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APPROPRIATION OF ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LINGUA FRANCA (EILF) IN ASEAN

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Given that present-day English plays an important role as an international lingua franca in the ASEAN region far outside the so-called Inner Circle, a question has been asked whether the language is still the sole property of people in native settings, or whether it has already been shared by a vast majority of speakers in particular outer- and expanding-circle countries where English is utilised as a second language and a foreign language by users of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This concern voices a call for increased attention to ESL and EFL learners' language appropriation and their identity formation to see the relationships between these learners' sense of self and their positioning with respect to English. This article provides insight into the theoretical background of a study which was designed to explore Thai postgraduates' opinions or feelings about their taking ownership of English as an International Lingua Franca in ASEAN and how they view themselves in relation to the language. A qualitative approach was applied, using open-ended interview questions to obtain the data from the participants. 44 postgraduate students who enrolled on existing courses of the two English-related programmes were taken as a sample group. The paper starts with a discussion of the present status of English across the globe including English as an International Language, World Englishes and English as an International Lingua Franca in ASEAN. It, then, moves on to a description of how a language and its learners' culture and identity formation are related. It ends with a brief review of concern over linguistic imperialism and ideas about how the ownership of the language has been taken.

Keywords: EIL, EILF, Appropriation of English, Ownership of English, Identity formation.

Introduction

Globalisation and economic growth have brought about timeless interaction—real-time communication and global mobility—people, capital, commodities, information, services across national boundaries. These digital world activities could be done easily between and amongst people of different nations. One common language that serves as a medium is English. Since people are required to have the knowledge and competence of this language, it has become the most used international language and the most taught foreign language in the world.

By dint of its undeniably widespread utilisation, the language has shifted from being conventionally employed only in native-speaking countries (i.e., Anglo-American English) to serving a large number of

international organisations and global users around the globe, especially in non-native settings which include multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual components as a result of demographic movement. Since there is an essential requirement for these peoples to utilise English frequently within wider regions, the language becomes variant. In views of Yano (2009), these institutionalised varieties of English can be grouped into regional standard Englishes like Euro English, Asian English, Latin English, Arab English and African English (other than Anglo-American English) the users of which share interregional intelligibility and preserve local lingua-cultural characteristics and identities. In addition, these regional standard Englishes have sociolinguistically emerged under the umbrella of World Englishes (WEs) (Kachru, 1985, 1992) which underpins the shifted paradigm of English as an International Language (EIL) in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) (Sharifian, 2009a).

As a consequence of this, a lot of concerns about the present status of English have been voiced among scholars in the fields of Teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), applied linguistics of English or English sociolinguistics. A lot more questions about the Anglo-American norms of use set by native speakers have been asked. For example, should there be one single international standard English which has higher prestige and functionality than the existing British and American standard Englishes (Yano, 2009)? A question as to whether the mainstream standard English (Krachru's (1992) 'Inner Circle') that English teachers in former Anglo-Saxon colonial countries (Kachru's (1992) 'Outer Circle'), or in countries where English is used as a foreign or an additional language (Kachru's (1992) 'Expanding Circle') try hard to inspire their students should be reliably informed by native speakers of English (Alhassan, 2017). Legitimising native-speaker linguistic norms as a set benchmark and paying no attention to Englishes outside the inner-circle countries seem unreasonable (Jindapitak, 2013). Why so? It is because the benchmark as such is absolutely unattainable. Apparently, people who live in the globalised world at present use Englihes rather than English so as to communicate with other international users. Moreover, the fact that outer- and expanding-circle speakers become economically stronger heightens cultural differences and variations of English utilisation between and amongst local people in different locations (Tupas, 2006).

Some more questions concerning the spread of English as linguistic imperialism or language imperialism have also been inquired of. Is the impact of the teaching of English worldwide questionable and does the privileged position English occupies in national education systems seem doubtful (Hayes, 2014)? Is the emphasis on the language seen as another means by which an affluent minority maintain their dominance over the underprivileged majority (Bruthiaux, 2002; Hayes, 2011)? Does the spread of English lead to additive or subtractive national languages and is the teaching of English empowering for individuals or is a form of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2009)?

