.25
	2. Target culture	9	56.25
	3. Variety of cultures	6	37.5
Q9: Which aspects of ELT should involve teaching culture?	1. Reading	3	13.04
	2. Writing	3	13.04
	3. Speaking	5	21.73
	4. Listening	2	8.69
	5. Pragmatics	3	13.04
	6. Semantics	2	8.69
	7. Vocabulary	1	4.34
	8. All of them	4	17.39
Q11: Can current materials in Iran promote cultural awareness?	1. Yes	2	12.5
	2. No	8	50
	3. Somehow	6	37.5
Q18: Who do you think your students will need to communicate with using English?	1. National interlocutors	3	18.75
	2. International interlocutors	8	50.00
	3. Native speakers of English	5	31.2

By teaching culture, 13 out of 16 (81.25%) of them had the intention of raising their students' cultural awareness. Two of them (12.5%), considered it

a way to enable students to communicate. Further, one teacher made reference to both raising the students' cultural awareness and enabling them to communicate. Concerning the relevance of culture to English language teaching in Iran, 37.5% found it completely relevant, 31.25% partly relevant, and 31.25% found it absolutely irrelevant. Subsequently, they were asked about the culture they should concentrate on and their reasons for the choice they made. Hereupon, one participant (6.25%) believed that it should be the local culture, 56.25% considered the target culture, and 37.5% argued that we should teach a variety of cultures simultaneously. In this regard, one excerpt from the participants is presented as follows:

Teacher 6: Culture teaching should not be localized, entailing cultural facets of the target language alone. Instead, and with the rise of globalization and English as an international language, culture needs to be treated taking advantage of the cultural aspects of a variety of countries.

As for the aspects of ELT which could be used for teaching culture, some of them (13.04%) chose reading and writing, speaking was chosen by 21.7% of the participants, and 8.69% suggested listening as one of the aspects of ELT that should involve teaching culture. 13.04% considered pragmatics, 8.69% semantics, and 4.34% made mention of vocabulary as the most crucial skill. Nearly one fourth (17.39%) believed that all aspects of ELT should involve teaching culture. When the participants were asked if the current materials and course books in Iran can promote the awareness of the relationship between language, communication, and culture, half of them disagreed (50%), 37.5% found them with limited contributions, and 12.5% totally affirmed that current materials in Iran can foster their awareness.

Considering the person your students will need to communicate using English, 18.75% believed that their students would need to communicate with national interlocutors such as their classmates and their friends, half of them pinpointed on the role of international interlocutors from all around the world, and 31.2% found native speakers of English as the best source to communicate with using English.

Most of the participants preferred to teach culture through “engaging students in role plays, dramas, and simulations”. The second preference of teachers was “assigning students to present research on different cultures”. One teacher affirmed that the use of the literature can be an effective way of teaching culture. While two other teachers marked “including problem-solving skills to discover culture” and “including holidays, festivals, and religious traditions” as useful activities employed in their classes. Conversely, “the use of arts”, “surrounding students with stimuli from different cultures”, and “experiential learning” were not considered as preferable techniques and activities for teaching culture by the participants of this study.

When the participants were asked if they have heard of the term EIL, a

large number of participants (93.75%) answered yes, and just one person asserted that he had never heard of this term before. To define this term, 81.25% generally referred to the definition of EIL by different scholars. However, some teachers' understanding of this term was irrelevant to the concept of EIL. One definition of EIL is as follows.

Teacher 3: Yes, it refers to the fact that English has become the main language of communication between people of different countries. To interact with other people, either really or virtually, you need to use English.

The participants were also asked whether or not they envisioned traditional English as foreign language (EFL) teaching of culture as evolving into the more recent conception of English as an international language (EIL). The related results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2.

*Teachers' conceptions of change in the instructions of culture from conventional to EIL*

Interview Questions	Themes	Frequency	Percentage
Q8: Whose culture should be taught in ELT and why?	1. Local culture	1	6.25
	2. Target culture	9	56.25
	3. Variety of cultures	6	37.5
Q14: Do English learners need to be familiarized with a variety of cultural	1. Particular	10	62.5
	2. Variety of cultures	6	37.5
Q19: Should ELT involve teaching particular varieties of	1. Particular	10	62.5
	2. Variety of cultures	6	37.5
Q20: Is EIL relevant to ELT in Iran?	1. Yes	5	31.25
	2. No	11	68.75

Concerning the culture which should be focused, only one participant believed that it should be the local culture, more than half (56.5%) claimed target culture should be given priority, and some of them (37.5%) explained that we should teach our students a variety of cultures simultaneously. When they were asked if the students learning English needed to be familiar with a variety of cultural norms that affect communication or only particular cultures should be considered, more than a half (62.5%) believed that it should be particular cultures which should be emphasized, and the rest (37.5%), maintained that it is better for students to be familiar with a variety of cultures.

Afterward, they were asked if ELT should only involve teaching particular varieties of English or not. While the majority (62.5%) agreed that ELT should only involve particular cultures, some teachers (37.5%) were on



the belief that a variety of cultures should be taken into consideration in ELT. One extract of the participants' comments is presented here.

Teacher 6: Different varieties of English imply instruction of different varieties of cultural and intercultural norms, pragmatic (socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic) norms, etc. as well.

Regarding the relevance of EIL to ELT in Iran, although 31.25% found it relevant, the vast majority 68.75% were opposed to it. In general, EFL teachers in this study, before receiving explicit instructions, affirmed that culture instruction should be a part of the language curricula in the course books. In other words, they unanimously suggested that in order for language learners to be communicatively as well as linguistically competent, the inclusion of culture should be considered. The data suggested that the EFL teacher participants were aware of the new trends of EIL before attending the workshop sessions. However, they were not inclined to teach a variety of cultures in their classrooms.

#### ***Teachers' perception of how explicit instruction on EIL changed their perception of teaching culture***

The analysis of the observation scheme filled out by the researchers after watching the video recording of the workshop showed that the teachers' reflections, exchange of ideas and perceptions underwent changes during the workshop. The way the participants were discussing the concept of EIL and reasons for the spread of English all around the world, all indicated that the participants were eagerly involved in the discussion and that the intended outcomes of the session were met to a great extent.

Table 3 displays the results and themes extracted from the teachers' responses from the second interview. There is no change in the teachers' opinion about the relationship between language, communication, and culture, and in both interviews the participants unanimously (100%) agreed that there is an intertwined relationship between language, communication, and culture. The following excerpt represents one teacher's response to this question.

Teacher 16: Yes, definitely these three are interwoven to such extent that one without the other cannot be put into practice.

Table 3.

*The extent to which the explicit instruction on EIL changed the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of teaching culture*

Interview Question	Responses/Themes	Frequency		Percentage	
		First I	2 <sup>nd</sup> I	First I	2 <sup>nd</sup> I
Q2: Is there any relationship between language, communication and culture?	Yes	16	9	100	100
Q5: Teachers' beliefs about teaching culture	It is a prerequisite for teaching language	13	7	81.2	77.7
	It depends on your class level and students' enthusiasm	2	0	12.5	0
	It depends on the aim of teaching culture	1	2	6.2	22.3
Q6: Teachers' objective of teaching culture	To raise cultural awareness	13	5	81.2	55.5
	To enable them to communicate easier	2	3	12.5	33.3
	Both	1	1	6.2	11.1
Q7: Is culture relevant to ELT in Iran?	1. Yes, completely	6	7	37.5	77.7
	2. To some extent	5	1	31.5	11.1
	3. Not at all	5	1	31.5	11.1
Q8: Whose culture should be taught in ELT and why?	1. Local culture	1	0	6.2	0
	2. Target culture	9	4	56.2	44.4.
	3. Variety of cultures	6	5	37.5	55.5
Q9: Which aspects of ELT should involve teaching culture?	1. Reading	3	1	13.4	8.3
	2. Writing	3	1	13.4	8.3
	3. Speaking	5	2	21.7	16.6
	4. Listening	2	0	8.6	0
	5. Pragmatics	3	3	13.4	25
	6. Semantics	2	0	8.6	0
	7. Vocabulary	1	0	4.3	0
	8. All of them	4	5	17.4	41.6
Q11: Can current materials in Iran promote cultural awareness?	1. Yes	2	1	12.5	11.1
	2. No	8	3	50	33.3
	3. Somehow	6	5	37.5	55.5
Q18: Who do you think your students will need to	1. National interlocutors	3	1	18.7	11.1
	2. International	8	7	50	77.7

communicate with using English?	interlocutors				
	3. Native speakers of English	5	1	31.25	11.1

Regarding the role of culture, the proportion of teachers who believed that culture is a prerequisite for teaching language decreased a bit (from 81.2% to 77.7%). Instead, the idea that teaching culture depends on the reason why we teach culture increased moderately after the workshop (from 6.2% to 22.3%). In the following, a sample answer to this question is provided. Likewise, the results showed a slight shift in the objective of teaching culture. While in the first interview the majority of the teachers (81.2%) intended to raise the students' cultural awareness through the instruction of culture, in the second interview and after receiving explicit instruction, the proportion of teachers who still insisted on raising cultural awareness decreased to 55.5%. On the other hand, the percentage of people whose objective was to enable students to communicate easily increased (from 12.5% to 33.3%). One sample answer was chosen for this interview question.

Teacher 8: There are lots of goals for teaching culture. Among them raising students' cultural awareness and promoting their discourse competence are the most important ones.

After receiving explicit instruction, the number of teachers who were on the belief that culture is relevant to ELT in Iran increased dramatically (from 37.5% to 77.7%). Figure 1 represents this change.

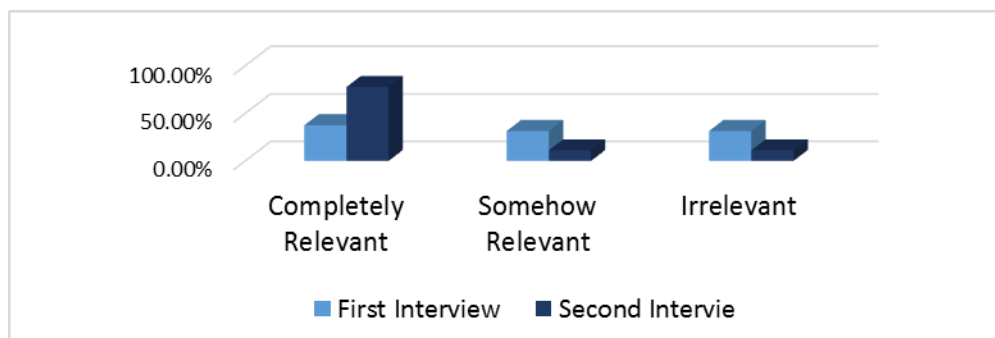


Figure 1. The relevance of culture to ELT in Iran

When the participants were asked “whose culture should be taught in ELT?” for the second time, there was a moderate change from target culture to a variety of cultures. In fact, after the workshop, the percentage of teachers who believed that it is a variety of cultures that should be taught in ELT increased (from 37.5% to 55.5%). This change can be seen in Figure 2.

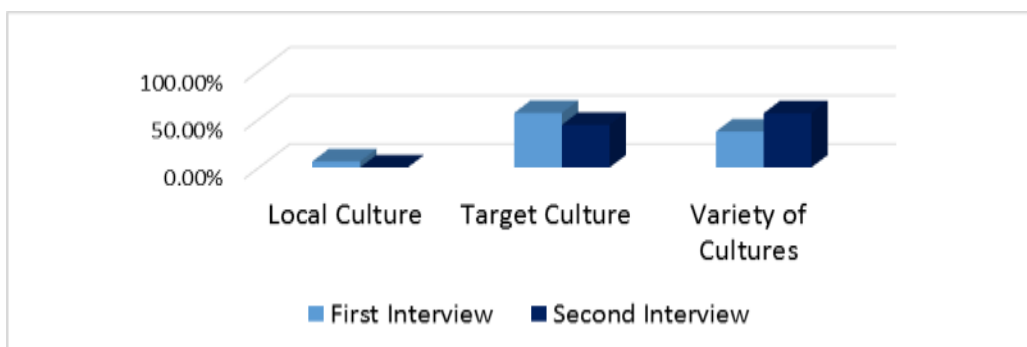


Figure 2. The culture that should be taught in ELT

One sample quote from the participants is presented hereunder:

Teacher 12: To me, mostly target culture should be emphasized with a look at all the nations' cultures that are using English, which can be all countries.

While during the first interview, speaking was rated as the first aspect of ELT which should be involved in teaching culture, in the second interview around half of the teachers (41.6%) asserted that all aspects of ELT should involve the instruction of culture. In the second interview, more than half of the participants (55.5%) considered the mediocre role of the current materials in Iran in promoting the students' cultural awareness. Finally, a noticeable change was observed (from 50% to 77.7%) in the belief that "they are international interlocutors with whom the students will need to communicate using English." This change has been illustrated in Figure 3.

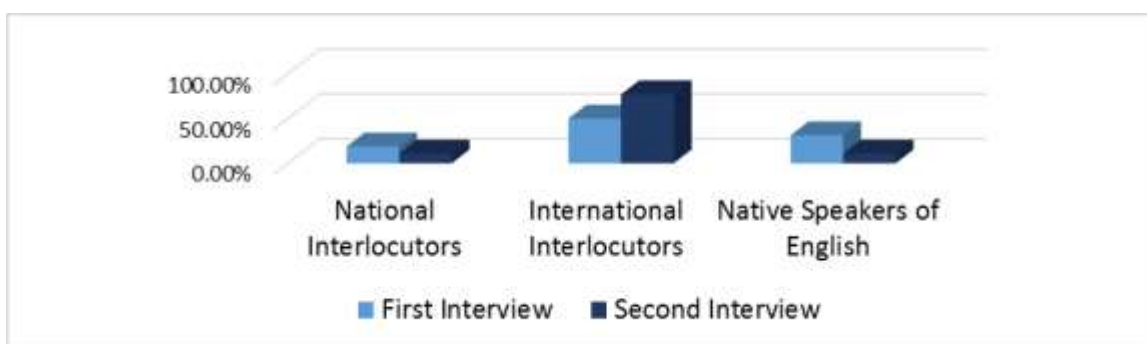


Figure 3. People with whom the students will need to communicate using English

Overall, after receiving explicit instruction, teachers' perceptions of teaching culture underwent some changes. While before attending the workshop, the teachers' objective was mostly to raise the students' cultural awareness, afterward, they considered enabling the students to communicate as another mission for teaching culture. One of the most surprising findings of

this study was that in the second interview more teachers alluded that culture is relevant to ELT in Iran. Another significant finding was that the number of teachers who claimed that their students would need to communicate mostly with international interlocutors increased after the course was run.

## **Discussion**

This study mainly investigated Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching culture prior to and after receiving explicit instruction considering English as an international language. Results pertaining to the first research question indicated that EFL teachers in this study had a high perception of the crucial role that inclusion of culture plays in teaching a language. However, before receiving the course instruction, the tendency was mostly teaching the target culture and the importance of introducing variety of cultures was ignored. Besides, it was observed that the teachers attempted to enable their learners to use English as a mean to communicate with not only the local interlocutors (classmates, colleagues, friends), but also native speakers of English and international interlocutors as well. Additionally, the integration of culture as one part of the curriculum was executed by employing different techniques and activities in the classroom.

