



Title	Exploring the Status of Teaching English as an International Language as a Critical Pedagogical Approach in Japan: Voices from Teachers
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Abstract of Thesis

Name (HOSSEINI NASAB SEYEDEH ZAHRA)	
Title	Exploring the Status of Teaching English as an International Language as a Critical Pedagogical Approach in Japan: Voices from Teachers (批判的教育学 (クリティカル・ペダゴジー) アプローチからみた国際的な言語としての日本における英語教育の位置づけを探索: 教員の声から)
Abstract of Thesis The widespread use of English in international encounters and by nonnative speakers of the language has redefined its boundaries. Nowadays, nonnative speakers of English outnumber its native speakers, and this has had consequences for how the language is taught. While not a long time ago it was taken for granted that native speaker norms and standards of language use should be the object of learning for nonnative learners of the language, this idea has come under criticism in recent years. Inspired by propositions of Critical Pedagogy a relatively new line of research referred to as Critical Language Pedagogy has been in the forefront challenging normative assumptions as such in language education. If English has become a lingua franca and is used as a tool for intercultural and international communications, why does it have to reflect Anglo-American values, worldviews and lifestyles, thus marginalizing anything that deviates from those standards. Teaching English as an International Language (EIL) can therefore be regarded as a critical pedagogical approach as it is an approach that strives to give voice to nonnative speakers of English and prepare them for real-world authentic interactions with other speakers of the language. EIL seeks to empower the local varieties of English developed in the Expanding Circle countries where English is not the first language and is not used widely outside educational settings and redefine their role in the English language teaching profession. Such local varieties of English are carriers of cultural values and identities of their speakers and their absence in English language education is questionable. The present research takes this theoretical perspective to explore the status of EIL as a critical pedagogical approach among teachers of English in the context of Japanese higher education. The study was conducted with a mixed-methods design. It was carried out in two main phases with the collection of quantitative and qualitative data with three data collection instruments. In an initial quantitative phase, attitudes of 75 teachers of English working at universities in the Kansai Region of Japan towards the tenets and principles of EIL was explored. Following the quantitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 participants with the aim of delving deeper into their views and perspectives about EIL. In another part of the qualitative phase, classroom teaching sessions of six of the participants were also observed to understand the relationship between the participants' beliefs and their classroom teaching practice. The descriptive analysis of the data collected via the questionnaire indicated that on average the participants held negative attitudes towards the tenets of EIL. The thematic analysis of the interview data added new dimensions to the findings of the quantitative phase by identifying a continuum across which the participants' attitudes and beliefs regarding EIL could be positioned. In other words, instead of viewing their attitudes as negative or positive, the findings indicated that the participants took four different positions with regards to EIL depending on their underlying beliefs and assumptions including, resistance, hesitancy, tolerance, and admiration. Along the same vein, the participant teachers were found to be identifying themselves and their roles as teachers in five different ways as far as providing their students with linguistic input model was concerned. These five identity descriptors included authority, emulator of authority,	

global citizen, agent of change, and conformist. An analysis of the data collected through observation also revealed that the way the participants provide their students with linguistic input is dependent on the textbook they use in their classes. In fact, while some of the textbooks used by the participants featured native speaker varieties of English exclusively, others strived to expose language learners to nonnative varieties of English as well. A third group of textbooks were also found to be pretending to be tolerant of diversity while in reality promoting native speaker norms. The findings of the study had threefold implications for research on language teaching/learning, language learners, and language teachers, which are discussed in the final chapter of the study along with a number of suggestions offered for further research on the topic.

論文審査の結果の要旨及び担当者

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論文審査の結果の要旨			
The above-mentioned members of the doctoral committee examined the thesis of Hosseini Nasab Seyede Zahra (Khatereh) entitled Exploring the Status of Teaching English as an International Language as a Critical Pedagogical Approach in Japan: Voices from Teachers. We found the thesis to contain original results that offered valuable insights into the status of the teaching of English in Japanese universities. It also confirmed the extent to which a critical pedagogical approach was limited due to both teacher attitudes and structural constraints.			
This doctoral dissertation set out to address four research questions concerning 1) the awareness of English teachers in Japan of the varieties of English around the world, 2) their attitudes towards those varieties, 3) their choice of a variety of English as a model for teaching, and finally 4) the construction of their professional identity in relation to this choice. Khatereh's starting point was that a critical pedagogical approach that embraced varieties of English and rejected 'English native speakerism' would be a more effective pedagogical and ideological (fairer) approach and for university students in Japan. This assumption drove the thesis to a large extent and pushed the research to produce some insightful results.			
The thesis is constituted of 8 chapters. The first chapter identified the fundamental problem to be explored, the aims of the study and briefly outlined the methodology. The problem identified in this chapter was that traditional approaches to English teaching set out to train students to model 'native speaker' versions of English, especially American and British, based on the presumed superiority of these 'varieties' and the assumption that the main interlocutors of students would be native English speakers. In contrast, in the context of globalization, the main contacts of non-native speakers of English would more likely be other non-native speakers. In addition, since the so-called linguistic turn it was clear that language not only reproduces reality but also constructs it. The so-called 'English native speakerism' that has dominated English language teaching until recently has also tended to create a hierarchy of English speakers and, along with this, English teachers. As a critique of this kind of 'linguistic imperialism', Khatereh introduced the idea of 'world Englishes' or 'international Englishes' which have been introduced into pedagogical practices in number of locations in the world. In this study, Khatereh set out to explore the extent to which there was an awareness of this critical pedagogical approach, and whether it impacted pedagogical practices and teacher identity focusing on Japanese university education. A mixed methods approach was taken to achieve this.			