As the focus of concern for this study, a question as to whether English is still the sole property of people in native settings, or has this property already been shared by a vast majority of speakers in particular outer- and expanding-circle countries (Canagarajah, 1999; Phan Le Ha, 2008; Lee, Lee, Wong, & Ya'acob, 2010; Anwaruddin, 2012; Sultana, 2012) has been dealt with in this paper. If not, the assumptions that 'the West is the world' and English belongs to native English-speaking countries (Phan Le Ha, 2009) and that 'native-speaker' teachers represent a 'Western culture' from which springs the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology (Holliday, 2005) become questionable. Widdowson (1994) posits that one should not bow to the control of the form originated by the inner-circle countries, but one should be 'proficient in a language to the extent that you possess it, make it your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it' (p. 384). It has been suggested that the model of English that language learners should follow needs to be revised, based on the sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects of the language (Cook, 2001; Seidlhofer, 2001; Tupas, 2006; Holliday, 2008).

This article, therefore, paves the way for understanding the reasons why there has been an upsurge in voices concerning the effects of the widespread use of present-day English. The following sections discuss how English is presently standing on the global stage; various roles it is playing (as an international language, World Englishes, an international lingua franca), its effect on its learners' culture

and identity formation, its influence over the economic, political and social life of its multinational users and the shared sense of its ownership.

Present-day English

Formed in England after the arrival of Germanic invaders during the 5th century AD, the English language has travelled a long way from its original location to different places around the world. Along the way to these places, the language has subsumed native languages of the colonised areas and gained the growing dominance as a worldwide language (Abley, 2003). Holding a well-known status at present, the language is used by a large number of global users, roughly estimated by Crystal (2008) at two billion people. This brings about diverse forms of English which exist around the world. Thus, when we talk about English at the present time, it may refer to any one of the varieties of the language used by contemporary users (Nordquist, 2018). The language functions as an international medium for communication, not only between any two L2 speakers of English, no matter whether sharing the same culture or not, but also between L2 and L1 speakers of English (McKay, 2011). Present-day English, thus, becomes the global use and permeates into the globalised economy. This makes governments around the globe allocate substantial resources to its teaching in formal education in the hope of levelling up their citizens' English proficiency so that their countries can compete successfully in the global economy. English, then, seems to become the world's important language in terms of economy.

The present state of English is academically valued by several scholars. The increasing trends of use for international communication have shifted the teaching of English paradigm, declaring English as an International Language (EIL) (Sharifian, 2009a). In terms of sociolinguistics, diverse forms of English presently used worldwide has announced World Englishes (WEs) a recent area of sociolinguistic research (Kachru, 1985; Sutherland, 2011). The Kachruvian three-circle model (Kachru, 1985; 1992) has been referred to as a framework for conceptualising the use of these different Englishes according to the historical context of the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional allocations of the English language (Yano, 2009). Moreover, the phenomenon that English serves both intra- and international communication is considered the world's lingua franca situation (Kachru, 1992). This lingua franca English(es) has been considered a sub-field of World Englishes research framework focusing on the communicative needs of people of various backgrounds joining together for business purposes (Kachru, 2011). In this situation, English is used globally as an international lingua franca between and among speakers of different mother tongues and locally as a communicative tool providing meaningful interactions between and amongst local users within one country (McKay, 2002). The ideas of lingua franca Englishes are the same in Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East, Latin America and other parts of the world (Yano, 2009). The best illustrations can be seen from member countries in the European Union (EU) and those of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) where there are bi- and multilingual citizens who 'are equipped with multicultural self-identities and cross-cultural communicative competence' (Yano, 2009, p. 247). Based on this, it can be said that English has now marked the phase of the English as an International Lingua Franca (EILF) for communication via English between and amongst speakers from different first-language backgrounds.

English as an International Language

The spread of English has considerable influence over communicative activities in various fields for the purpose of successful communication. There is no exception in the field of language education. Initially proposed by Smith (1976), the notion of English as an International Language (EIL) emerged as a broad term underscoring the shifting trends of use and teaching of English worldwide. The shifted paradigm of EIL assumes the role of an international language for intercultural communication (Sharifian, 2009a) for multi-faceted users, including either native speakers interacting with native speakers, or non-native speakers interacting with non-native speakers, or non-native speakers interacting with native speakers

(Smith, 2004). Since non-native speakers, of all users of English, outnumber their native counterparts (Jenkins, 2003; Graddol, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2007), EIL is mostly used by those who have different first languages, resulting in the non-native varieties of English. These varieties are not considered deviant. In fact, these variations evidence the language choices which really exist in various contexts (Kanoksilapatham, 2012).