The findings of the first research question were in line with the study of McKay (2004), in which she explored the role of culture in teaching English as an international language in an Asian context. She discussed how culture played a crucial role in language learning and teaching of semantics, rhetoric, and pragmatics. Hereupon, Dahmardeh and Wray (2011) concluded that changes should be made if we want to enable students to communicate appropriately and internationally. They added that cultural concepts in ELT program should be included in the curriculum in Iran if we want to improve the language skills of students and help them develop their communicative ability. In addition, in their study, Tran and Dang (2014) had asked both Vietnamese Teachers of English (VTEs) and Native English Teachers (NETs) about the objectives of culture teaching. VTEs chose the development of cultural skills as the most important objective of culture teaching, but NETs opted for the development of cultural attitudes, which both are different from the findings obtained from this study.

Since the vast majority of the participants had high levels of education in TEFL and other related fields, they had mostly heard about the new trends of EIL prior to the course. This finding further supports that of Chau and Truong (2019), which found that the teachers' graduate education had a positive influence on their intercultural teaching practices not their international experiences or the coursebook they were teaching. However, neither the assumptions of EIL were employed in ELT classes in Iran, nor a positive outlook for transforming the traditional instructions to EIL was perceived. This result corroborates previous findings (Lee, Lee, & Drajiati, 2019) in that teachers found it necessary to teach students various forms of

EIL and include them in the course contents and materials while concurrently feeling that it was necessary to stick to native speaker norms.

The obtained results also agreed with Young and Walsh's (2010) study in which they examined the perceptions of EFL teachers about the usefulness and appropriateness of varieties of English such as EIL and ELF, compared with native speaker varieties of English. The results showed that teachers needed to rely on a "standard" form of the language, while it did not agree with the reality of Englishes which are used worldwide. The results were also in tune with McKay's (2002) study, in that EIL should be based on a completely different set of hypotheses than traditional informed ELT pedagogy.

As for the results of the second research question, after receiving explicit instruction, teachers' perception of teaching culture changed considerably. Teaching culture was seen as a tool not only to increase the cultural competence of the learners (which was considered as the main objective of teaching culture before the course), but also to enable students to communicate easily. Communication and specially communicating internationally by means of inclusion of culture in language curricula became more importance from the viewpoints of the teachers participating in the workshop.

The result was found in line with the findings of Baker (2012), who concluded that the use of English as a Lingua Franca emphasizes the need for an understanding of cultural contexts and communicative practices to successfully communicate across different cultures. He added that traditional assumptions in ELT about communicative competence and cultural awareness are no longer responsive and English as a global Lingua Franca leads us to go beyond notions of teaching a fixed cultural context as adequate for successful and comprehensive communication.

Another significant result was related to the relationship between culture teaching and ELT practices in Iran, which was found in conflict with the findings of Aliakbari (2004). In his study, he denoted that cultural materials or textbooks which are used in Iran are superficial with respect to their treatment of culture and they do not prove to be useful in developing intercultural competence and cultural understanding. According to Dahmardeh and Wray (2011), changes should be made if we want to enable students to communicate appropriately and internationally, and cultural concepts in ELT program should be added in the curriculum developed in Iran if we intend to improve the students' language skills and help them develop their communicative ability.

All in all, the results revealed that the workshop and the materials used were comprehensive enough to raise the teachers' cultural awareness and moderately reconstruct their perceptions of teaching culture through EIL.

## Conclusion

Situated within the paradigm of English as an International Language (EIL), this study focused on reconstructing EFL teachers' cultural awareness and investigating their perceptions of teaching culture prior to and after receiving explicit instruction. Overall, the present study came up with different findings. As discussed earlier, it was identified that the teachers had a good perception of teaching culture in EFL classrooms even prior to attending the workshop. Being graduated in TEFL and related majors, the participants of this study were highly aware of the new trends of English as an International Language as well. However, they did not confirm the transition of traditional assumptions of ELT in Iran to new trends of EIL. After presenting explicit instruction, introducing EIL and discussing its aspects meticulously, the teachers were encouraged to teach varieties of cultures along with the native culture.

In the pursuit of globalization, it is vital for teachers to be culturally competent enough to provide learners with an awareness of cultural and linguistic differences in a variety of Englishes as well as strategies for handling these differences. In fact, teachers should persuade students in that what is more important in today's world is intelligibility and not just being native like. In particular, teachers should encourage students to see the worth of their culture, as well as other cultures. Traditional approaches of teaching EFL could be also revised with EIL in mind. In doing so, in learning English as an international language, the focus should be on learning as a means of communication not simply mastering skills as an object of academic study.

In this study, there were some situations and circumstances that were not under the control of the researchers. First, since the participants of the study were all full-time teachers, the workshop time was limited and it was an intensive course in order to have as many teachers present in the session as possible. Moreover, due to attrition, we could have the presence of just 16 participants in the workshop. Hence, the findings of the study might not be generalized to a larger population due to the qualitative nature of the study. It is therefore recommended to replicate the study with more teacher participants of outer circle countries, which can lead to a more accurate as well as generalizable result. Questions about EIL, such as whose culture or which English to teach, cannot be easily resolved, but answers can be gradually discovered and shared by teachers and teacher educators in their specific contexts.

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# **Changing Contours: The Interference of the Mother Tongue on English Speaking Sylheti Bengali**

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## **Abstract**

The Sylheti Bangla, a variety of Bangla language is primarily spoken in the Sylhet District of Bangladesh, Barak Valley of Assam, Tripura, especially in North Tripura. The systematic perusal on English spoken by Sylheti Bangla speakers demonstrates that it carries a huge difference with English (RP) specially in respect to pronunciation, syllable structure, stress, intonation. The disparities between Sylheti English and English (RP) are because of a number of divergent variances between Sylheti Bangla and English which often makes the acquisition of English an arduous job for the Sylheti speakers. The errors committed by Sylheti speakers during their speaking in English can be attributed to the interference of the rule of mother tongue in learning the second language. This interference can be of phonological, morphological and sentence structure. However, the domain of this paper is exclusive to phonological interference of L1 on L2 through the contrastive analysis of the phonological aspects of Sylheti Bangla and English (RP). This paper intends to improve the status of English teaching-learning process compared to contemporary practices. Thus, it aspires to contribute to the theory of second language acquisition with a particular focus on learning English by the Sylheti speakers.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue interference, Sylheti English, phonological interference, contrastive analysis

## **Introduction**

All languages have their own patterns of linguistic system and the nature of this system differs from one another. Due to this variety of patterns in linguistic system, when a learner consciously begins the process of learning a second language or a foreign language, the distinctiveness of the second language in terms of its properties with that of the mother tongue of the speaker inhibits the process of his/her acquisition of the second language disregarding his/her consciousness of the intrinsic differences between the two. This interference impels the learners of the second language to attempt to change the system of the target language in order to match it to their own language.

When a learner's native language affects the learning of second/foreign

language, it is called interference of mother tongue (Thyab, 2016). In Dulay and Burt (1976, p. 71), the term ‘interference’ is defined as “the automatic transfer, due to habit of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language” (cited in Lott, 1983, p. 257). According to Lott (1983), interference refers to the errors committed by learners of second or foreign language that “can be traced back to the mother tongue”. At the phonological ground, this interference is most prominent. It is because most of the phonological aspects are language specific. The concept of “transfer” can be best understood from Ellis (1994). He comments that L1 transfer usually refers to the “incorporation of features of the L1 into the knowledge system of the L2 that the learner is trying to build” (Ellis, 1994, p. 28). The behavioristic approach proposes that in learning L2 speakers transfer the “habit” of the L1 into L2.

So, from the above definitions of interference, it is understood that interference is the transfer of the grammar of the first language upon the target language of the grammar. If the target language is different from L1, this transfer results into interference or negative transfer; on the contrary, if L1 and L2 are similar, positive transfer occurs. Thus, the transfer of L1 can both facilitate and hinder the learning process of L2. In order to obtain a clear concept of the role of L1 in learning L2, I refer to the work of Hayati (1997). He mentions that when there are more differences between first language and target language, learners face more difficulties to learn it. On the contrary, if the two languages share more similarities, the learning of second language becomes easier for learners. Due to this reason, people can learn some languages more easily than other languages. For example, the acquisition of Hindi is easier for a Bengali speaker than the acquisition of English language. It is because Bangla and Hindi have many identical forms in respect of linguistic features. If the learners’ mother tongue and target language belong to same language family, it makes the learning process of target language easy for learners and vice versa.

Many previous works uphold that the application of Contrastive Analysis (CA) methodology between L1 and L2 helps to predict the reasons behind the errors made by second language learners. The emergence of CA in second/foreign language teaching primarily engendered in Fries (1945). In his work, it is stated that “the most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learners” (cited in Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982, p. 98).

According to Dulay et al. (1982, p. 97), “[c]ontrastive Analysis took the position that a learner’s first language “interferes” with his or her acquisition of a second language, and it therefore comprises the major obstacle to successful mastery of the new language”. Brown (2007) states that the CA is rooted in behavioristic and structural approaches. In his book, the concept of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis refers to the idea that,

the principal barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the first language system with the second language system and that a scientific, structural analysis of the two languages in question would yield a taxonomy of linguistic contrasts between them which in turn would enable linguists and language teacher to predict the differences a learner would encounter. (Brown, 2007, p. 220)

Based on such aforementioned works on CA, it can be stated that CA is a methodology which can be applied to explore the areas of difficulties faced by L2 learners and provide guidelines for the students, teachers, L2 material planners to plan language learning and teaching lesson plan.

The systematic perusal of English spoken by Sylheti speakers exhibits that it carries a huge difference with English (RP) with respect to a number of linguistic attributes especially in pronunciation, syllable structure, stress, and intonation. Due to these divergent variances, the acquisition of English has always been an arduous job for the Sylheti speakers. This almost always leads to a lot of flaws and gaffes. These errors, for the most part, can be attributed to the interference of the rule of mother tongue in learning the second language. Based on the methodology of Contrastive Analysis, in this paper, I attempt to demonstrate the differences between Sylheti Bangla (henceforth, SHB) vis-a-vis that of English (RP) with respect to phonology. The contrastive analysis throws significant light on the reasons behind the errors committed by Sylheti learners of English, and it will help us to get an empirical profile of the Interlanguage (i.e. IL) phonology of Sylheti English (henceforth, SHE), a variety of English spoken by Sylheti speakers. This will unequivocally help them to attenuate the gap between Sylheti English and English (RP).

The study examined some basic phonological aspects of SHB such as segments, syllable, stress, and intonation, and evaluated the interference of mother tongue in Sylheti learners of English. The findings will contribute to the theory of second language acquisition with a particular focus on learning English by the Sylheti speakers.

## **Literature review**

Though a substantive number of researches has been done on the interference of first language in learning second language, not a single work is available in the literature on the interference of Sylheti Bangla in learning English. Therefore, it would be a novel approach to discuss some previous works based on the interference of L1 on L2 with regard to some other languages in order to grasp a clear view of the concept of “interference” and the methodology of Contrastive Analysis. Keeping this in mind, in this section, I will cite some previous works on the interference of L1 on L2. These citations will also help me to understand the fact that the interference of mother tongue in learning second language is a very common phenomenon in second language acquisition, and the English spoken by Sylheti speakers is also not devoid of

this interference.

The first work which I refer to is of Derakshan and Karimi (2015). After reviewing some previous works they establish the fact that second language learners always face some problems in learning second language because of transfer of first language on target language. In their opinion, a lot of factors work behind this interference. For example, whether the structure of two languages is similar or different from each other, and existing knowledge of the learners. They propose that if L1 and L2 are similar in structures, L2 learners encounter less difficulty in learning L2. On the contrary, if L1 and L2 differ from each other in structures, learners face many problems in the acquisition of L2.

The research work of Malana (2018) examines how Ilocanos, Ibanags and Itawes use their own mother tongue in learning English. Ilocanos have the tendencies of transferring rules or patterns of intonation from their L1 in learning L2. For that reason they commit more errors while they communicate in English. The Ibanags tend to transfer the L1 pronunciation rule to L2. That is why they commit errors on pronunciation. The author investigates that when speaking in a target language code-shifting and code-switching are tendencies of L2 learners like the Ilacano, the Ibang, and the Itawes. The learners use these strategies when they find it difficult to proceed with a learning task in L2.

Another significant study on L1 transfer in the acquisition of L2 is Radhika (2014). This work examines the mother tongue interference on learning spoken English by the learners coming from Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and Bhojpuri languages. The author investigates that when Tamil learners of English pronounce the voiced and voiceless plosives /p/ and /b/ they confront difficulty and mother tongue interference occurs in their English. They pronounce /pin/ and /bin/ alike. The reason behind this is that there is no exact letter for each sound in Tamil. One letter can be used for three sounds. For instance, for “pa”, “ba”, pHa”, “bHa” Tamil speakers use one letter “pa”. Telugu students pronounce English words end with the vowel sound /u/ e.g., “girl” is pronounced as “girlu”. Explaining the reason behind it the author mentions that in Telugu most of the words end with the vowel sound /u/ like “kooralu”, and “bommalu”. Now coming to Bhojpuri, the author investigates that Bhojpuri students shorten the long vowel sounds and pronounce nasal sounds such as consonant sounds. Bhojpuri students pronounce “Rajeev” as “Rajv” because the long vowel sounds are not found in Bhojpuri language.

Also, Hu (2015) states that English is difficult for Chinese learners. It is because Chinese and English have different language structures. English is part of Indo-European language family, on the other hand, Chinese is part of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Due to the significant differences between Chinese and English many Chinese English learners rely on their mother tongue while they try to learn new languages. His research proposes that Chinese English learners encounter difficulty to pronounce English sounds because their similar Chinese sounds influence a lot. For example, Chinese

students can not differentiate the distinction between the alveolar nasal sound /n/ and the alveolar liquid lateral sound /l/. As a result, they mispronounce “knife” and “life” as well as “need” and “lead”. Chinese learners face difficulty to pronounce words like “English” and “rose” correctly because English sounds /r/ and /s/ differ from Chinese /r/ and /s/.

While examining Bengali speakers, Saha and Mandal (2014) reveal that Bengali English learners encounter difficulty to pronounce some American English consonant and vowel sounds. As a consequence, they make error in pronouncing the vowels and consonants of American English. This paper proposes that as Bengali Speakers face problem with American English consonants and vowel sounds, they try to replace these sounds by the similar sounds of their mother tongue Bengali. His research shows that Bengali speakers replace American English consonants such as /f/, /v/, /T/, /D/, /z/ by /pH/, /bH/, /tH/, /dH/, /dZ/ respectively, and vowels such as /e/ and /E/ are transferred to /e/, /u/ respectively, and /uè/ becomes /u/.

The work of Thyab (2016) also provides the interferences of mother tongue in second language learning by Arab speakers. His work shows that the article system, especially the notion of definite and indefinite article is different in Arab than that of the English language. As a result, Arab learners of English face problems in the correct use of articles in English language.

