CONTRAPUNTAL READING OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN EFL SETTINGS

Sathya Priya.S.K[a] *

[a] Queen Mary's College, Chennai, India

Abstract

This article presents a critical perspective on English as foreign language teaching by drawing on postcolonial theory and research. Starting with the fundamental classroom issue of linguistic variation and variability, this article takes a critical approach to language in education, aiming to place language studies in cultural, historical, geographic, and inter-cultural contexts within the context of humanistic learning. This article promotes a critical, intercultural, and linguistic humanism based on decolonial foreign language teaching techniques that are theoretically informed, educationally relevant, socially engaged, and ethically accountable. This article also aims to provide more historical and critical context for how foreign language educators think about and practice language education in ways that connect to intercultural research concerns in the humanities and beyond. Contrapuntal reading was proposed by Edward said in his book orientalism. The methodology depicts here about two categories of people. Those who speak English and are born in English, all other peoples and nations come under the other category. Main aim of this paper is to apply his theory on intercultural communication and how people accept and un accepting their slang in spite of British people themselves borrowed many words from other language and they spell it wrong and it becomes a word in dictionary in spite of wrong pronunciation compared to the native where the word born. This study applied to different language speaking students and participants from different cultures in college level seminars and conferences. The result and outcome was calculated through a feedback method.

Keywords: EFL, language, culture, identity, contrapuntal reading

*Corresponding author Sathya Priya.S.K. ORCID ID.: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3547-2580
E-mail: Sathyapriyaa.s.k@gmail.com

1. Introduction

If the Romans created the first humanism, it was largely through the development of Latin, the first world language. The codification of languageness, like the codification of future world standard languages English, was part of a greater entextualization of ideologies and practices around global hegemony and inequality. Languages in education were reduced to codified "arts" that were both texts, as in an ars grammatica, and a body of cultural-pedagogic knowledge and competence, as one of the liberal arts, the first two of which were grammar and rhetoric, which were developed by the Romans and further institutionalized in medieval Europe. The objective and effect of codifying Latin in grammars artes was to use grammatical categories to restrict and regulate speech, as well as to divide, distinguish, and classify educated speakers from the unschooled masses. The language that the Latin grammarian taught was invented as simultaneously and paradoxically artificial and natural, or, in other words, "a product of human skill that claimed objective validity and permanence" in a move that laid the groundwork for standardizing linguistic and pedagogical practices up to the present day (Kaster, 1988).

The need we could or should greet others in our own language, while comes the terms of intercultural communication. One may think if someone greet in their own language others might be able to get confused without understanding the meaning of what they were speaking, but the hard truth is, a person who interested in intercultural communication is all eager to know the other language, and their country, food etc...if they does not don't want to learn other cultural languages ,by any way and by all means they are going to confuse themselves because intercultural communication means not only different cultural peoples speaking with one another in English ,but it's the deep understanding of two cultures, so the first step to make other to understand our culture is to greet them in our own language and style that's comes as an act of pure form of love for language, but what we are all doing in academics is not ourselves greeting our students and colleagues in our own cultural language instead of that , we are making them to greet in English, which we have already made the western languages as superior and made to sit all the other languages only next to it, by providing it with the crown and scepter, hope it's the time to change the course of our generation's way of greetings.

1.1. English as a Foreign Language Education and the Humanities in a Critical Way:

It's important to remember that the descriptions of language and humanistic learning invoked in the MLA Report are positioned in relation to lengthy and complex histories surrounding the applied study of language when contemplating the fundamental and ongoing coloniality of language in education. Those who wrote on and methodically reflected on language, its uses, and its users in the European tradition were usually doing so in the context

of language teaching or, more broadly, language/culture-centered education. This tradition coalesced around the classical notion of European Renaissance of humanitarians built around a curriculum of studia humanitatis and artes liberales, from which we get our modern notions of the humanities and the liberal arts (Train, 2009b). Today, it is still in the liberal arts–based humanities that language and languages occupy a central curricular place in education.

The contours of language education have been historically formed in terms of shifting programmes of humanistic learning e.g., humanism, enlightenment, and modernity based on reductive ideologies, policies, and practices, according to a postcolonial perspective. Traditionally, dominant, even hegemonic discourses of education, culture, and literacy have been based on standardized ideas of unity and purity of language that fuse with notions of speakership anchored in dynamics of not belonging, inclusion, and exclusion. The purpose of these discourses is to circumscribe the boundaries of languages, as well as the barriers between their ostensible speakers and learners.

1.2. Literature Review:

Rao (1938) in his foreword points out that English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up - like Sanskrit or Persian was before - but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us in our own language and in English. We cannot write like English. We should not. We can only write as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as a part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will someday prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it.

Edward Said's understanding of culture derives from his dedication to the contrapuntal method; a philosophical and methodological premise that:

> 'cultural forms are hybrid, mixed, impure' and that modern cultural forms have an infinity of imperial traces' within them The contrapuntal approach enabled Said to see cultures not as monolithic, pure entities, but as overlapping, as interdependent, in which the patterns of power and domination are never expressed completely, but are accompanied by resistance and subversion, by point and counterpoint, and where contemporaneous events can produce antiphonal responses. History is a giant fugue of interweaving themes and voices, of subject and reply. A contrapuntal reading of culture entails the entire constellation of its voices. (Said, 1978).

This conditioning does not make them less of a writer; rather they are experts in explicating the thoughts and lives of Indian characters living in India but not speaking, thinking or living an English life. It requires great talent, insight and exceptional grasp of bilingualism to express in English the lives of people who do not speak that language.