As a result of EIL, the notions, analytical tools, approaches and methodologies in the sub-fields of language education like TESOL, SLA, applied linguistics of English or English sociolinguistics need to be reconsidered and adjusted. This is because EIL brings about different aspects of the present use of the English language and these aspects need to be investigated through more critical thinking, research and practice. For example, new theoretical approaches such as cultural linguistics and cognitive linguistics provide deeper insights both into the nature of those non-native varieties of English and communication across these Englishes. When English is used for intercultural communication, intercultural competence, then, becomes a key component of proficiency in English (Sharifian, 2009b). What is more, research in the area of intercultural communication which focuses on native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) intercultural communication has risen and it is now expanding into intercultural communication between and amongst NNSs. Although EIL has formed two very different worlds of NSs and NNSs, the so-called 'native speakers' of English still exist. Its focus is, however, not on who is a native speaker and who is not a native speaker, but on how they communicate (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2002).

Apart from that, a variety of English proficiency levels within the EIL context has also been recognised. Yano (2007, 2009) has proposed a three-dimensional model of English use to describe the proficiency level of an individual speaker of English. To illustrate this, foreign-language users in the Expanding Circle must be someone who can understand and be understood with no difficulty the basic communicative skill in English (i.e., English for General Purposes (EGP)). Second-language speakers in the Outer Circle may need to improve their EGP proficiency and learn pragmatic strategies of communication in professional fields and across cultures. Users of English in the three circles have to try to acquire professional and cultural knowledge and expressions respective disciplines and cultures in order to gain proficiency for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and for English for Specific Cultures (ESC). Users of Intra-Regional Standard English (intra-RSE) are those who use intra-RSE within their regions such as Europe, Asia, Latin America which share similarity in linguistic, historical and cultural connections. These users are supposed to use easier English than those of EIL who are at the top of the model and use English across regions. These EIL users are expected to have high ESP and ESC proficiencies and accommodation skills established from frequent contact with people of different professionals and cultures.

World Englishes

One dominant aspect that underpins the EIL paradigm is World Englishes (WEs). By definition, WEs is a collective term describing different forms of the English language which are used throughout the world (Kachru, 1985; Sutherland, 2011). Kachru's (1986, 1992) model of three concentric circles is used to describe the role and use of English based on geographical regions where English users are living. The notion of WEs, then, is based on regions of English users which can be a factor that is used to describe the phonological, grammatical, lexical and pragmatic features of these present-day users of English (McKay, 2011). As a result, English users can be separated into three regional groups. The first group is native users of English who are in the native-speaking countries or the Inner Circle (e.g., USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand). English is the first language or the mother tongue in almost all communicative functions for people living there. The second group includes non-native users of English who are in the postcolonial countries or the Outer Circle (e.g., The Philippines, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Ghana, Nigeria). These people use English alongside their mother tongue as an institutionalised second-language (L2) variety for official interactions (e.g., the local educational, administrative and legal system). The third group covers non-native users of English who are in the rest of the world or the Expanding Circle

where English is used as a foreign or an additional language. These people use English as an important foreign language in highly-restricted domains (e.g., business and commerce, higher education, media, science and technology). Thus, the English language people in these circles use is described as institutionalised varieties of English.

In Kachru's views (1986, 1992), WEs has developed mainly in countries which were once colonised by Britain, the Outer Circle. Since English is used in several domains on a daily basis in these countries, it has inevitably been influenced by their local languages and cultures. From there, varieties of English have initially been recognised. These outer circle English varieties are sometimes known as New Englishes which can be categorised into, for example, African Englishes (e.g., Black South African English (BSAE), Nigerian English, Cameroon English, Ghana English) and Asian varieties (e.g., Singlish, Indian English, Philippine English, Malaysian English) (Mesthire, 2004; van Rooy, 2008). With the continuing spread of English at present, a growing number of standardised varieties of English have been identified in various Expanding Circle countries too (Lowenberg, 2002). This can be illustrated in particular intra-national and regional domains across Europe where English is used as a second language. As a result, present-day English has been nativised and modified in conformity with local customs or usages, bringing about varieties of standard English both within and between countries.

With the aid of modern communication and technology, WEs has been rapidly expanding, covering such areas as education, economics, business, entertainment, social media etc. For English Language Teaching (ELT), a related aspect is the relevance of WEs to contexts in which English is used between and among speakers from different cultural and national backgrounds. WEs, then, functions as a model to explain and legitimise a polycentric perspective that English is a language with several standard versions and several centres, each of which provides a national variety with at least some of its own (codified) norms. There is not just a single reference variety against which any other is appraised. Kachru puts it that English has 'blended itself with the culture and social complex' (1983, p. 139) of the country that uses it and this particular English has turned out to be 'culture-bound' (1983, p. 140) in that country. Once new Englishes become known, they cannot be typified by the inadequacy of their acquisition, or justified by the standards of English in countries in the Inner Circle. In short, WEs attempts to equalise all English varieties without having them being measured against any set benchmark.