Ullah (2011) also deals with the interference of L1 on L2. He claims that the errors committed by learners in learning second language are the result of the transfer of L1 on L2. He investigates the differences of consonants between English and Pashto language. Their work finds that English consonant sounds which are not present in Pashto create problems for the Pashtan learners of English such as English sounds /t/, /v/, and /z/.

Like Thyab (2011), Crompton (2011) also reveals that how Arabic learners of English face problems in using English article correctly due to the transfer of L1 article system on L2. Das (2001) shows how Tripura Bangla speakers in their use of English language get deviated from the stress pattern of English because of the interference of the core pattern of the first language on English.

### **A background study of Bangla language and Sylheti Bangla**

From the celebrated work of Chatterjee (1926), it is known that Bangla originated from Indo-Aryan (IA) or the Indic Sub-branch of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European (IE) language family. Commenting on the Bangla language, Gope (2016) claims that in India, Bangla is the second most spoken language (behind Hindu and Urdu).

Sylheti dialect belongs to eastern variations of Bangla. The origin of Sylheti dialect presented in Anowar (2013) is stated below.

Indo-European>Indo-Iranian>Indo-Aryan>Eastern group>Bangali-Assamese>Sylhet.

This dialect is primarily spoken in the Sylhet District of Bangladesh, also known as Surma valley. Sylhet district is located in the North-Eastern region of Bangladesh. It has five divisions Sylhet, Habiganj, Maulavi Bazar and Sunamganj. Apart from Bangladesh, this dialect is also spoken in the North parts of Tripura, Barak Valley of Assam, and some parts of Meghalaya.

Anowar (2013) claims that Sylheti has its own script known as “Sylheti Nagari”. In Bangladesh during Afgan reign “Sylheti Nagari” was used for the print of Afgan coin. Sylheti Nagari has similarity with Kaithi alphabet. However, this dialect varies from Standard Colloquial Bangla in terms of linguistic aspects.

## **Methodology**

Data were collected from native speakers (approximately 20, 10 males and 10 females and aged between 11-15 years of age) of SHB. The speakers were the students of primary school of vernacular medium. They grew up in and around Dharmanagar district of North Tripura where SHB is spoken. For the examination of segments, syllable pattern and stress, a list of English words was given to them to read out. For the intonation part, the speakers were asked to produce both Sylheti and English scripted sentences. The data were recorded into a Samson CUIU PRO USB microphone attached to a laptop. The recordings were made in Audacity software in Praat (Boersma and Weenink, 2019). Recorded sentences were saved in Praat and segmented manually. In order to analyze the data for intonation, 2 tier Praat Textgrid file was created. In the first tier, the divisions of the words of the sentences were shown, and in the second tier, the pitch contour of the sentence was shown. The speakers were asked to repeat each sentence three times. In a quiet environment, the recordings were made. It is pertinent to mention that the present researcher herself is a native speaker of SHB. First, the data have been collected, verified and then cross-checked with the researcher’s native language’s knowledge and intuition. The data collected from the native speaker-informants along with the perception and judgement of the native speaker-researcher has been the mainstay of the work.

## **Results**

### ***Phonological aspects of SHB***

In this section, I will outline the nature of the basic phonological properties of SHB such as segments, syllable, stress, and intonation. The delineation can be started off with a brief account of these phonological aspects.

Speech sounds are classified into consonants and vowels. Phonetically consonant sounds are defined as sounds “made by a closure or narrowing in the vocal tract so that the airflow is either completely blocked, or so restricted

that audible friction is produced” (Crystal, 2008, p. 103). Based on the manner of articulation consonants are divided into two parts — obstruents and sonorants. During the production of obstruents, “the airflow is noticeably restricted, with the articulator either in complete closure or close approximation”, on the other hand, in the case of sonorants “either there is no such restriction in oral tract, or the nasal tract is open; either way the air has free passage through the vocal tract” (Davenport & Hannahs, 2005, p. 18). Depending on the stricture type, obstruents have three classifications — stops, fricatives, and affricates. The subdivisions of sonorants are nasals, liquids, and glides. The contact of active and passive articulators completely closes the oral tract and this closure is suddenly released during the production of stops. Due to this closure, the flow of air can not escape from the mouth. If a voiceless stop begins the word, during its articulation air is released with an “audible puff”. This phenomenon is termed as aspiration. For example, in the case of English sound /p<sup>h</sup>/ “pie”, /p/ is an aspirated sound. With regard to the production of fricatives, active and passive articulators make contact in such a way that there is a narrow gap between the articulators which allow the airflow to exit from the passage of the mouth. In the words of Davenport and Hannahs (2005, p. 27), “fricatives are produced when the active articulator is close to, but not actually in contact with the passive articulator”. In the articulation of affricates, the articulators create complete closure like plosives but in the case of release they follow fricatives as the release is very slow. So affricates possess the nature of both plosives and fricatives. In Crystal (2008, p. 16), the affricates are defined in the following way:

when the air-pressure behind a complete closure in the vocal tract is gradually released; the initial release produces a plosive, but the separation which follows is sufficiently slow to produce audible friction, and there is thus a fricative element in the sound also.

When the air passes through nasal cavity, nasal sounds are produced whereas, liquid sounds are produced with “unhindered airflow”. Like vowel sounds, in the case of articulation of glides, there is no contact of the active and passive articulator. But their nature is like consonants as they cannot form syllable nuclei; they appear at the edge of the syllable.

During the articulation of vowel sounds due to the wide gap between articulators the airflow exit without any obstruction. Vowels can be divided into monophthongs, diphthongs, and triphthongs. In the case of monophthongs, there is no tongue movement, whereas diphthongs involve tongue movement during its production. In Crystal (2008, p. 311) monophthongs are defined as pure vowels “where there is no detectable change in quality during a syllable”, and diphthongs or triphthongs refer to the vowels change in quality. Diphthongs can be again subdivided based on their ending vowel – fronting, centering and backing diphthongs. In the case of fronting diphthongs, the tongue glides towards the front vowel, when this glide is towards the centre vowel, it is called centering diphthongs; whereas, in the



case of backing diphthongs, tongue movement ends in the back vowel.

In a language, sentences are not simply constructed by adding up individual segments. First, segments are externally organized to form an “invisible” unit that is syllable which exists between the melody of segments and metrical organization of linguistic structures. In Crystal (2008, p. 467), it is defined as “a unit of pronunciation typically larger than a single sound and smaller than a word”. This abstract unit is termed as “syllabe” by Greek people and in Latin, it is known as “syllaba”. In Indian tradition, in order to understand the concept of syllable the term “akshara” has been used. The etymological meaning of “Akshara” refers to something which can not be destroyed.

The cross-linguistic studies tell us that in almost all languages there is a variation in the relative prominence of syllables. The prominence of syllables is referred to as stress. In Crystal (2008, p. 454), it is defined as “a term used in phonetics to refer to the degree of force used in producing a syllable”. For example, in the English word “parrot”, the first syllable “pa” is more prominent than “rrot”, so the first syllable is stressed and second syllable is unstressed (Davenport and Hannahs, 2005). In selecting the appropriate syllables for prominence placement, factors like rhythm, position, quantity, and morphology play vital roles. Prominent syllables also tend to be of longer duration and higher intensity. The absence of clear phonetic property of stress makes it difficult to detect stressed syllables in a language. In general, stress assignment is based on rhythm and/or syllable weight which looks at the rhyme structure.

While speaking in any language of the world a native speaker produces various kinds of melodies. It is because while we speak the pitch of our voice sometimes goes up, sometimes down and sometimes it remains level or steady. The pitch is the basic element for both tone and intonation. Tone is a property of individual syllable or word while intonation is a property of longer stretches such as phrases or sentences. Like consonants and vowels, tone plays an important role in distinguishing the meaning of the word. In Nupe language, the sequence [ba] can be produced using three different varieties of pitch. When low pitch is used it means “to count”, high pitch means “to be sour”, whereas if the pitch level between high and low is used, it means “to cut” (Davenport and Hannahs, 2005).

A language may or may not have lexical tones but intonation contours over a phrase or a sentence occur in all languages. Intonation contour on phrases or sentences helps to transmit differences in meaning. For example, in English falling and rising intonation contours over an utterance are used to distinguish a statement from a question. An utterance that has a falling intonation contour as in “He eats an apple” is usually perceived as a statement whereas the same sentence produced with a rising intonation contour would be perceived as a question – “He eats an apple?” To point out the basic nature of intonation, Cruttenden equates it specifically with pitch movement, while Coulthard identifies it with prosody which would include not only pitch

movements but also loudness, length, speed, and even voice quality (Ranalli, 2002).

### *Segments of SHB*

Being a speech form of Eastern Bengal areas, though SHB shares an identical form of phonetics as well as phonology with all other dialects of Bangla of this area, there exist some particular properties in SHB such as, its distinctive sound system, its excessive indulgence on friction, its unique tone and intonation properties which give it a unique picture compared to other dialects of Bangla. SHB sound system exhibits certain special properties which are traceable in no other dialects of Bangla. For that reason, people of other dialect areas of Bangla can hardly understand anything of it.

In this section I have demonstrated phonemes of Sylheti Bangla. In order to represent phonemes in a language, the convention is to use slashes-//. After investigating SHB words it is found that SHB carries five monophthongs — /ɪ E α □ ʊ/. With regard to SHB diphthongs, I divide them into three sections based on their ending vowel — fronting diphthong ending in ɪ, centering diphthong ending in α, and backing diphthong with ʊ, □. The sixteen diphthongs of SHB are /ʊɪ eɪ αɪ αʊ oɪ εʊ ɪ□ ʊα oʊ □α Eα ɪʊ ɪα E□ α□ ʊ□/.

In respect to consonants, SHB has twenty sounds — seven non-aspirated stops /β τʃ δʃ □ | κ γ/, three voiceless aspirated stops /τʃʰ □ʰ κʰ/, four fricatives, /ð ÷ Σ σ ζ/, three nasals /μ ν N/, one alveolar flap /p/, one retroflex flap /ʃ/ and one lateral /λ/. SHB lacks voiceless bilabial stop /p/, voiceless and voiced alveolar stops /τδ/, voiceless and voiced labiodental fricatives /φθ/, voiced palato-alveolar /ʒ/, palato-alveolar affricates /τΣ δZ/.

### *Syllable pattern of SHB*

The syllable structure of SHB consists of onset and rhyme. Onset is composed of only one consonant immediately located in front of the nucleus and rhythm is further classified into nucleus and coda. SHB is not very strict about having onset and coda in every syllable. So it can be logically claimed that in SHB onset and coda may be optional. The general rule of syllabification in SHB words is very simple. Word can begin with both a syllabic element V (in VC) as in /αμ/ “mango” or a non-syllabic element C (in CV) as in /γα/ “body”. Consonant clusters are not allowed in word initial and word final position. Medial CCC cluster is found though very rare. In an open monosyllable the vowel can be lengthened.

From the examination of consonant+vowel sequences in SHB monosyllabic words, eight types of syllable structures (four for open and four for closed syllables) are found in this dialect as demonstrated below.

Open syllable

V                    □            “is it?”

VV                  ου          “this”

CVV    βοι        “book”

CV      γα        “body”

Closed syllable

VC                  αμ        “mango”

VVC    αιλ        “boundary of a paddy land”

CVC    ξαμ        “work”

CVVC    μαιρ        “beat”

### ***Stress pattern of SHB***

SHB words are classified into three groups based on their internal structure – words containing only light syllables, words containing only heavy syllables and words containing both light and heavy syllables. SHB native words containing four or five syllables are very rare. There appear to be two degrees of stress: primary and secondary. Light+light combination SHB words form trochaic feet from left-to-right such as ( ≡βα.}ι) “home”. In a sequence of three light syllables, a trochee is constructed on the two left-most syllables with initial prominence and third syllable remains unparsed because of its light monosyllabic nature such as ( ≡γυ.λα)βι “pink”. SHB speakers discard an alternative option of L(LL). It implies that they prefer to construct foot aligning with the left edge of the grammatical word. In SHB only VC, CVC and CVVC type syllables are considered as heavy attracting stress. Canonical vowel length of V: type is not distinctive in SHB. In the case of heavy+heavy combination, only the first syllable attracts stress obeying syllabic trochaic foot form from left-to-right for example, ( ≡βαιN.γ□v) “eggplant”.

SHB speakers discard stressing two successive heavy syllables. Thus the principle weight-to-stress (WSP) is dominated to avoid clash between two successive syllables. In sequences of three heavy syllables HHH, the first two heavy syllables form a trochaic foot with primary stress on the left. The third one being heavy also initiates a foot with secondary stress.

Disyllabic words of light and heavy combination attract initial stress irrespective of its internal structure for example, ( ≡βα.λιΣ) “pillow”, ( ≡ηυκ.να) “thin”. However, in the cases of tri-syllabic words stress distribution becomes apparently irregular due to the presence of heavy syllables. Heavy syllable attracts stress and this is so powerful a requirement that it can override otherwise inviolable principles of word-initial primary stress and of non-final prominence. Primary prominence shifts to the second syllable if the first syllable is light and second is heavy in the case of tri-syllabic words for example, ÷υ ( ≡ρ□Σ.ξαρ) “prize”. The third initiates a foot with secondary stress after the primary foot is constructed over the two initial light syllables,

for example, (  $\cong \div \square. \tau 5 \alpha$ ) (  $\exists \xi \alpha \lambda$ ) “dawn”. This results in sequences of successive feet. However, two successive heavy syllables do not initiate two feet. So, one can argue that SHB is quantity sensitive, *albeit partially*.

### ***Intonation pattern of SHB***

For the intonation part in this paper, I have only investigated wh-question of SHB. It is because the interference of the rules of wh-question of SHB in learning the wh-question of English is very prominent compared to other types of sentences. From the experiment on wh-question, it is noted and pointed out that in the wh-question, the wh-phrase is considered by the native speakers as the most significant phrase in the sentence. For example, in the sentence //  $\xi \alpha \rho$   $\beta \circ \iota$   $\iota \square \alpha$  // “Whose book is this?”, the wh-phrase / $\xi \alpha \rho$ / “whose” is the prominent phrase of the sentence. Therefore, within the phonological phrase of wh-question, the wh-word is considered to be the nuclear accent of the question and within the intonational phrase of wh-question the phonological phrase which bears wh-word receives the strongest stress of the intonational phrase.

In the case of wh-question with utterance initial or medial wh-word, the left-most word is the main stressed word which attracts pitch accent and in the case of wh-questions with utterance final wh-word the rightmost word of the strongest phonological phrase is the main stressed word; in all the cases the P-phrase bearing the most stressed wh-word receives the strongest stress of its I-phrase.

The following demonstration shows the stress pattern of representative SHB wh-question with sentence initial wh-word.

x					Phrasal level
	x	x	x		Word level
	x	x	x		Syllabic level
	[[ξαρ] <sub>P</sub>			[[βοι] <sub>P</sub> [ι□α] <sub>P</sub> ] <sub>IP</sub>	
	//ξαρ βοι ι□α// “Whose book is this?”				