Chapters 2 and 3 were literary review chapters. Chapter 2 explored in depth the movement towards English as an international language and the introduction of critical pedagogical approaches. To counter her clear commitment to these new approaches, she also covered some of the literature criticizing these approaches. Chapter 3 introduced the scholarly work on English education in Japan, which is largely critical of the approaches that have been taken here.

In Chapter 4 she outlined her research design and methods. The study was presented as a mixed-methods design with a quantitative arm to gain data about the attitudes and awareness of university teachers of English towards the idea of English as an international language. The qualitative arm was the main method and aimed to go deeper to explore attitudes, approaches, constraints and identity issues around English language pedagogy. This involved interviews with teachers and observation of classes. In total, questionnaires were returned from 75 teachers. 15 teachers were interviewed, and 6 teachers were observed in their classroom teaching. The latter was far less than planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting teaching. A key conceptual tool to analyze the data was Kachru's model of the Three Concentric Circles of English or the so-called Kachurian paradigm assigning study participants into the Inner (countries where English is commonly the main language), Outer (countries with historical connections to English speaking countries, largely through colonialism where English is taught as a second language) and Expanding Circle (countries like Japan that introduce English as a foreign language) status to understand their positionality to English as an international language. Unfortunately, Khatereh struggled to recruit teachers from the 'outer circle' which limited the application of this model, especially to the quantitative data.

Chapters 6 and 7 outlined the results of the study. The quantitative data was presented in Chapter 6 using descriptive statistical analysis. Khatereh made the decision to combine inner and outer circle respondents due to the low number in the second category. In addition, in order to see whether Japanese respondents had different views to other Expanding Circle respondents, she split this group into two. As 53 (70.7%) of respondents were from the inner circle and only 7 in the non-Japanese expanding circle, the committee felt this was unfortunate as it limited the conclusions that could be drawn from the data. It was felt that the general analysis that included the whole sample was more meaningful. This descriptive data outlined the contract status of the respondents, the type of university they were working in, their age, their major field of study, highest level of degree certification and whether they had English teaching certification or not, and finally their attitudes towards teaching English as an international language. The committee felt that this data was insightful into the background of English teachers at Japanese universities, while being aware of selection bias and the small size of the sample. The presentation of some data broken down on the basis of Kachru's model was judged to be of limited validity and best added as supplementary data. It was also felt that the difficulty of recruiting outer circle teachers should have been explored in greater depth, as it contrasted with the ease of recruiting inner circle teachers. As the researcher herself, is from the expanding circle this should also have been considered.

Chapter 7 presented this qualitative data, which the committee judged to be of significant academic interest. The main findings from the interviews were presented on an individual and then group basis, employing Kachru's model in the latter case. It was felt that the narrative content was extremely powerful at conveying not only teacher attitudes but the structural constraints that limited choices around pedagogical approaches and content. Through the interviews it became that while native (inner circle) English teachers were privileged in hiring processes, they were often on contracts that left them with limited autonomy in the classroom.

Even instructors with PhD's in their field reported having no freedom to chose textbooks or how they teach. In terms of critical pedagogical approaches, Khatereh identified four positions in the sample: resistance, hesitancy, tolerance, and admiration. Each position point was explored in detail offering a granular analysis of the participant's attitude and willingness to embrace the idea of teaching English as an international language. This chapter was very interesting, presented well and was seemed to offer a powerful picture of the pedagogical landscape around English teaching in Japan. In terms of teacher identity formation through their teaching, Khatereh identified five different position points from global citizen to conformist. The observation data was seen to be of only limited interest and probably better positioned in the appendix.

Chapter 8 served as the conclusion to the study. It summarized the aims and objectives, and outlined the conclusions drawn from each chapter. Following on from this, each of the research questions was revisited and the conclusions from the study reiterated. The implications of the study were then outlined, making clear that the exploration revealed factors that have an impact on real life teaching and the professional identity of teachers. The Committee agreed that Khatereh's findings would be of practical value to universities wanting to better understand the limits of current approaches and the possibilities if a critical pedagogical approach. It was felt that it would also contribute to the literature on English language teaching in 'expanding' circle countries.

Based on the high quality of the research and the relevance of the topic, the committee were in strong agreement that this thesis had reached the level necessary to be awarded a PhD in Human Sciences.