What is more, it seems that viewing WEs solely through the Kachruvian three circles is not enough due to global mobility these days. There appears a large number of Outer-Circle speakers and Expanding-Circle speakers living in the Inner-Circle countries. As a result, native speakers of English in the Inner-Circle countries are more and more exposed to WEs of those new comers (Canagarajah, 2006a). In the same vein, there is also an increase in numbers of new generations born to native-speaker parents but growing up in non-English speaking communities (Yano, 2009). The geographical boundaries of the Inner, Outer and Expanding circles may be challenged. It is not an easy job for someone even native speakers of English to successfully deal with or judge the different varieties of Englishes in different communities for international communication (Canagarajah, 2006a).

Tinglish

Since the research setting of the present study is Thailand, one of the member countries of ASEAN, the following section exemplifies Tinglish or Thaiglish (Thai and English) which is one form of the WEs varieties. It is also regarded as one of the Intra-Regional Standard English (intra-RSE) varieties (Yano, 2009) in the context of ASEAN which gives rise to the emergence of English as an International Lingua Franca (EILF). According to Kanoksilapatham (2012), three distinctive features of Tinglish which are different from Anglo-American varieties cover pronunciation, grammar and discourse particles.

In terms of pronunciation, the /r/ sound is pronounced as the /l/ sound. Sometimes, neither the /r/ nor the /l/ sound is pronounced at all. In addition, the /v/ sound is pronounced as [w], for example *very* [weli] and *play* [pe]. Final consonants are omitted or replaced by one of the eight Thai final consonants (/k/, /ng/, /t/, /n/, /p/, /m/, /l/, /u/) instead, for instance *ball* [bɔn]. Initial or final clusters tend to be simplified:

trail [tren] or [ten] and cats [kæt]. The sounds /ʧ/ and /ʃ/ are pronounced in exactly the same way: *chip* and *ship* [ʃɪp] or *witch* and *wish* [wɪʃ]. English voiced sounds tend to be devoiced: *dog* [dɔk] and *zoo* [su] similar to the words *dock* and *Sue*. Interdentals are always replaced by the sounds /t/, /d/ or /s/: *thin* and *tin* [tɪn], *then* [den] and *thing* [sɪŋ]. Monosyllabic words with consonant clusters are inserted with /ɑ/ sound: swim [sɑ-wɪm]. The distinction between tense and lax vowels are neutralised. For instance, words with lax vowels are pronounced with tense vowels instead: *said*, *bread* and *friend*. Lastly, stress tends to be placed on the last syllable of a word: *sofa*, *comfortable*, *student*, *university* and *soda*.

As for the grammar, a lot of deviations can be identified. For example, the verbs are unmarked in all tenses and aspects: *Yesterday, I eat rice with fried chicken*. Always, the verb to *be* is either omitted or used incorrectly: *It convenient to take MRT*, *Peter and Sarah is my friend*. Articles are usually omitted: *Central is oldest department store in Thailand.*

Given that discourse particles which show the feeling, attitude, or status of speakers towards what is being said are plentiful in Thai, some of these meaningful markers are frequently added to English utterances Thai people speak: [la]—*'Why don't you ask her la?'* (giving suggestion), *'I'm going to Japan for my holidays la.'* (informing), *'Why don't you watch this soap opera la?'* (asking); [na]—*'You need to come home early na.'* (giving suggestion), *'Let's go shopping together na.'* (urging); [ja]—*'See you later ja.'* (adding informality to the conversation); [krap]—*'Thank you krap.'* (male speakers making the sentence polite), *'Is everyone ready krap?'* (male speakers confirming); [kha]—*'Coffee and cream kha.'* (female speakers making the sentence polite), *'Shall we start now kha?'* (female speakers confirming).

The above description shows how Thai speakers form a new variation of English different from the existing British and American standard Englishes. In contrast to mastering native speakers' norms of English, this conforms to the notion of a lingua franca the aim of which is to efficiently communicate and successfully interact with multilingual interlocutors.

English as an international lingua franca

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) appears because the English language has played a significant role in today's world. Now, this language serves as a lingua franca or a shared language of communication utilised by people whose main languages are different. Scholars describe different origins of the term 'lingua franca'. House (2003) mentions that the word 'lingua franca' stems from Arabic 'lisan-al-farang' which was an intermediary language spoken by speakers of Arabic with travellers from Western Europe. According to Ostler (2005), the term was first used in the area along the eastern Mediterranean shores with its islands, extending from Greece to Cyrenaica, the Levant. Phillipson (2008) says the word originates from a historical event when Franks (Germanic-speaking people) moved into Gaul (a region of Western Europe during the Iron Age) in the 5th century. They adopted the local language there. Thus, the language these people used became known as the Franks' language or lingua franca.