In the above stress pattern of wh-question //  $\xi \alpha \rho$   $\beta \circ \iota$   $\iota \square \alpha$  // “Whose book is this?” has three phonological phrases i.e. [ $\xi \alpha \rho$ ], [ $\beta \circ \iota$ ] and [ $\iota \square \alpha$ ]. In the first p-phrase [ $\xi \alpha \rho$ ], wh-word / $\xi \alpha \rho$ / “whose” is the main stressed word. Since p-phrase [ $\xi \alpha \rho$ ] bears the main stressed word of the whole sentence so this leftmost phrase is the strongest phrase of Intonational Phrase //  $\xi \alpha \rho$   $\beta \circ \iota$   $\iota \square \alpha$  //. Now we examine the stress pattern of SHB wh-question with sentence medial wh-word.

x				Phrasal level
x		x	x	Word level
x		x	x	Syllabic level

[[μ.α.λ.α]<sub>P</sub> [κ.ι. τ.5.α]<sub>P</sub> [ξ.α.ι.β.□]<sub>P</sub>]<sub>IP</sub>  
 //μ.α.λ.α κ.ι.τ.5.α ξ.α.ι.β.□// “What will Mala eat?”

In the above representation of stress, it is noticed that SHB wh-question //μ.α.λ.α κ.ι.τ.5.α ξ.α.ι.β.□// “What will Mala eat?” has three phonological phrases i.e. [μ.α.λ.α], [κ.ι.τ.5.α], and [ξ.α.ι.β.□]. In the second p-phrase [κ.ι.τ.5.α], wh-word /κ.ι.τ.5.α/ “what” is the main stressed word, and the first syllable /κ.ι/ of the phonological word /κ.ι.τ.5.α/ is the main stressed syllable. Since p-phrase [κ.ι.τ.5.α] bears the main stressed word of the whole sentence so this phrase is the strongest phrase of Intonational Phrase //μ.α.λ.α κ.ι.τ.5.α ξ.α.ι.β.□//.

Now we demonstrate stress pattern of a representative wh-question with sentence final wh-word given below.

	x		Phrasal level
x	x	x	Word level
x	x	x	Syllabic level

[[τ.5.□.ρ]<sub>P</sub> [ν.α.μ]<sub>P</sub> [κ.ι.τ.5.α]<sub>P</sub>]<sub>IP</sub>  
 //τ.□.ρ ν.α.μ κ.ι.τ.5.α// “What is your name?”

The above wh-question //τ.5.□.ρ ν.α.μ κ.ι.τ.5.α// has three phonological phrases [τ.5.□.ρ], [ν.α.μ] and [κ.ι.τ.5.α]. The left syllable /κ.ι/ of the phonological phrase /κ.ι.τ.5.α/ is the main stressed syllable and the word /κ.ι.τ.5.α/ is the strongest word of this phrase. Since p-phrase [κ.ι.τ.5.α] bears the main stressed word of the whole sentence so this right most phrase is the strongest phrase of Intonational Phrase //τ.5.□.ρ ν.α.μ κ.ι.τ.5.α//.

After finding out the main stressed word in SHB wh-questions we move on to demonstrate the intonation contour of SHB wh-questions. From our experiment on SHB wh-questions it is revealed that in SHB wh-questions with utterance initial or medial or final wh-word high (H\*) pitch accent falls on the most prominent word i.e. wh-word and intonational phrase boundary is marked with low tone (L%).

Now coming to SHB wh-question with utterance initial wh-word, it is noticed that the contour starts with a rise and high (H\*) pitch accent falls on the nucleus of wh-word and low (L%) boundary tone falls on the utterance final position (see Figure 1).

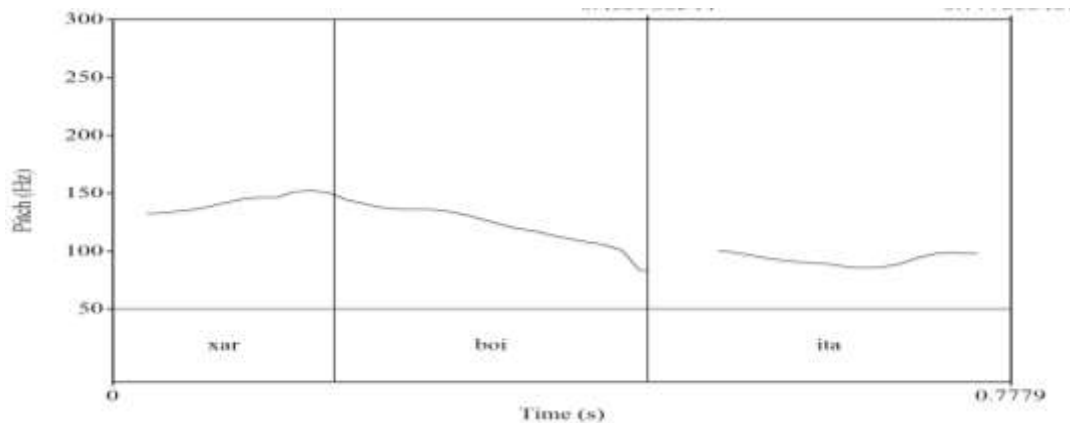


Figure 1. //ξαρ βοι ια// “Whose book is this?”

In Figure 1, wh-word /ξαρ/ “whose” is placed at sentence initial position which starts with a shallow rise and H\* tone falls on its peak. Here also low (L%) boundary tone falls on the sentence final position. Figure 2 demonstrates the intonation contour of a representative wh-question with utterance medial wh-word in SHB.

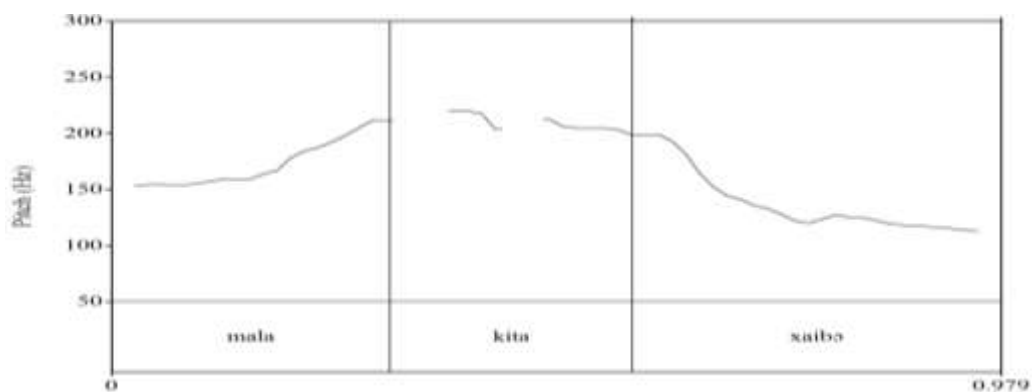


Figure 2. //μαλα κιτ5α ξαιβ// “What will Mala eat?”

In Figure 2, we see that in the phonological phrase [κιτ5α], wh-word /κιτ5α/ “what” is the main stressed word and the first syllable /κι/ of the phonological word /κιτ5α/ is the main stressed syllable which carries H\* pitch accent. The boundary tone that falls here is low (L%). So in the I-Phrase //μαλα κιτ5α ξαιβ// “What will Mala eat?”, the *leftmost* Phonological phrase [κιτ5α] “what” is the strongest phonological phrase as it carries main stressed word /κιτ5α/ which attracts pitch accent.

Like the previous examples, in the case of wh-question with utterance final wh-word the same intonation contour is noticed. The main stressed word i.e. wh-word /κιτ5α/ receives H\* pitch accent and boundary tone of IP receives Low tone (L%).

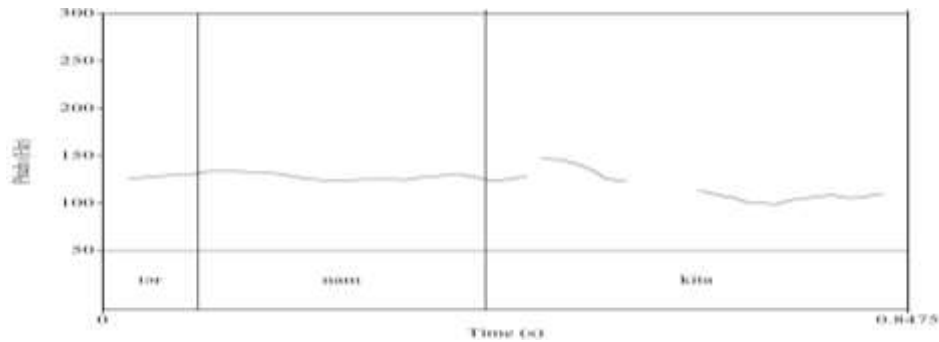


Figure 3. //τ5□ρ ναμ κιτ5α// “What is your name?”

In Figure 3, wh-word /κιτ5α/ “what” is placed at sentence final position and it is the main stressed word in the sentence. The pitch accent that falls on the nucleus of the first syllable /κι/ of the wh-word /κιτ5α/ is high tone (H\*), and low (L%) tone acts as a boundary tone.

From the simplest description of SHB wh-questions with utterance initial or medial or final wh-word, it can be stated that in SHB the intonation contour of wh-questions is rise-fall. Besides the above examples of SHB wh-questions, there are some other examples of wh-questions where SHB speakers use clitic – ba. In such cases also the same rise-fall contour is noticed (see Figure 4). In Figure 4, wh-word /ξE/ “who” occurs with the following clitic /-βα/ and the same intonation pattern i.e. H\* as a nucleus tone and L% as a boundary tone are used.

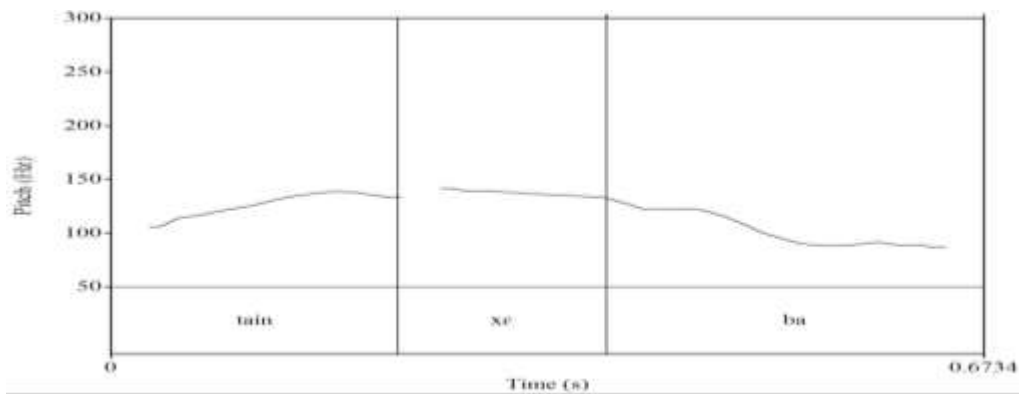


Figure 4. //τ5αιν ξE βα// “Who is he?”

### Contrastive analysis between English and SHB

In this section, first I will demonstrate the contrastive picture of English and SHB in respect to phonological aspects such as segments, syllable, stress, and intonation. Then, I will discuss the phonological aspects of Sylheti English, a variety of English spoken by Sylheti people.

In spoken communication clear pronunciation is essential. When learners have good command over pronunciation and intonation they are more likely to communicate effectively even though they produce minor inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar. The various features that constitute the production of sounds in English are illustrated below.

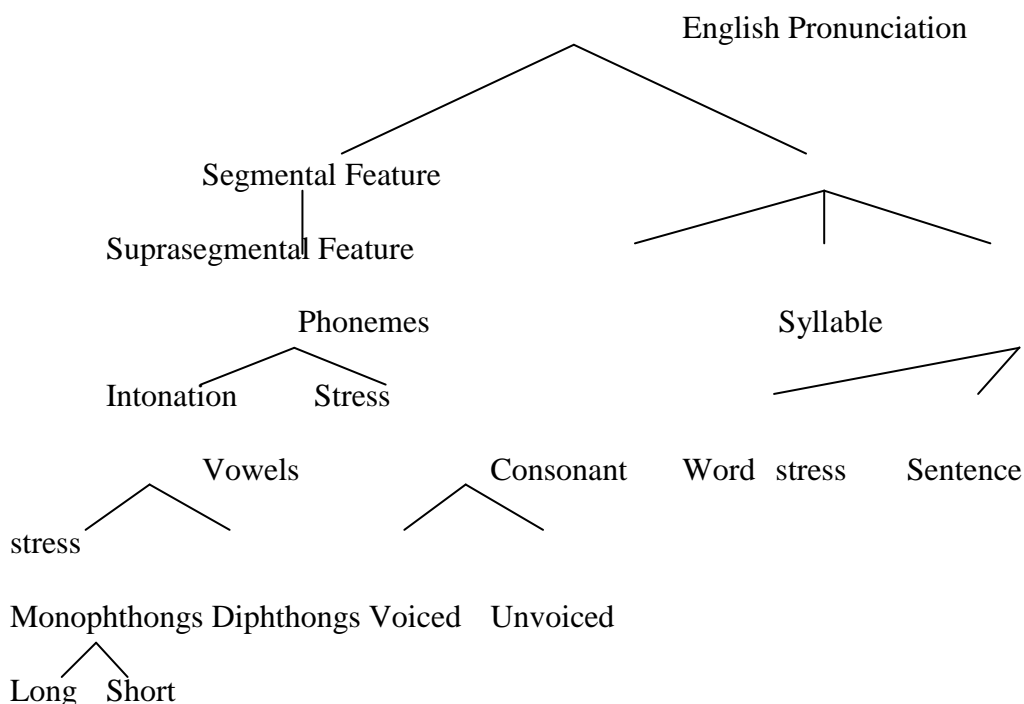


Figure 5. Aspects of English pronunciation in respect of segmentals and suprasegmentals

Figure 5 illustrates the aspects of English pronunciation in respect of segmentals and suprasegmentals. I start with segmental features. In comparison with the picture of the vowel inventory of the L1 of the SHE speakers, the target language i.e. English has a system of twelve monophthongs including long and short that are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1  
*English short monophthongs*

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	I		Y
High-mid	ε	↔	
Low-mid		ɒ	□
Low	Θ		



Table 2

*English long monophthongs*

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	ɪ		ʊ
High-mid			
Low-mid		ɛ	ɔ
Low			ʌ (unrounded)

In SHB there are five vowels – /ɪ E ʌ ɔ ʊ/ with one allophonic variant each of /ɔ/ and /E/ i.e. the high mid vowels o and ε respectively. For clarity Table 3 shows SHB monophthongs.

Table 3

*SHB monophthongs*

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	ɪ		ʊ
High-mid	ε		
Low-mid			ɔ
Low	ʌ		

It is obvious from the comparison between the two vowel systems that English carries more variations regarding monophthongs in comparison with SHB. Our findings tell us that when SHB speakers learn English they have a tendency to reduce English vowels according to the system of their L1 vowel phonology. Table 4 shows the reduction of English monophthongs in SHE by SHB speakers.