The meaning of ELF also covers different features. According to House (2003), it was once used to describe only a language of commerce—not a variation of individual speakers. Now, the number of people who use English becomes considerably larger than its native users, ELF may refer to today's global English, the functions of which are flexible, spreading across various domains. Firth (1996, p. 240) states that ELF occurs in interactions between and amongst L2 speakers of English in which English is used as 'a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication'. ELF interactions take place commonly in countries where English is used as a foreign or additional language (Kachru's (1992) 'Expanding Circle'). Based on this, ELF is used as a communication tool somewhere outside the inner circle countries between and amongst non-native English speakers of different nationalities in situations where there are no native speakers getting involved (Watterson, 2008). Since the first languages of these non-native English speakers are for sure not equally understandable, they have to have English as a means for them to participate in communication. Consequently, it is not necessary for these ELF speakers to follow the norms of native English speakers exactly because their communication

is negotiated by them alone (Seidlhofer, 2006). For example, ELF situations take place when there are cultural, economic or educational interactions between and amongst Northeast Asian people like Korea, Japan, China and others in the Asian region, or when English is used as the working language in ASEAN (Kanoksilapatham, 2012).

Since English continues to spread, it is possible that this language is used for communication between any two English L2 speakers, no matter whether they share the same culture and also between English L2 and English L1 speakers. This paradigm characterises English as an International Lingua Franca (EILF). EILF recognises the local linguistic environment of interactions, together with the social dimensions of certain interactions (McKay, 2011). The following examples show how EILF situations take place.

First, in some of its rural parts of Japan where English plays a role in their geographical and social contexts, new Japanese generations start to realise that the way to communicate with various migrant workers from Brazil, China, Thailand and Vietnam in these areas is through English or Japanese rather than other languages. Moreover, those migrants also need a second language that facilitates their local communication. They, then, choose to learn and get involved in using English as an international lingua franca because this language seems to represent more economic capital and international currency (McKay, 2011).

Second, different nationals may communicate internationally in English: A Hungarian educationalist coming to Copenhagen to discuss qualification equivalences in European higher education with her Danish, Finnish and Portuguese colleagues; a Korean sales representative negotiating a contract with his German client in Luxembourg; a Spanish Erasmus student chatting with local colleagues in a student hall in Vienna (VOICE, n.d.).

Third, in a less official manner, EILF may appear in these situations: conversations between and amongst international students across dinner tables or summer course orientations held for international students in China (Meierkord, 2002; Sampson & Zhao, 2003).

Fourth, Berns (2009) and Seidlhofer (2009) illustrate European representatives who come to resolve issues between members of the European Union (EU), or negotiate wording regulations etc.

Fifth, in the context of South-East Asia, ten countries (i.e., Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam—with one observer, Papua New Guinea) formed the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1976 in order to promote co-operation in trade and economic growth and peace together with stability in the region (NTI, 2015). Later in 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has been launched with an aim to transform ASEAN into a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour and freer flow of capital and with a hope that this would bring a new era of economic co-operation to all the 10 countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, n.d.). That is, investors could invest anywhere in these countries. Workers could go to work anywhere in these countries also with no tight restriction like before. Competition would get tougher for those who are not well prepared. Even though all the 10 countries in this community represent rich ethnic and cultural and language difference, English was initially made the sole working language of the Association and has been used ever since its establishment (Krasnick, 1995). Thus, English is considered playing a lingua franca role in ASEAN (according to Kirkpatrick (2012)), following his third model of teaching English language (Kirkpatrick, 2007)). It functions as an additional language used by a large number of Southeast Asian multilingual citizens and this becomes the major use of English in the world as a whole as well. This means that ASEAN provides an international context where first language speakers of English are only part of a larger group of second or foreign language users of English and which is non-Anglo-cultural, but where English is regularly used. This situation thus becomes 'post Anglophone post-Anglo-cultural' (Kirkpatrick, 2012, p. 18).

In short, it can be said that EILF emphasises the local linguistic ecology of interactions and it is used in a particular social context where there is a 'heterogeneous global English speech community, with a heterogeneous English and different modes of competence' (Canagarajah, 2006b, p. 211). However, EILF situations cannot be generalised as McKay (2011) remarks that in many local linguistic situations '...English plays more of a symbolic role than an actual medium of communication' (p. 128).