Table 4

*SHE sounds*

English	SHE
ɪ I →	ɪ
ε Θ →	E
ɛ ɔ ʌ →	ʌ
ɔ ɔ →	ɔ
ʊ Y →	ʊ
↔ →	null

The left column of Table 4 shows RP vowels and the right column their reduced correspondents in SHE. The first point of difference is the lack of [ATR] feature in the reduced version. It implies that SHB phonology does not possess phonemic difference between short and long vowels. Hence during

their pronunciation of English vowels [+ATR] feature is lost. In the reduced version SHB speakers retain only [+high] and [-back] features. We show the change from long front vowel  $\text{ɪ} \text{̄}$  to short high vowel  $\text{ɪ}$ , to begin with.

$\text{ɪ} \text{̄} \rightarrow \text{ɪ}$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\text{ɪ} \text{̄} \tau$	$\text{ɪ} \tau$	“eat”
$\beta \text{ɪ} \text{̄} \tau$	$\beta \text{ɪ} \tau$	“beat”
$\mu \text{ɪ} \text{̄} \nu$	$\mu \text{ɪ} \nu$	“mean”

English  $/\varepsilon \Theta/$  turn into one single vowel of SHB  $/E/$ . For this reason, pronunciation of many words gets deviated from the standard RP.

$\Theta, \varepsilon \rightarrow E$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\beta \Theta \delta$	$\beta E \text{̄}$	“bad”
$\kappa \Theta \tau$	$\kappa E \square$	“cat”
$\gamma \Theta \sigma$	$\gamma E \Sigma$	“gas”

This reductionism results in the birth of SHE vowels  $/\text{ɪ} E/$  from English vowels  $/\text{ɪ} \text{̄} \text{I} \varepsilon \Theta/$  in the front zone. In the back flank a similar picture is noticed — two English back high vowels  $/\text{ʊ} \text{̄} \text{Y}/$  get reduced to  $/\text{ʊ}/$ .

$\text{ʊ} \text{̄}, \text{Y} \rightarrow \text{ʊ}$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\beta \text{ʊ} \text{̄} \tau$	$\beta \text{ʊ} \square$	“boot”
$\pi \text{Y} \lambda$	$\div \text{ʊ} \lambda$	“pull”

In the same way two non-high non-low English back vowels  $/\square \square \text{̄}/$  are reduced to  $/\square/$ .

$\square, \square \text{̄} \rightarrow \square$		
$\beta \square \delta \text{̄} \text{ɪ}$	$\beta \square \text{̄} \text{ɪ}$	“body”
$\beta \square \text{̄} \lambda$	$\beta \square \lambda$	“ball”

On the back flank we witness the reduction of English back vowels from four to two in SHE:  $/\text{ʊ} \text{̄} \text{Y} \square \square \text{̄}/ \rightarrow / \text{ʊ} \square/$ .

As for central vowel reduction occurs not only in respect of quantity but also quality. Central vowels  $/\wp \in \text{̄}/$  are reduced to low front vowel  $/\alpha/$ . Sometimes  $/\wp/$  changes into  $/\square/$ .

$$\wp \rightarrow \alpha/\square$$

English	SHE	Gloss
ϕ ϑ v	÷ α v	“fun”
v ϑ μ β ↔	v □ μ β □ ρ	“number”

RP central long vowel /ε ʊ/ is articulated as /α/ in SHE.

ε ʊ → α		
English	SHE	Gloss
β ε ʊ δ	β α ρ δ	“bird”
σ ε ʊ κ λ	σ α ρ κ Ε λ	“circle”

This SHB low front vowel /α/ also takes the place of English lowest back vowel /Α ʊ/.

Α ʊ → α		
κ λ Α ʊ κ	κ λ α ρ κ	“clerk”
ϕ Α ʊ μ	÷ α μ	“farm”
μ Α ʊ σ τ ↔	μ α Σ □ □ ρ	“master”

The net result of all these reductions is that SHE vowel system emerges with a spectacular presence of L1 (i.e. SHB) vowels: /I E α □ υ/ which is demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 5  
*SHE vowels*

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	ɪ		ʊ
High-mid			
Low-mid	E		□
Low	α		

Another mid central English vowel /ə/ creates a problem for SHB learners of English, as this vowel does not have an exact equivalent in SHB. This vowel is specially used in English in unstressed syllables. Then, which vowel do SHB speakers adopt for the articulation of the segment? It is noticed that SHB speakers replace /↔/ by a vowel from their native ones thanks to ignorance or imperfect knowledge. For instance, the first vowel in /↔/. □ β ϑ ϖ/ “above” is pronounced in English as [↔]. SHB speakers replace it with [E] and place stress on it: [ □ Ε.β α β]. Many such instances are noted in SHE and some are cited below.

↔ → E, α		
English	SHE	Gloss
↔ β α Υ τ	Ε β α υ □	“about”

↔βαΥνδ	Εβαυν	“abound”
κ↔λκτ	ξαλΕκ□	“collect”
σιγ↔ρετ	σιγαρΕ□	“cigarette”

This reduction gives birth to many homophonous words in SHE. In English these sounds have different pronunciations with different meanings, whereas in SHE they have distinct pronunciation with distinct meanings, such as, in SHE both “bet” and “bat” are replaced as /βετ/. Some more examples are demonstrated below.

English	SHE	Gloss
φι λ	÷ιλ	“feel”
φΙλ	÷ιλ	“fill”
χ□ τ	ξ□□	“caught”
χΑτ	ξ□□	“cot”
βεδ	βε	“bed”
βΘδ	βε	“bad”
φυ λ	÷υλ	“fool”
φΥλ	÷Υλ	“full”

Coming to diphthongs, while SHB carries 16 diphthongs English has only eight. The frequent errors SHB speakers make in respect of English diphthongs are a) in SHE, many English words with monophthongs are pronounced with diphthongs and b) many English diphthongs are substituted by monophthongs.

#### Monophthongs → Diphthongs

English	SHE	Gloss
φλ□	÷λουρ	“floor”
μ□ (ρ)	μουρ	“more”
βελ	βειλ	“bell”

#### Diphthongs → Monophthongs

English	SHE	Gloss
φ□λ↔Υ	÷□λ□	“follow”
νφυ ζπεΙπ↔	νιυζ÷Ε÷αρ	“newspaper”
↔ΥΣν	□ΣΕν	“ocean”
ν↔ΥτΙσ	νυ□ι Σ	“notice”
δεΙνδΖ↔ρ↔σ	Ενζαρασ	“dangerous”
ελβ↔Υ	Ελβ□	“elbow”
ειβλ	Εβυλ	“able”
πρ↔υτι ν	÷ο□ιν	“protein”
ρειλ	ρΕλ	“rail”

Table 6  
*English consonants*

	Bilabial	Labio dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd
Plosive	π β			τ δ			κ γ	
Fricative		φ ɸ	T Δ	σ ζ	Σ Z			η
Affricate					τΣ δZ			
Nasal	μ			ν			N	
Flap								
Lateral				λ				
Approximant	ω				ρ	φ		

Table 7  
*SHB consonants*

		Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Alveo-palatal	Velar
		Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd	Vl Vd
Plosive	Un-asp	β	τ5 δ5		□		κ γ
	Asp		τ5H		□H		κH
Fricative		÷		σ ζ		Σ	
Nasal		μ		ν			N
Flap				ρ	}		
Lateral				λ			

Like vowels, consonants also show significant variations between SHB and English. English has six plosives, nine fricatives; seven sonorants: three nasals, three approximants, and one lateral. SHB has ten plosives, four fricatives, three nasals, one lateral and two liquids. Tables 6 and 7 capture the comparative pictures.

The important fact about /p/ is that in English during its articulation the tip of the tongue does not touch any part of the mouth, it only approaches the alveolar area. However, SHB pronunciation of /p/ is different from RP pronunciation: in SHB during its pronunciation tongue makes contact with palate. Again, in English /r/ is uttered in several ways depending on its position in a word. It is uttered before vowel word-initially and word-medially. In word final position it is not pronounced except when it is followed by a vowel in the next word. The English examples below from Roach (2000) bear this out.

Prevocalic p		Postvocalic and word final p	
peð	“red”	keɪp	“car”
əˈraɪv	“arrive”	evə	“ever”
ˈhiːə	“hearing”	ˈhiːə	“here”

On the contrary, in SHB /r/ is pronounced in all positions of the word. The difference is noticeable in the pronunciation of some English words by SHB speakers. SHB learners, orthographically guided and lacking in phonological information, pronounce r. Remember, SHB is a rhotic language, English is not.

SHE	Gloss	SHE	Gloss
xeɪp	“car”	heɪp	“hard”
evə	“ever”	veɪs	“verse”

Like vowels, for consonants also in SHE English consonants are frequently substituted by the consonants of SHB (Table 8).

Table 8  
*English and SHE consonants*

English (RP)	SHE
π φ →	÷
κ →	ξ
T Δ →	τ5H τ5 δ5
τ δ →	□
σ τΣ →	Σ σ
Z δZ →	ζ
ω φ →	υα ια υ ι

Due to the fricativization of plosives SHB speakers always commit errors in pronouncing English plosives  $\kappa$  and  $\pi$  as evidenced by the examples below.

$\pi \rightarrow \div, \kappa \rightarrow \xi$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\pi \square \kappa \iota \tau$	$\div \square \xi E \square$	“pocket”
$\pi \leftrightarrow \upsilon \sigma \tau$	$\div o \Sigma \square$	“post”
$\kappa \lambda A \sqcap \sigma$	$\xi E \lambda \alpha \sigma$	“class”
$\kappa \Theta \pi$	$\xi E \div$	“cap”

In SHE, English voiceless dental /T/ is pronounced as aspirated / $\tau 5H$ / in word initial position and in other cases non-aspirated / $\tau 5$ /. The voiced dental / $\Delta$ / is pronounced as / $\delta 5$ / everywhere in SHE. These sounds are pronounced in English “with the tip touching the inside of the lower front teeth and the blade touching the inside of the upper teeth” (Roach, 2000, p. 51). However, in SHE dental / $\tau 5 \delta 5$ / are pronounced with the tongue touching behind the upper teeth. The comparative examples shown below illustrate how in SHE English dentals change into SHB sounds.

$T \rightarrow \tau 5H, \tau 5 \quad \Delta \rightarrow \delta 5$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$T \rho \upsilon \sqcap$	$\tau 5H \rho \upsilon$	“through”
$\Delta \wp \sigma$	$\delta 5 \alpha \zeta$	“thus”

Voiceless alveolar fricative / $\sigma$ / and voiceless palato-alveolar affricate / $\tau \Sigma$ / in most of the cases change into SHB voiceless sibilant sound / $\Sigma$ / or voiceless alveolar fricative / $\sigma$ / in SHE. The examples below bear this out.

$\tau \Sigma \rightarrow \sigma, \sigma \rightarrow \Sigma$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\tau \Sigma A \sqcap$	$\sigma \alpha \rho \square$	“chart”
$\tau \Sigma \square \sqcap \kappa$	$\sigma \square \kappa$	“chalk”
$\sigma Y \tau$	$\Sigma \upsilon \square$	“suit”
$\sigma \tau \square \sqcap \phi$	$\Sigma \square \alpha \div$	“stuff”

English voiced alveolar affricate / $\delta Z$ / and voiced palatal fricative / $Z$ / are substituted by SHB voiced alveolar fricative / $\zeta$ / in SHE.

$\delta Z, Z \rightarrow \zeta$		
English	SHE	Gloss
$\mu \varepsilon Z \leftrightarrow$	$\mu E \zeta \alpha \rho$	“measure”
$\tau \rho \varepsilon Z \leftrightarrow$	$\square E \zeta \alpha \rho$	“treasure”



δΖΘκιτ

ζΕκΕ□

“jacket”

English voiceless and voiced alveolar plosives /τδ/ are replaced by SHB alveo-retroflex /□|/ in SHE.

τ → □, δ → |

English	SHE	Gloss
τι  τΣ↔	□ισαρ	“teacher”
τ□ κ	□□κ	“talk”
δ□γ	□γ	“dog”
δ□λ	□λ	“doll”

In English, “when the voiceless plosives /πτκ/ begin the word, there is likely to be an audible puff of air following the release” (Davenport & Hannahs, 2005, p. 22). In SHB we notice aspiration only in the case of a few segments such as dentals /τδ/ 55/. Velar /κ/ retains aspiration selectively and this aspiration is phonemic as it distinguishes meaning. Due to the absence of phonetic aspiration of voiceless plosives SHB speakers do not apply this rule in SHE. The following data is illustrated.

English	SHE	Gloss
[πΗεν]	÷Εν	“pen”
[τΗαΙμ]	□αιμ	“time”
[κΗελκ]	ξεικ	“cake”

In English there are two semivowels /φω/, but SHB attests no clear presence of semivowels. How do SHB speakers cope with the English semivowels!

φ → ι/ια

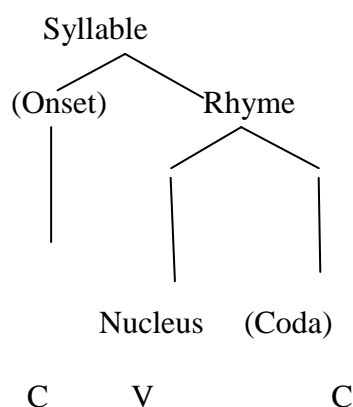
ω → υ/υα

English	SHE	Gloss
ω□ κ	υακ	“walk”
ω□ντ	υαντ	“want”
φ ϕΝ	ιαΝ	“young”
φες	ιες	“yes”

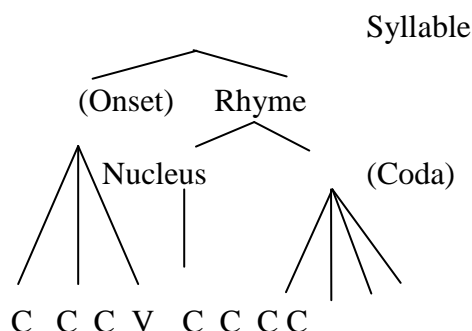
SHB speakers replace English semivowels /ω/ and /ψ/ by vowels /υ/ and /ι/ respectively. Like the errors occur in segments SHB speakers also do supra-segmental errors regarding syllable, stress, tone and other factors. The process of syllable division of the word is a natural process in a language. The arrangements of the syllables in a word are shared by the native speakers dictated by intuition. For example, in English there are some words which can have variable pronunciation: “bottling” can be parsed into two or three syllables; “realistic” in three or four. So, variable syllabification is a reality,

though treated as marginal and hence immaterial in literature. Let us look at the picture of syllable structures of SHB vis-a-vis English.

#### Syllable structure in SHB



#### Syllable structure in English



From the above, it is obvious that English has a complex syllable structure unlike SHB. The former permits consonant clusters at syllable margins i.e. onset and coda. The language allows three consonants in the beginning of a syllable and up to four in the end. The following set testifies to this point.