Language and Its Learners' Culture and Identity Formation

After travelling around the world for a long time and gaining global status as English as an international language, World Englishes and English as an international lingua franca, present-day English has now been questioned. Are there any influences this language has on the communities it has visited? Before the answer is elaborated, let us see how language, culture and identity work. Language, culture and identity are interrelated. The main characteristic of language, according to Hall (1997a), is its connection to meaning whilst culture comprises shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialisation (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, n.d.). Identity can be seen either as a shared culture of one true self in which other superficial or artificially imposed selves may be hidden, or as a matter of becoming and being (Hall, 1997b). Shaped by culture, language is the medium of culture, whilst culture is influenced and impacted by language. Cultural identity is not stable, but it may change or go beyond the range or limits of space, time and history. Interaction between language and identity can obviously take place (Hall, 1997a). On the one hand, language can show and build identity. On the other, language provides a sense of one's own identity, of who one is and to whom one belongs. Both language and culture play a vital role in identity formation (Phan Le Ha, 2008).

Based on this, it is likely that one's native language represents one's ethno-cultural identity. Learning a foreign language as a means of communication seems to be closely connected with users' identities. Foreign language learners are probably connected to foreign cultures, behavioural norms and cultural values which usually define one's self-identity. Nevertheless, clarifications on this doubt vary. Durairaj (2015) postulates that English unites, but at the same time it divides. There is a wide division between those who acquire the language and those who cannot or do not have a chance. For example, in Puerto Rico, the use of English as an official language makes its citizens see English as an important instrument to move up in social class and English, then, becomes a symbol of class differentiation (Nickels, 2005). It is surely a higher social class in any given society who gets such a good opportunity (Fuller & Hannum, 2002). According to Young (2008), English would probably endanger both its learners' local language and their identity. For some societies in the Expanding Circle, this could lead to fear of national identity loss, or linguistic imperialism as pointed out by Phillipson (2009). Boonchum (2010) has found three influential factors which affect Thai undergraduate students' self-identity change: 1) students' foreign friends, 2) their attitude and motivation towards English and 3) the extent to which their main subjects are related to the practical use of English.

By contrast, some research studies on actual language use in various countries have revealed that the native language/culture and target language/culture are not competitors and the learning of English does not become a threat to the learners' cultural identity. For example, Gao (2009) reported that the learning of English in China is viewed as building 'imagined communities' (Norton, 2001) and it helps learners to form various identities such as competitive job hunters on the international market, competent professionals, successful ambassadors of the native culture. Bradford (2007) found that Indonesian university students endorse orientations towards the potential economic value of learning English. In the same vein, Chinese university students in Macao (Carissa Young, 2006) and in Taiwan (Warden & Lin, 2000) do not have integrative motivation to learn English, but they express readiness to learn it with instrumental motivation for their future careers. The results of Hayes' (2014) study also reiterate that Thai university students view English as a personal instrument for career development and meanwhile the status of Thai as their national identity remains untouched. Dastgoshadeh and Jalilzadeh (2011) postulate that learning EIL has nothing to do with the possibility of losing one's national language and one's identity. Instead, EIL provides a chance for social mobility and modernity and helps ones to be identified as given voices to the whole world. Their contributions could result in the formation and development of the language, leading to scientific and cultural development.

Linguistic Imperialism

Another seminal question has also been asked. Since English is the native language of the US and the UK which are ones of the inner circle countries and recognised as the world's powerful core nations, there seems to be some doubt as to whether these countries have tried to influence over the economic, political and social life of other weaker countries by trying to spread their cultural, social, political and economic features and ideologies through their language. English, then, is believed to be a hegemonic language. It was proclaimed decades ago by Nazis and Soviets the language of world capitalism, forming lingual imperialism (Khan, 2013). In more recent years, with his 1992 famous book 'Linguistic Imperialism', Dr Robert Phillipson, an intellectual and linguist and now Professor Emeritus at Copenhagen Business School, characterises the impact of English over weaker countries' socio-lingual horizons as a continuation, in a modern pattern, of colonialism and conquest. Political and economic hidden agendas of the English-speaking nations have been accompanied by the spread of this language with an aim to take control of other countries. Cultural ideals, ways of life and indigenous languages of these weaker countries as a result might be harmed and damaged. According to Phillipson (1992), it is international institutions like International Monetary Fund, British Council and World Bank that misguide the people of third world countries by misleadingly illustrating that the English-speaking community is well-educated and knowledgeable about education, economy and politics. Linguistic imperialism can, thus, be simply known as a 'theory of a deliberate expansion of hegemonic power using English as a weapon' (McEwen, 2010, para. 8). In the same vein, the global teaching of English or English Language Teaching (ELT) by English language teachers is also an act of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992). It is doubtful whether the impact of the teaching of this language worldwide and the honoured position it occupies in national education systems have served to destabilise the privileges of other languages and to banish the chances for widespread multilingual education.