#### CV(C)

κɪ | "key"  
 ρ ɹ ʌ v "run"  
 φɪ l "fill"  
 σ θ τ "sat"

#### CCV(C)

σ τ ɪ n "sting"  
 π λ ɛ ɪ "play"  
 τ ρ ɑ ɪ "try"  
 σ μ κ ɔ y ɪ k "smoke"

#### CCCV(C)

σ π λ ɪ t "split"  
 σ τ ρ ɪ l μ "stream"  
 σ τ ρ ŋ n "strong"  
 σ τ ρ ɑ ɪ k "strike"

One important thing is that in comparison to CCC- clusters, CC- clusters show a huge variety of combinations. There are some constraints operational on English syllable structure and these are as follows. In English

except /N/ any other single consonant can function as an onset of a syllable. Besides this, in English no words can begin with nt, lk, mp, tl, dl, ps, pm, vw, rd. /τ δ T/ cannot be combined with /λ/ in onset cluster; nasals cannot be combined with stops in onset. In the onset cluster the fricatives /π Δ ζ Z/ never occur. In case of three element onset clusters, the initial consonant is invariably voiceless alveolar stop /σ/, the medial one a voiceless plosive such as /π, τ/ or /κ/ while the third or final consonant before the vowel should without exception be any one of the set of liquids and glides /λ ρ φ ω/.

Like the onset, in the field of English coda we find it permits up to four consonants to end a syllable. The two consonant coda clusters are predominant compared to three consonant clusters. In English /η ω φ/ never occur as coda consonant. English coda contains from zero to four consonants as testified by the following words.

VC		VCC		VCCC	VCCCC
ι ɲζ	“ease”	βεντ	“bent”	τεμπτ	“tempt”
	τεμπτς	“tempts”			
Θμ	“am”	βΘNκ	“bank”	τεκστ	“text”
	τεκστς	“texts”			
□ ɲτ	“ought”	βελτ	“belt”	νεκστ	
	“next”	πρ□μπτς	“prompts”		

From this comparison, it is obvious that syllable structure of SHB is much simpler than in English. So pronunciation of an English syllable with cluster becomes problematic to the SHB learners of English. One needs to investigate how SHB speakers negotiate with the clustered margins of English. SHB speakers of English adopt certain strategies so as to pronounce the English clusters according to the phonotactics of their own language. In such cases, learners delete a consonant from the cluster or sometimes they insert a vowel inside the cluster or before the cluster, and re-syllabify the syllable according to SHB phonotactics. The following examples illustrate this.

#### Vowel Epenthesis in onset cluster

English	SHE	Gloss	English	SHE	Gloss
βλαυζ	βΕλαυζ	“blouse”	βριδZ	βοριζ	“bridge”
βλ□κ	β□λ□κ	“block”	στειΣν	ιΣ□ιΣ□ν	“station”
κλι↔	κιλιαρ	“clear”	σμαιλ	ισμαιλ	“smile”
σλιπ	σιλι÷	“slip”	σμ□λ	ισμ□λ	“small”

#### Deletion in onset cluster

English	SHE	Gloss	English	SHE	Gloss
τρ ϕ κ	□ α κ	“truck”	π ρ α Ι τ ρ ↔ τ	÷ α Ι β Ε □	“private”
στ ρ ϕ γ λ	τ α γ υ λ	“struggle”	δ ρ ε Ι ν	ε Ι ν	“drain”
π λ ι ρ ζ	÷ ι ζ	“please”	δ ρ ε σ	Ε σ	“dress”

#### Deletion in coda cluster

English	SHE	Gloss
π ϕ μ π	÷ α μ	“pump”
φ ε ρ σ τ	÷ α Σ	“first”
δ Ζ ϕ μ π	ζ α μ	“jump”

Now we examine some other common errors of SHB speakers in speaking English. However, before analyzing these errors we will look at how English speakers pronounce them and what is the reason behind these types of pronunciation. In English some syllables are strong and some are weak. There are some strategies to identify strong syllable and weak syllable. Weak syllables are always unstressed. Strong syllables always have coda if the vowel is short. At the end of the word, there may be a weak syllable ending with a vowel. The vowel /↔/ is always associated with weak syllables which is common in English. /↔/ or schwa is typically found as the first vowel in “above” or the last vowel in “extra”.

This phenomenon of weak and strong syllable is absent from SHB phonology. That is why SHE speakers do not resort to reducing unstressed vowel: in fact, the phenomenon of reduction is absent in SHB phonology. The examples below make it clear.

English	SHE	Gloss	English	SHE	Gloss
λ ι τ ρ ↔ τ Σ ↔	λ ι □ α ρ Ε Σ α ρ	“literature”	β ε τ ↔	β Ε □ α ρ	“better”
ν Θ Σ ν ↔ λ	ν Ε Σ α ν α λ	“national”	↔ υ π ↔ ν	□ ÷ Ε ν	“open”

A vowel acts as a nucleus in almost all syllables of a language and on either side of this vowel, there may have one or more consonants as its margins. For example, in /β ε δ/ the vowel acting as the nucleus is /ε/ and the consonant at the margins are /β/ and /δ/. In English, some consonants act as the nucleus of syllables. English consonants /ν μ λ ρ/ can function in this way: /τ ε Ι β λ / “table”. These consonants are called syllabic consonants. In SHB only vowel can act as nucleus: the phenomenon of syllabic consonants is absent. For that reason, SHB learners of English face trouble during the pronunciation of English words with syllabic consonants as they treat them as consonants and insert a vowel before it as exemplified in the comparison below of English and SHB examples.

English	SHE	Gloss	English	SHE	Gloss
σΙμπλ	σιμπυλ	“simple”	τεΙβλ	ειβυλ	“table”
β□τλ	βυτ5□λ	“bottle”	πΘδλ	÷E  Eλ	“paddle”
λ↔υκλ	λυκαλ	“local”	στρ ϑγλ	ταγυλ	“struggle”

In English, listeners can identify the words based on their stress patterns. For that reason, if stress patterns of English are not noted carefully by the English learners in the pronunciation of the words, it results in errors in speech. In this regard, Bansal (1976) opines that in India misperception arises because of the errors in the stress patterns of English.

To get a clear picture of English stress patterns Roach (2000) is helpful. He mentions that the rhythm structure of English language is “stress-timed”. This means that in English “stressed syllables tend to occur at relatively regular intervals whether they are separated by unstressed syllables or not” (Roach, 2000, p. 134). Three levels of stress are primary stress, secondary stress, and absence of any stress. The strongest type of stress is the primary stress whereas secondary stress is stronger than the unstressed syllable but the weaker than the primary stress. The stress system of English is not fixed and there are many variations which give a complex stress system to English.

In English, the falling of stress on a syllable is dependent on the structure of the syllable, whether it is light or heavy. A syllable is considered as heavy in English if it consists of a long vowel or diphthong or a vowel followed by a coda. On the contrary, when a syllable is formed with a short vowel and it does not have any coda, it is considered a light syllable. The stress system is also based on “whether the word is morphologically simple, or whether it is as a result either of containing one or more affixes (that is, prefixes or suffixes) or of being a compound word or the grammatical category of a particular word (noun, verb, adjective), or how many syllable the word has, or what the phonological structure of those syllable is”. (Roach, 2000, p. 97). Another fact is that in English the occurrence of stress can be on any of the syllables: antepenultimate, penultimate or final. However, stress pattern may vary within different forms of the same word for example “logic” has main stress on “lo”, but in “logicality”, “ca” bears main stress, and in “logician” it is “gi” which is most prominent. Another kind of stress in English is function stress that helps to distinguish words. For example, words like “perfect”, “combat”; each of these has two different stress patterns depending on the position of the main stress. If the first syllable is stressed the word is noun, and if the second syllable is stressed we have a verb.

Other factors involved in English stress system include ascertaining the word class (noun, adjective, verb.), and the nature of suffixes that may form part of the word (-ate, -ic, -ity). Discussion on these follows as per Roach (ibid.).

In two-syllable words, only one syllable gets stressed — either the first or the second, never both. The rule is that stress always falls on strong syllable

e.g., /ʊk fɔr m. fɛt/ “comfort”, /ʊk fɔr m. pi s/ “compass”, and /ʊ fɛI. wɛt(r)/ “favour”. Conversely, second syllable, being strong, gets stress in /fɛt. ʊ bɹɔ̃ d/ “abroad”, and /fɛt. ʊ bɹɛ s t/ “abreast”. If the final syllable contains fɛtY, it is considered unstressed such as /ʊ rɛI. dɪ fɛtY/ “radio”, and /ʊ bɹɔ̃. p fɛtY/ “borrow”. In the case of nouns, stress placement is governed by a different rule. Stress is placed on the first syllable if the second syllable is formed with a short vowel (/ʊ m fɔ. vI/, “money”, /ʊ pɹɔ̃. d fɔ k t/ “product”). However, if the second syllable is heavy, stress falls on the second – /I. ʊ s tɛI t/ “estate”, /dɪ. ʊ zɔI v/ “design”.

In three-syllable words stress pattern is complicated. In the case of verbs, the stress falls on the final syllable if it is heavy, for example, /ɛv. tɛt. ʊ tɛI v/ “entertain”, /rɛ. zɛt. ʊ rɛ k t/ “resurrect”. Otherwise, the preceding syllable attracts stress if it is strong. For example: /ɪ n. ʊ kɔY v. tɛt/ “encounter”, and /dɪ. ʊ tɛI. mɪ v/ “determine”. The initial syllable attracts stress if both the second and third syllables are weak, such as /ʊ pɹɔ̃. p fɛt. dɪ/ “parody”. Like di-syllabic words, in tri-syllables also nouns require a distinct rule. A final weak syllable or a final one ending in fɛtY is unstressed. If the middle syllable is strong, it takes stress as in /dɪ. ʊ zɔI. s tɛt/ “disaster”, /pɛt. ʊ tɛI. tɛtY/ “potato”. The first syllable gets stressed if both the second and third syllables are not strong as in /ʊ θ wɔ̃ v. tɛt. tɪ/ “quantity”, /ʊ k fɔ. s tɛt. dɪ/ “custody”. Thus, the above rules ensure that stress falls mostly on strong syllables.

English polysyllables are generally derived through affixation and hence complex. Sometimes an affix itself receives the primary stress: /ʊ sɛ. mɪ. sɛI. k l/ “semicircle”. Stems getting stressed is the norm otherwise: compare /ʊ p lɛ. zɪ v t/ “pleasant” with /ʊ fɔ v. p lɛ. zɪ v t/ “unpleasant”. Under affixation stress can shift albeit within the stem e.g. /ʊ m θ γ. v fɛt/ “magnet”, /m θ γ. ʊ vɛ. tɪ k/ “magnetic”. When polysyllabic suffixes are attached commonly the first suffixal syllable gets the primary stress. In case the stem too consists of more syllables than one, one non-final in the stem will get secondary stress. For example, /dʒ fɛt. ʊ pɔ v/ “Japan” → /dʒ θ. pɛt. ʊ vɪ z/ “Japanese”. Some examples of words where suffixes that do not affect stress are “-able”: /ʊ k fɔ m. fɛt/ “comfort”, /ʊ k fɔ m f. tɛt β l/ “comfortable”. Some suffixes, -eous, -ic affects stress. In such cases, the primary stress falls on the last syllable of the stem such as /fɛt. ʊ wɔI v. tɪ dʒ/ “advantage” but /fɛt. ʊ wɔI v. ʊ tɛI. dʒ fɛt/ “advantageous”; /ʊ k lɔI. mɪ t/ “climate” but /k lɔI. ʊ m θ. tɪ k/ “climatic”. Finally, when suffixes such as -ance, -ant and -ary are used in stems consist of only single syllable, stem tends to attract stress. When the stem has more than one syllable, the stress is on one of the syllables in the stem.

With these Roach (2000) also points out some other necessary rules to remember for learning the correct stress placement of English words. First, before stress placement, the speaker should determine whether the word is

simple or complex. Next, the speaker should know the parts of speech of the word such as whether the word is noun or verb or adjective. In addition to the number of syllables and the phonological structure of those syllables in the word. Significantly, though Roach's set of rules does not help to explain the stress pattern of all English words, they can still be applied to major categories of English lexical words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives, though not to function words such as articles and prepositions.

Compared to English SHB metrics is very simple. SHB metrical pattern is binary. Word stress is syllable based as this dialect builds syllabic trochee from left to right iteratively. The minimal requirement for the prosodic word template is disyllabic. This disyllabic requirement is also fulfilled for a monosyllabic word or an odd-numbered heavy syllable stranded otherwise at the edge of the prosodic zone with the presence of a virtual syllable - a mechanism popularly called catalexis. A heavy syllable that normally attracts stress is constituted of a light monophthong followed by a coda consonant.

In the case of word stress of SHE the influence of SHB phonology is strongly present. English is a language in which lexical stress can be movable. Excepting a few instances in most of the cases regardless of grammatical class, an inviolable rule of SHB stress system dictates that the first syllable of a word has to be stressed. In SHB, stress placement takes place from left to right in a word. However, in English the direction is from right to left for example /δισ. ⇔ μισ/. SHB speakers misplace the stress applying it from left to right as in / ⇔ | ισ.μισ/. The examples below of stress system of SHE show how it is different from English stress system due to the influence of mother tongue.

#### Stress placement in SHE

English Foot Typology	SHE		Foot Typology
□πρε.ζντ (N)	(□LH)	□÷E.ζEv (N)	(□LH) “present”
πρI. □ζεντ (V)	L( □H)	□÷E.ζEv (V)	(□LH) “present”
β↔. ≡λυ v	L( □H)	≡βE.λυv	(□LH) “balloon”
δI. ≡ζαIv	L( □H)	≡ι.ζαIv	(□LH) “design”
κ□□v.δ ϕ κτ(N)	(□HH)	≡κ□v.  ακ (N)	(□HH) “conduct”
κ↔v.□δ ϕ κτ (V)	L(□H)	≡κ□v.  ακ (V)	(□HH) “conduct”
δI. □λεI	L(□L)	≡ι.λε	(□LL) “delay”
κ↔. □μι.τι	L(□LL)	□ξο.μι.□ι	(□LL)L “committee”
□δειv.δZ↔.ρ↔σ	(□HL)L	□ Ev.ζα. ∃ρEσ (□HL)(∃H)	“dangerous”

The other aspect of prosodic phenomenon namely intonation will be looked upon now. Intonation has a great role in communication. Along with conveying linguistic information, it also regulates discourse.

As for SHB wh-questions we noted earlier that in SHB wh-phrase is considered by the native speakers as the most prominent one in wh-questions. Therefore, the pitch accent of the wh-phrase acts as the nuclear accent of the

question. Another thing noted is that in SHB wh-questions also a low boundary tone (L%) is placed at sentence final position.

However, in English “the nuclear accent in wh-questions normally goes on the rightmost content word as in declaratives” (Ladd, 2008, p. 224). Ladd shows that English has, “Where are you GOING?”, rather than “WHERE are you going?” It means, in the sentence “Where are you going?”, a special neutral location for the main stress is “going” rather than “where” which indicates falling (HL%) boundary tone in the English wh-question.

As for the English wh-question spoken by SHB speakers, we realize that a significant influence of mother tongue intonation pattern falls on SHE. In the case of SHE wh-question, the prominence always falls on the wh-phrase rather than the rightmost content word, and low boundary tone (L%) is assigned rather than falling (HL%). The Intonation pattern of wh-question in SHE is shown in the following representatives of SHE wh-questions (Figure 6).