The issue is also supported by Holliday (2005) who focuses on the conflicts among TESOL educators and researchers who face cultural and political interfaces created by the native-speakerist attitude and the injustices created by the desire to change the cultures of non-native-speaker students and teachers. Furthermore, Phan Le Ha (2008, p. 72) makes a remark that ''Centre' (English speaking countries) imposes its own cultural values, military and economic power, wants and needs upon the 'Periphery' (less developed countries) through ELT and so-called 'aid''. ELT, then, becomes an instrument of colonialism which is used, as noted by Pennycook (1998), to support or bolster the spread of English around the globe, accompanied by its underlying cultural values. Skehen (2006, p. 57) adds that 'the teaching of English is not a neutral activity, but contributes to the perpetuation of existing international power structures, and implicitly the downgrading of local cultures and power'. Moreover, local needs and different contexts of language teaching should not be overlooked. It is important for language teachers to be aware of hegemonic power relations that may be transmitted through their teaching and practices. In fact, the ways they teach must be associated with the objective of English language acquisition amongst the target group. Such power relations must be deconstructed and appropriate and effectual curricula should be created in order to serve the variety of English learners around the world in different contexts with resources and pedagogy in which teachers' cultural background and their connection with English need to be included. Thus, to deconstruct hegemonic power relations in ELT, radical change in language policy to improve the balance and to uphold the multilingualism that reproduces the more natural state of language use around the world has been called for.

Taking the Ownership of English

Apart from the awareness of linguistic imperialism, the issue of taking the ownership of English by users of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds which is a focal point of the present study has been raised due to the fact that the status of English becomes international. Since varieties of English are presently

institutionalised by millions of contemporary users in different regions, can these users claim their rights to be counted an owner of this language?

The notion of English ownership has been talked about by several scholars (e.g., Widdowson, 1994, 1997; Canagarajah, 1999; Kramsch, 2001; Pennycook, 2001; McKay, 2002; Holliday, 2005; Phan Le Ha, 2007, 2008;). According to Widdowson's (1994) remarks, when native speakers of English are proud of and satisfied with the status of their language as an international means of communication, they must accept one thing that an international language has to be an independent language. As a result, it is no longer their property, but other users actually possess it too. Since English serves the communicative and mutual necessities of various societies, the language inevitably adapts and diversifies into a standard form to the extent required to meet the needs of the communities concerned. For example, scientists or business people, whose first languages are different, could maintain a common standard of English in order to keep up standards of communicative effectiveness. Canagarajah (1999) exemplifies the appropriation of English in the context of Sri Lanka where there are local cultural and political issues. Sri Lankan people are able to take control of English and use it for their own sake. Due to this, Canagarajah proposes a teaching approach that is resistant to linguistic imperialism. In accord with this, Kramsch (2001) focuses on how those who are diverse users of English can own the language through their English teachers, positing that appropriation can claim itself by continuously forming 'third cultures' or 'third spaces' (Kramsch, 1993). Agreeing with Canagarajah's and Kramsch's ideas, Pennycook (2001) offers possibilities of forming the so-called third spaces or third cultures.

The opinions on appropriation from these scholars, in fact, go against linguistic imperialism and the postcolonial dichotomy of Self and Other (Lin et al., 2001). Phan Le Ha (2007, 2009), however, explains that the notion of English ownership does not indicate refusing English at all. Rather, it first promotes one's use of English for one's own benefit and equality. Second, it encourages users of English to join together to get rid of the discoursal forms of colonialism/imperialism (genres, styles, rhetorical conventions of the English speaking world). This is to create 'a new and more sophisticated view of 'appropriation', which consists of resistance and reconstitution' (Phan Le Ha, 2009, p. 205). Hashimoto (2000) illustrates a case of how Japan withstands the effect of Western globalisation and English dominance, reasoning that 'the commitment of the Japanese government to internationalisation in education actually means 'Japanisation' of Japanese learners of English' (p. 39). In short, the notion of English appropriation is to highlight the role of non-native users in spreading and transforming English into a global language. These people, then, should 'be the main agents [having the authority (Warschauer, 2000)] in the ways English is used, is maintained, and changed, and who will shape the ideologies and beliefs associated with [EIL]' (Seidlhofer, 2003, p. 7). It covers not only the notions of opening up to changes and spaces for non-native speakers of English to develop positively and equally in comparison to native English speakers, but also the ideas of how non-native speakers actively and comfortably use English as their language (Phan Le Ha, 2009).

Empirically speaking, Phan Le Ha (2009) reveals multiple identities of Asian international students constructed around English and their being Asian. The identities she found are not in a static and patronising manner but are produced and reproduced in complex, dynamic and sophisticated ways. She gives a reason that 'together with encouraging and valuing users' appropriation of English, it is necessary to acknowledge and promote ways that individuals take ownership of English' (p. 201). Seilhamer (2015) has studied the relationships with English experienced by six young women who are proficient in English in terms of their prevalent usage, affective belonging and legitimate knowledge, using the acceptability judgment task and footing methodology. The results show that four out of six participants deserve full membership in the imagined global community of English users, which is considered a degree of English ownership. That is, all of them have highly prevalent English usage in communities that regarded them as full competent members, strong affective belonging with English, a high degree of expertise in the language and English teaching experiences that position them as legitimate experts.

However, the only problem pointed out by Canagarajah (2005) is the fact that 'standard English' which was firmly codified or supported by established grammars and dictionaries is still the norm in most educational institutions. Non-native leaners of Jindapitak's (2013) study in Thailand and those of

Alhassan (2017) in Sudan are of the same opinion that the standard English to be taught, learnt and identified in the classroom still needs to be attached to the ideology and construct of native speakers. In his study, Boriboon (2013) has found that Thai teachers of English still value native speaker ideology in relation to accent and pronunciation believing that native speakers are the most desirable accent models learners should aspire to. Why so? This may be because of the fact that the dichotomy and implication of the Self (native speakers) and Other (non-native speakers) are still prevalent in TESOL (Lin et al, 2001). The former implies first-class users of English who are superior, whereas the latter second-class users who are always inferior. Therefore, teachers and learners in ELT contexts still value the native speakers' norms of English.

To devalue this stereotype, suggestions for teaching English as an International Language (EIL) have been made. Kramsch (2001) views that it must be English language teachers who can help non-native students to appropriate English and use it 'in ways that are unique to their multilingual and multicultural sensibilities (p. 16). McKay (2003) and Brutt-Griffler (2002) suggest an alternative way of teaching EIL in which learners should be taught to use the language for specific purposes, use it in multilingual contexts and use it to communicate their cultures and knowledge with others. In terms of spoken language, Boriboon (2013) argues that native speaker accents should not be valued too highly, but an appropriate local language-accented English as the model for accent and pronunciation practice should be searched for. Similarly, Kanoksilapatham (2012) remarks that since the mastery of the Anglo-American speakers' norms of pronunciation, grammar use and pragmatic use may not be attainable for non-native speakers of English, the notion of teaching learners to use English as an International Lingua Franca (EILF) for the purposes of effective communication and interaction seems to be the best option. However, in terms of academic assessment, Phan Le Ha (2007) suggests that non-native teachers of English leave out the native-speaker dominated framework for evaluating and non-native learners of English be made aware of the fact that they are language users of EIL.

Conclusion

The above discussion has emphasised some background to important voices concerning the effects of present-day English. Present-day English is now playing a major role as a global language of global citizens serving both intra- and international communication. While assuming this gracious position, the language is performing its lingua franca function in various regional communities with a hope to bring about successful communication between and amongst people who have different first languages and cultural backgrounds. Consequently, the language is used more freely, rather than strictly following the Anglo-American norms of use set by native speakers. This results in the emergence of local varieties for intra-national use. By the passage of time, the language seems to lose its allegiance to particular cultures because the people of which are given the opportunity to communicate scientific, technological, socio-political, or social and cultural outcomes through it and share them with others all over the world. Thus, it becomes the world's language, being entitled English as an International Language (EIL), rather than the sole language of Anglo-American countries. Furthermore, its ownership, in terms of respect and human relationships not legal property rights, has been shared. But even so, these co-owners are unlikely to undergo changes in their perceptions of the national language loss, international identity gain, competence, styles of communication, behaviours, or individual personalities if they, along with the original owners, are well aware that this idea of appropriation is just for the sake of all and the outcomes that are conveyed are intended to change the world for a better one for themselves and for the others. If they experience changes in any case, these changes could be attributed to such personal factors as gender, starting age of new language learning, motivation to learn or attitude towards the language. Once the use of EIL is worldwide and the appropriation of English is huge, this necessitates alternative pedagogy both for the present and future users, the one that 'should involve valuing and nurturing the expression of other cultural voices in English, making explicit the values that support judgements about 'good' English and

individual ability, and helping students to construct identities as owners, meaning makers, and authorised users of EIL' (Phan Le Ha, 2007, p. 57).

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