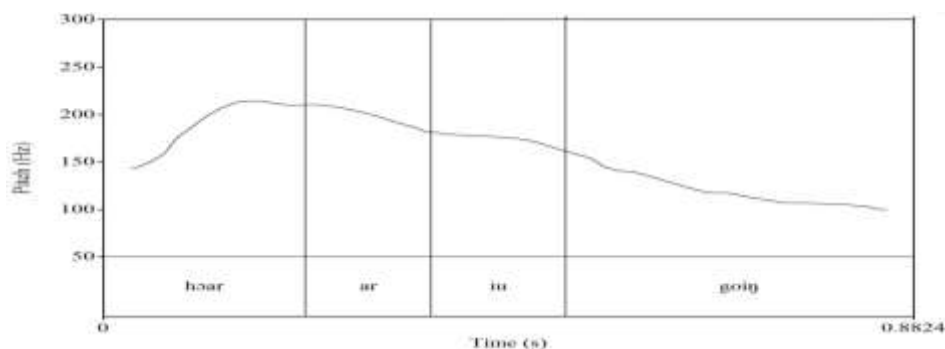


Figure 6. //η□αρ αρ ιυ γοιN// “Where are you going?”

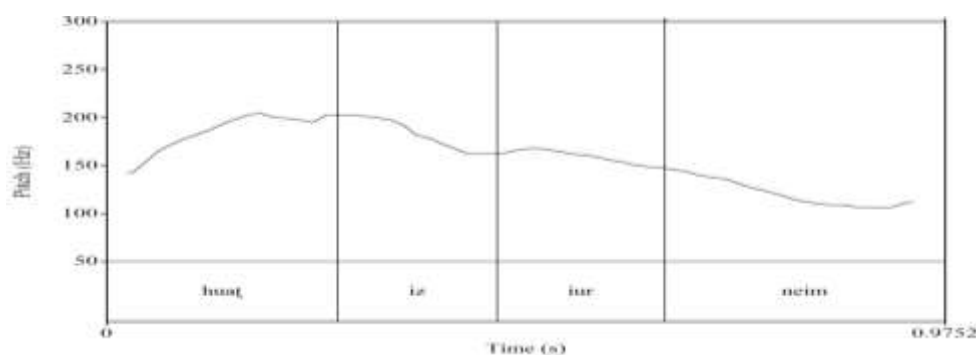


Figure 7. //ηυα□ ις ιυρ νειμ// “What is your name?”

Figures 6 and 7 show that SHB speakers give more prominence to wh-word “where” or “what” rather than the rightmost content word “go” or “name”, and they attach low boundary tone (L%) under the influence of their mother tongue intonation. So it can be said that the “error” made by SHB speakers is due to the interference of L1 with L2. The “incorrect” intonation pattern may also convey some kind of meaning, but it may not express the



intended meaning and misunderstanding may easily take place. So there is a need for SHB speakers to learn proper intonation pattern of English.

### **Recommendations**

The results of the comparative study of English and SHB sounds help us to understand the factors regarding the errors committed by SHB speakers during their pronunciation of English words. While teaching English to SHB students the concerned teacher must keep in his/her mind some important points. Students should be aware of the fact that the application of mother tongue rules in the target language produces wrong structures. SHB students should be familiarized with the complex syllable structure of English including complex margins. Teachers should make SHE speakers refrain from using vowel epenthesis, initial or internal, as the latter distorts English complex margins. SHB learners of English should have proper knowledge of the function of /<=>/ in English. Besides making the SHE speakers learn the rules, equal emphasis should be given on regular drills to maximize learners' awareness about the differences between the native system and the target system.

For a learner of English to predict the stress pattern from a written form of the English word is a difficult task. On the contrary, native speakers do not face such problems as they are able to guess the stress pattern of unfamiliar words. It implies that there are some underlying rules of English stress system though these rules for stress are complex and have many exceptions. As English stress system is in part rule-governed so it is good for learners of English to learn the most useful patterns of English stress system. The guidelines are like traditional advice to non-native English learners for memorizing the stress pattern of words when they learn and they must apply them. Since incorrect stress placement causes major intelligibility problems for foreign learners it needs to be treated seriously. Finding appropriate practice and testing materials for word stress is effective for use in the classroom.

So to remove the hindrances which SHB speakers face during their speaking in second language, the teacher should make SHB learners of English aware of the items of difference between the phonetics and phonology of the two systems and alert them about the L1 interference with L2. Therefore, the awareness of L1 and L2 phonological systems will be of immense help to improve second language learning. The appropriate application of the approaches mentioned above promises to improve pronunciation, stress placement, and intonation of SHB speakers. Besides learners of English, these pedagogical issues will be beneficial to the teachers, material producers, language planners, and researchers as well. A systematic analysis of the learners' errors will help in improving the status of the teaching-learning process compared to the one(s) that exists now.

## Conclusion

This paper offers a contrastive picture of SHB and English phonology to show how the differences create hindrances in the way of SHB speakers' learning of English correctly. In the process, it has highlighted the causes behind the systematic errors committed by SHB speakers. From the analysis of English data spoken by Sylheti speakers, it comes to the fore that while learning English, the properties of SHB phonology interfere with the phonology of English. Due to this interference, SHB speakers commit many errors in their spoken English.

The CA between SHB and English phonological properties will make the Sylheti learners of English aware of the divergences between their mother tongue and second language. This knowledge is sufficed to aid them to attenuate the gap between SHE and English and thus, making the SHB learners better users of English.

The study, nevertheless, has some limitations. It primarily exhibits the interference of Sylheti Bangla in learning English with regard to phonology. However, it is also observed that Sylheti speakers not only commit errors in the case of pronunciation but also in other areas such as in the use of English articles, and prepositions. The learners also face difficulties in constructing sentences. These errors indicate that besides phonological interference, English spoken by Sylheti speakers also encounters interference of L1 grammar, syntax, and morphology. Since the domain of this paper is exclusive to phonological interference, the potential examination of interference of L1 in other linguistic aspects can be studied in further research.

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## **Babu English Revisited: A Sociolinguistic Study**

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### **Abstract**

Babu English is arguably one of the most popular varieties of Indian English and ironically the least studied too. An attempt to define the variety lands one in a mushy land of definitions that are untenable. It has been described variously by different scholars while German linguist Schuchardt classifies it as a pidgin, Kachru defines it as a register. Most descriptions emphasize on the highly overt stylistic features of the variety. This paper analyses the stylistic and syntactic features of samples from a collection of Babu English letters to identify the characteristics of the variety. It also studies various definitions of the variety and arrives at the conclusion that Babu English is in fact a non-variety and is interlanguage or learner's language.

**Keywords:** Babu English, Babu, Pidgin, Creole, Interlanguage

### **Introduction**

The term "Babu English" summons an image into the mind of every Indian – poor, bombastic and unidiomatic English of an Indian Babu, that often resulted in un-intended, embarrassing and therefore comical instances. The phrase has its origin in the colonial period. It was used to refer to the "funny" English written by English educated Indians, many of whom were clerks who worked for the English. "Babu" originally a term in Bengali, Hindi and other North Indian languages is used as a respectful term of address, to refer to educated men of high social standing. At some point in the colonial rule, it came to acquire an offensive sense. Babu English became a derogatory term along with Butler or Kitchen English, used by the British to refer to the English used by Indians.

Today in modern India the term has acquired a new meaning. "Babu" has become an umbrella term that signifies any Indian who was a clerk and wrote in officialese English. There is a general tendency to describe all officialese and stilted writing as Babu English. All government employees who do clerical work are *Sarkari Babus*. The word has generated other terms such as babudom, babucracy, all referring to bureaucracy. According to Sailaja (2009), today any Indian who wrote flawed English is dubbed a Babu.

This paper analyses a 19<sup>th</sup> century collection of miscellaneous specimens written by Indians in English. The English colonial officers in India collected letters, articles, poems, reports etc. written by Indians as instances of Babu English. These were written by Indians with lesser education and prospects. These letters open to a lesser known world of colonial India - that

of the middle class, aspiring Indian; his workplace, home, and even his national and identity politics.

The scope of this paper is a study of the language variety called Babu English. It analyses a collection of letters written by Bengali men, compiled by an English man called TWJ, and published in 1890 under the title "*Baboo English*"; or, *Our mother -tongue as our Aryan brethren understand it: Amusing specimens of composition and style*. The paper studies various commentaries and descriptions of the variety, to argue that what is termed Babu English is not a variety at all, but an interlanguage or learner's language. Although Selinker's (1972) interlanguage theory is used for the analysis, it has been modulated to include discursual analysis, beyond the structural analysis visualised by Selinker.

### What is Babu English?

**Baboo.** [p]roperly a term of respect attached to a name like Master or Mister. . . in Bengal and elsewhere among Anglo-Indians, it is often used with a slight savor of disparagement, as characterizing a superficially cultivated but often effeminate Bengali. And from the extensive employment of the class, to which the term was applied as a title in the capacity of clerks in the English offices, the word has come often to signify "a native clerk who writes English". (Yule & Burnell, 1986, p. 44)

Back in 1886, the *Hobson Jobson* defined a *Baboo* (or Babu) thus. Most descriptions of "Babu" are slight variations of that by *Hobson Jobson*. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1911) defines a Babu as "a native Indian clerk":

The word is really a term of respect attached to a proper name, like "master" or "Mr," and *Babu-ji* is still used in many parts of India, meaning "sir"; but without the suffix the word itself is now generally used contemptuously as signifying a semi-literate native, with a mere veneer of modern education.

A Babu was an Indian clerk who had a smattering of English. With the advent of the English, Babu, a prestigious term of address in the Indian languages, became a derogatory term. Tirumalesh (1990) states that "when you describe somebody's English as *babu*, you are disparaging it by comparison" (p. 98). The author of "Comical Baboo-English" (1882) describes it "the really funny English of India" which he says is "fairly grammatical" and is quaint due to "laborious use" by young men who have learned English at schools from thesauruses and dictionaries. The writer gives the following excerpt from a newspaper article as an instance:

The bullocks of Kattyawar are grand beings. They are white, colossal, with eyes and foreheads whose expression is impenetrable, crowned with immense horns which curl up towards the sky or taper sideways like the moustaches of Sir Richard Temple. The buffaloes are equally great, perfectly tame, calm, contemplative; and while they look at you they seem almost venerable, with the hair falling off their glossy skin as with excess of mental labor and worry.

One of the earliest attempts to study Babu English is that of Schuchardt's (1891). He classifies Babu English along with Butler English, Boxwallah English, Pidgin English of Bombay and Cheechee as varieties of "Indo-English". He defines Indo-English as the English of the Eurasians and natives in India, which according to him is a pidgin. What exactly Schuchardt's definition of pidgin is, is not clear.

The recurrent description of a Babu as a clerk, leads to the common assumption that Babu English is a register – the register of administrative or bureaucratic language. Kachru (1994) classifies Babu English as a variety of South Asian English along with Butler English and Boxwallah English. In the case of Babu English, Kachru (1994) does not come to a definite conclusion as to the variety it is. He defines Babu English as the English that was spoken in Bengal of undivided India, used by English-using clerks. Babu English referred to the style of administrative English, but these regional and registeral restrictions are not applicable anymore. The style, he says, is marked by "excessive stylistic ornamentation, politeness and indirectness" (Kachru, 1994, p. 512) and the discourse organization is that of a South Asian language.

Kachru's (1994) definition placed later in the chronology of definitions gives an idea of the evolution and current conception of the term. The definition is no longer narrowed down to Bengal or to administrative English. However, it is clear from his definition that Babu English was once a variety of English used by Bengali-speaking clerks and that it referred to administrative English. It can be inferred that he classifies it as a register.

Most or all of the definitions focus entirely on the stylistic features of the specimens such as obsequiousness, flowery or ornate language etc. The examples are also chosen accordingly. These exclude instances of the other peculiarities of language that can be seen in the specimens collected by T.W.J. It is clear that the writers have chosen specimens which reveal only stylistic oddities and not grammatical ones. This makes the description of Babu English simpler. Letters written by men with lower levels of proficiency which contain both stylistic as well as grammatical deviations have been excluded.

So, what exactly is Babu English? Is it only the English of the sarkari babus? Is it just officialise and if so is it a register? Is all officialise Babu? Is it a pidgin, a crude mixture of Bengali/Hindi and English? What comprises this variety? Above all is it a variety at all? In order to answer these questions, it is

necessary to describe the features of Babu English. From the above descriptions one could construe vaguely that Babu English is the English written by less educated Indian clerks. It is described as pidgin and register. There is thus a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the term *Babu English*. There is no consensus or definite conclusion as to the variety it is. This paper tries to sort out from this clutter of definitions and observations, a linguistic term to define Babu English. It is an attempt to identify the characteristics and thereby describe the nature of Babu English.

Hosali's (1997) study of Butler English in her book *Nuances of English in India: What the butler really said* is of significance here. Butler English, another variety of Indian English is often dubbed "minimal pidgin". Hosali (1997) analyzes the speech of Butlers through interviews and questionnaires and the study focusses on the syntactic and morphological features that characterize Butler English. She concludes that it is neither a minimal pidgin nor broken English but closer to learners' approximations along with folk believes about English. Hosali's (1997) analysis provides a framework for the analysis of Baboo English, though factors like the sources, kind of data collected, and context are quite different.

## Methodology

To define any variety it is important to identify its features. The text chosen for this purpose is "*Baboo English*"; or, *our mother- tongue as our Aryan brethren understand it: Amusing specimens of composition and style* collected and edited by T.W.J . and published in 1890. It is also titled *English as written by some of Her Majesty's Indian subjects*. It is a collection of over 200 specimens of letters, advertisements, essays, notices etc. These were selected from a number of such specimens that the compiler came across during his 25 years in India.

Collecting letters and other specimens written by the Babus was a favourite pastime of the British as they found these quite amusing. T.W.J's "*Baboo-English*" published in 1890 is possibly one of the only two available collections of Babu English today. Almost all of these were written by English educated men from the Bengal Presidency and a few from other provinces like Sindh. Though there are different text types in the collection, the analysis is restricted to letters (136 in number) as they form over 80% of the specimens in the collection.

The main features of *Baboo English* letters are classified under two sections – Syntax and Style. For each feature, instances have been cited from the letters.



## Characteristics of Babu English

### *Stylistic features*

The foremost stylistic feature used to describe Babu English is obsequiousness. The discourse of all the letters in *Baboo English* except eight is obsequious. This is evident from the use of subservient address forms, subscriptions, certain phrases used etc. The following is an instance of such servile language: “With deep regret and unfeigned sorrowfulness your poor slave approaches his poor tale at the footsteps of your honours throne . . . he may meet with forgiveness of his sins. . .” (TWJ, 1890, p. 6) The writers use address forms like “Honored sir” or “Hon’d Sir”, “Respected Sir”, “Worshipful Sir” etc.

An equally important characteristic is verbosity. This includes the use of high sounding or Romance words, adjective/adverb piling, excessive use of compound words etc. Of the 32 verbose letters, 15 are highly verbose and 17 relatively less verbose.

- (1) “. . . damnable miserable . . . unfortunate petitioner. . .” (p. 24),
- (2) “In heavy tribulation and honest solicitation . . .” (p. 33),
- (3) “. . . tantalizing assurance hollow in nature and shallow in performance” (p. 35)

Another striking feature is the use of fixed, readymade expressions which the writers have used indiscriminately in letters of different situations. These are classified as fixed phrases. The most common formulaic phrase to begin a letter is: “I beg (most respectfully/humbly) to report for your honours information/notice”. Sixteen letters close with “hoping” for something. This is a fixed phrase used in the concluding paragraph of letters. For instance, “Hoping my poor prayer will meet with your almighty approval” (TWJ, 1890, p. 103).

Random uses of fixed phrases create odd situations such as these: “I have the honor to inform you that I am quit unable to attend my works . . . owing to sudden death of my parent . . .” (TWJ, 1890, p. 172). 21 letters conclude with blessings and prayers for the receiver’s long life, prosperity etc. which also is a fixed, formulaic use: “. . . I and my family ever pay for your and family health and wealth and prosperity for evermore amen” (TWJ, 1890, p. 121).

There are also instances of inappropriate or odd use of vocabulary. In the attempt to use a high-sounding word, the writer ends up using an odd one and conveys a different meaning from what was actually meant. Use of incorrect or inappropriate words, wrong word formation is characteristic of the vocabulary of *Baboo English* (1890) which lends it a humourous tint. Here are some instances:

- (1) “. . . the multiplicitousness (for multiplicity) of my duties . . .” (p. 172)
- (2) “All impotent (for omnipotent) God” (p. 118)
- (3) “. . . to stand on my own bottom” (p. 7)
- (4) “I entreat your honour to deem me illegible (for eligible) for it.” (p. 85)

### *Syntactical features*

Along with the stylistic features we see certain syntactical features specific to Babu English such as Missing or Incorrect articles in *Baboo English* (1890):

- (1) “. . . whereby he experience the severe wound. . .” (p. 29)
- (2) “. . . your honors servant is poor man. . .” (p. 23)

Incorrect prepositions:

- (1) “Since my coming to here. . .” (p. 29)
- (2) “Kindly come at me. . .” (p. 49)

Incorrect auxiliaries:

- (1) “I am regret again. . .” (p. 30)
- (2) “. . . he not understands the English language. . .” (p. 4)

There are run-on sentences where the whole letter is one long sentence; either with incorrect punctuation or no punctuation at all. Eleven letters have run-on sentences. Along with these, nine other letters use very long sentences.

When it comes to tense, the excessive use of present continuous in place of simple present is a feature that Babu English shares with Indian English. However along with this there are several other usages that do not exhibit any consistent pattern in tense deviation.

- (1) Simple past instead of simple present: “. . . it required more eloquent pen than mine . . .” (p. 3)
- (2) Simple present for past perfect: “. . . no one of my masters tell me before . . .” (p. 15)
- (3) Present perfect instead of simple past: “one gentleman has come at my station” (p. 15)

Speakers of different varieties of English prefer different auxiliaries. Parasher (1983) in “Indian English: certain grammatical lexical and stylistic features” says that while British and American users preferred *would/will* in requests, Indians used *could/would*. The use of *will* in requests is common in *Baboo English* (1890). The following are some examples:

- (1) “. . . you will very much oblige. . .” (p. 8)
- (2) “Therefore your honor will be pleased appoint me without further delay” (p. 38)

The spelling errors reveal that the writers have spelled the words as they sound, which is not always the case with English: popper (pauper) (p. 34), honor (honour) (p. 90), mite (might), plees (please) (p. 94), Dickshunharrys (dictionaries), terrifick (terrific), eenglish (English), petishan (petition), hart (heart), ruff (rough) (TWJ, 1890, pp. 141-152).

There are several features that are not very common but present none-the-less, such as use of transitive verbs as intransitive or vice versa: "I humbly beg to transfer from this place" (p. 15), incorrect word class "... widely circulation journal..." (p. 43), use of non-countable nouns as countable: "cares" (p. 8), "bloods" (p. 11), "relaxations" (p. 25 ), iteration of the subject using an anaphoric or cataphoric pronoun: "the booking clerk he called to me..." (p. 1).

Though the most prominent features can be classified in this manner, one cannot absolutely neglect many more utterances that exhibit more than one feature such that they become incomprehensible and hence difficult to classify. There are also those usages that occur much rarely but cannot be ignored all the same: combination of verbosity and indirectness, lack of exactitude, incorrect idioms, ambiguous sentences, combination of both syntactical deviation and verbosity and many more miscellaneous ones.

While these are the general features, common to a good number of writers, the analysis also brings forth the fact that there are features which are not widespread or are idiosyncratic. Features like spelling errors, use of transitive and intransitive verbs, countable and non-countable nouns, incorrect idioms and several others classified as miscellaneous are idiosyncratic ones. Even the common features are present to different extents in each letter. While some letters do not exhibit these features, some others have more than one instance of a feature. For example, the feature "Literary or poetic language" identified as common is present only in four percent of the 136 letters. Even within these four percent, the degree of literariness or poetical language varies. As shown in the analysis, though there are deviations in the use of tense, the errors are different for each writer. There is no consistency in the error patterns.

Therefore, we could say that each letter is at a different proficiency level. While there are letters which display considerably high level of proficiency, there are others which are low on the proficiency scale. In addition to these, within the same letter one can see fluctuating levels of competence. A writer who can produce correct sentences may use incongruous vocabulary or idioms. Another writer uses the transitive verb "transfer" as transitive and intransitive in the same letter. A writer may use the same preposition correctly and incorrectly or the progressive instead of simple present in one instance and not repeat the same in another instance. Another writer may spell a word in different ways in his letter. Therefore, the analysis reveals that there is a lack of not just consistency in the occurrence of the different features, but also of a homogenous group of writers. These features qualify Babu English as non-variety.

### *Babu English as interlanguage*

This leads to the assumption that Babu English is not a variety at all but a collection of interlanguages. An interlanguage is a learner's language. Here the Babu's English proficiency is described as that of a learner's and hence Babu English as interlanguage proficiency. In the following pages it is argued that Babu English is a collection of interlanguages. This interlanguage analysis tries to account for the utterances produced by the learner i.e. the Babu.

The term interlanguage was introduced by the American linguist Selinker (1972) to describe the linguistic system produced by an adult second language learner when he/she attempts to express meanings in the language being learned. The interlanguage is a separate linguistic system, different from both the learner's native language and target language but linked to both native language and target language by interlingual identifications in the perception of the learner.

Though Selinker (1992) identifies five central processes responsible for this interlanguage, D'Souza (1977, as cited in Srinivas, 2005) suggests that the five can be reduced to just three. Research evidence is provided to prove that all these psycholinguistic processes affected the formation of interlanguage.

- (1) Transfer from previous learning experience; errors due to interference
- (2) Simplification and overgeneralization of elements of the target language system; errors due to learning strategies
- (3) Errors arising from teaching methods and materials employed; teaching induced errors

### *Interlanguage analysis*

However, Selinker's (1992) interlanguage theory has completely ignored discursal and cultural aspects of language learning which is of prime importance in a multilingual context such as that of the Babu. Some of the major characteristics of Babu English are at the discourse or stylistic level – obsequiousness, literary/poetic language, verbosity etc. Therefore, an analysis that excludes these will be incomplete and invalid. In order to make the analysis more credible, Selinker's theory was modulated to include aspects beyond the structural features of a learner's language.

In the analysis the different characteristic utterances of the *Baboo English* letters have been explained using the three psycholinguistic processes explained earlier.

- (1) Transfer from previous learning experience; errors due to interference (MT Language transfer). It could be assumed that (as the Babus were from the Bengal Presidency) the learners' native language was Bengali

and the other language that the writers possess is Hindi. Hence, the possible language transfer could be from these two languages.

- (2) Inappropriate usage like “green minds”  
Transfer of the word “kachcha” from Hindi/Bengali into English. *Kachcha* in Hindi is used in different senses such as “raw/green, immature” etc.  
Use of “stop” for “close” as in “Please send men to stop all holes in my quarters...” (T.W.J, 1890, p. 152) is the result of transfer from Hindi or Bengali. The words *band* and *rok* can be used interchangeably in Hindi.
- (3) Missing or incorrect use of articles  
This feature is explained by the absence of Articles in Hindi and Bengali.
- (4) The use of fixed formulae such as blessings and prayers for the receiver such as “I shall ever pray your long lives and prosperity.” (p. 86)  
This is a transfer of cultural practice from the Indian languages. Though not as a concluding phrase, Mehrotra (2002) cites the practice of salutation in the name of a deity seeking his blessings for the addressee, in personal letters. Personal letters written in most Indian languages follow the pattern of following an address form by a salutation or greeting, appropriate to the context.
- (5) The closing phrase that begins with “hoping” used in many letters, “Hoping to hear your action...” (p. 101) for instance is a transfer of the Hindi usage *aasha karta hun ki...* or *asa kori...* in Bengali. These are concluding phrases common in letter writing in many Indian languages.
- (6) Simplification and overgeneralization of elements of the target language system; errors due to learning strategies:
- (7) Incorrect word forms such as the following are the result of overgeneralization of target language rules.  
troublusness (p. 8), mechanicism (p. 38), respectableness (p. 40), stupidness, botheration, costive (p. 101), loosed (p. 100), shamefulness, generositying (p. 174), stupidness, zealousness, bended, jokative, beforetimes, unhurted, poorness, shotted (p. 88), thoughtfoolness (p. 142), deepness (p. 142).
- (8) What is normally pointed out as the lack of exactitude resulting from the Babu’s ignorance of the exact word in English, is in interlanguage terms communication strategies adopted by the learner. The writers resort to the strategy of elaborating in order to express the right sense as seen in these usages: “in back part” (for “behind”) (p. 82), “such like things” (for “similar things”) (p. 37), “in like manner” (for “similarly”) (p. 88) etc.
- (9) Errors arising from teaching methods and materials employed; teaching or training induced errors.

- The introductory phrase, “I beg (most respectfully/humbly) to report for your honours information/notice” is classified as a Fixed phrase in the analysis. These were part of linguistic forms prescribed for subordinates to use in addressing their superiors during the early days of the British rule in India. This could thus be a usage the learners learned by rote. But this learning strategy did not help in alternative situations to which the writers over generalized, such as these: “I humbly beg to inform to your honour that you will be graciously pleased to grant to me ten days leave...” (p. 11).
- The occurrence of literary language could be attributed to teaching materials. The use of Romance words and high - sounding words could be the effect of colonial English education. Meenakshi Mukherjee (2000) in her essay “Nation, Novel and Language” states that the English introduced a literary canon consisting of selections from Chaucer, Bacon, Milton, Shakespeare, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats among others in the Indian universities. Thus, the use of literary/ poetic language in formal letters is the influence of these learning materials along with the lack of acquaintance with the other registers as well as the lack of communicative knowledge.
- Usages such as the following are the influence of learning/reading the Bible: “. . . I am as a bark tossed on the wind of adversity, seek and it shall be given you; ask and ye shall find, full measures and nothing wanting” (p. 155). The incorrect use of Biblical allusion in inappropriate situations result in usages like: “...as feeding pearls before swines...” (From the Bible “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” - KJV, Matthew 7:6)
- Obsequiousness, the most dominant feature of Babu English, is the result of a combination of several complex factors. As mentioned above, the teaching methods/materials of the British resulted in servile usages like “I humbly beg to inform to your honour that...”, “Yours obediently/obedient servant” etc. Verma (1982) cites usages in Indian English which he thinks are the result of exposure to the “frozen” English preserved in old literary texts:  
 “Most humbly and respectfully I beg to submit the following few lines for favour of your kind consideration.”  
 “I need your esteemed help”  
 “With due respect I beg to inform you that...”  
 “Respected Sir/Madam” (p. 34)

The obsequious usage “...some crumbs which fall from the rich mans table may be available for me” (p. 7). is an adaptation of the Bible verse Matthew 15:27: “Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table”.

Nevala (2007) explores the use of address forms in personal letters in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century England. Her analysis reveals that the English writers in 17<sup>th</sup> century used extremely deferential address forms especially when written by social inferiors. These writers addressed their superiors as “most honourable sir” “your highness/excellency” Bijkerk (2007) says that the subscription “your most obedient humble servant” was used by the English before the eighteenth century. So, if Indians were exposed to the English literature of these ages, the appearance of these features in the Babu letters is the result of teaching-induced errors too.

Transfer of certain cultural practices from the native language of the user could be one of the reasons of the extremely polite usages. Politeness in Indian English is determined by the restraints of politeness in Indian languages and culture. Pandharipande (1992) identifies the term “respectable sir/madam” as terms from Indian languages; it could be the transfer of the Hindi phrase *aadarneey mahoday*. Therefore, the long history of British colonialism as well as India’s socio-cultural practices is the twin source of excessive politeness in these letters.

## Conclusion

It is thus clear that the factors that produced the features characteristic to Babu English are those that are responsible for a second language learner’s interlanguage. Hence Babu English can be defined as interlanguage proficiency. Each specimen is a separate linguistic system different from the learner’s native language as well as target language. There are features from both languages in the interlanguage. The writers have used different strategies employed by second language learners. As in the case of most interlanguage data there are some language behaviours that are unexplained. Hence, *Baboo English* is a collection of interlanguages. A Babu is thereby a second language learner who is placed in uncommon social contexts which too contributed to his interlanguage. The features that distinguish Babu English from other interlanguages are mostly the result of cultural and contextual transfer, an area in interlanguage which has not been accounted for in Selinker’s (1972, 1992) works.

The fact that Babu English is interlanguage helps make sense of the statements made by many writers with regard to Babu English. The writer of “Comical Baboo-English” says that Babu English is similar to the Latin written by English schoolboys. Schuchardt (1891) who also expresses the same opinion describes the Latin as “turgid to the point of incomprehensibility” (p. 51). He also adds that “[i]n the foreign language, which is the medium of education, people strive to express themselves in as “educated” a way as possible” (p. 51). Though these writers do not use the term interlanguage, they all talk about learner’s language, especially within a colonial context. As Tirumalesh (1990) says, Babu English is a kind of attitude that forms part of the psyche of once-colonized people. Thus, there is

Babu Latin, Babu French, and Babu Dutch. These are all learners' languages. These are the interlanguage universals as well as the cultural universals that shape a learner's interlanguage. These observations add impetus to the statement that Babu English is interlanguage. The fact that Babu English instead of "babu Latin" was the object of stigma and scrutiny indicates the power politics in play in the selection, compilation, classification and distribution of knowledge.

The scope of the findings can extend beyond the purview of Sociolinguistics into Applied linguistics. These findings suggest that incorporating the cultural aspects of the learner into the classroom is crucial in SL teaching and learning. Interlanguage analysis of students along with cultural and discoursal aspects can create a database of patterns of deviations or errors. This in turn points at the significance of performing error analyses by SL teachers to get further insight into the learning process of students. It is recommended that teachers devise remedial measures based on such a study. The key findings of the study – that Babu English is neither pidgin nor register, but interlanguage – also implicates that in further research on pidgins and creoles, examination of cultural and discoursal aspects is vital or inevitable, without which such a study is in fact incomplete and biased.

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