1.3. Research Questions:

Whether it's a pride for us to know that our local slang becomes a word in English man's dictionary because we always celebrate the word that's comes as a new addendum to oxford or Cambridge dictionary in that way are we unknowingly celebrating English as dominant factor? Or are we accepting our own slang as inferior to them? Giving a big speech in a newspaper with a highly rising tone and a shout out to the public and celebrating and telecasting the news about the info that the western world speaks our own native slang and accept it as a word. Accepting ourselves that our own language becomes superior only when the west accept it as their own and published in their dictionary, still English is an awesome language no doubt in that…but while comes the talk of an inter and intra cultural communication ,it's our own duty and responsibility to show our mother language and giving priority to ours is much more important .some could ask why it's important ,let me ask why you prefer to talk in English, because it's so elegant, easy, understandable, pleasurable, and utmost it's the language that stored in our mind and heart as superior by the west and most deeply and strongly in each and every way of living in the colonized world ,After much endurance and pain getting independence after so many years still the westernization from style to slang is reflecting and goes on multiplying. Is that not the right time to show the little elegance of our own language to the world? Are we not a generous enough to share our own beloved language to OTHERS lets us give a chance to know them ours too at least a word it's time to change for the sake of our upcoming generation otherwise versatility will be vanished and there will be nothing to speak and enjoy other than English. The contours of language education have been historically formed in terms of shifting programmes of humanistic learning e.g., humanism, enlightenment, and modernity based on reductive ideologies, policies, and practices, according to a postcolonial perspective. Traditionally, dominant, even hegemonic discourses of education, culture, and literacy have been based on standardized ideas of unity and purity of language that fuse with notions of speakership anchored in dynamics of (not) belonging, inclusion, and exclusion. The purpose of these discourses is to circumscribe the boundaries of languages, as well as the barriers between their ostensible speakers and learners.

2. Method:

2.1. Research design

In the study Feedback Methods were used. The word feedback is used to describe useful information or constructive criticism regarding not only the person's actions and behaviors but their assumptions too (DeFranzo, 2021). When comes to the fact peoples blindly following other culture by not giving importance to their own there is always a grandmother's proverb

for everything in India here is one about the cat and tiger: "Cat and tiger, will the tiger cub becomes the cat? No because the tiger itself comes from the cat family, scientifically and logically, according to Darwinism, it could not go backwards from its hereditary development, even though each and every language have some link with each other like all language s emerge from either bow -bow theory or ding dong theory, but definitely culture emerges from the most civilized man.

2.2. Participants

According to geography it is our duty to preserves our own unique cultural language when comes the terms of intercultural communication instead of only using western English, so we test this form of traditional things through literature conference, where more than 100 volunteer students who were selected randomly, participated from different colleges in India as India have more than 21 official languages, we get the result through the above given feedback method.

Feed Back Form For Introducing Greetings In Mother Tongue During Public Speaking In Intercultural Communication:

Greetings In Single Word Like : Indian: Namaste, Spanish: Hola, French: Bonjour, German: Guten Tag, Italian: Salve, Chinese: Nĭn Hăo, Portuguese: Olá, Arabic: Asalaam Alaikum, Japanese: Konnichiwa, Korean: Anyoung Haseyo, Russian: Zdravstvuyte, Turkish: Merhabha

No	Topics	High	Low
1.	Talking Subjects Become More Interesting		
2.	Level Of Impression		
3.	Inducing For Learning New Language		
4.	Level Of Interest To Hear The Language Again		
5.	Certainty		
6.	Understanding Language		
7.	Respect For Prioritizing Culture Through Language		
8.	Their Way Of Bilingualism		
9.	Accepting And Knowing Their Identity		
10.	Refreshing Mind While Hearing The Greetings		

NAME:

LANGUAGE:

COLLEGE:

SIGNATURE:

Figure 1. Form

As long as our societies remains traditional and open to other culture and language of the world, but giving much importance to our own first, and community groups who form families and respect the wisdom of intercultural communication and greeting first in their own language, for example "vanakkam" in Tamil (one of the oldest language in the world) or "merhaba" in Turkish, it will be continue to be anchors, spiritual and pleasing our own heart and something that we teach to our offspring. It depends on how our language relationship with culture develops and the dynamics involved, which will, arguably, determine the representation in the intercultural communication.

2.3. Data collection tools

A good rule of thumb to keep in mind while creating feedback is to only ask questions that will help us achieve our end goal. I made sure each question has a clear purpose. I didn't ask the question if I do not intend to use the information. The goal is to gather input from students and, not to have them write an essay paper. So I opted for long form based survey from jot form blog which I considered a best tool for feedback method. As I created the feedback form from the blog I send the form to the inbox during online seminars and conferences as well as I take print out of the hard copy for the offline seminars and conferences. In the case of offline seminar we created Focus groups to provide feedback from students. Focus group is a qualitative way of gathering students feedback in which our own known people with student volunteers and friends acts as a moderator leads a small group of students through a discussion. Focus groups are used to learn about a group's needs, interests, and priorities through feedback form. Focus group replies are often open-ended and assist to gain student's experiences or stories in the end of the feedback form, they're often used to supplement research studies to get extra context, but students took only 5-7 minutes to complete the feedback form. In case of online the form we pasted in the inbox that will automatically save to my mail thorough the aid of the software provided link with automated process technique.

2.4. Data analysis:

All data gathered in one location. Now, before we begin our feedback analysis, we come across some incomplete input and collect it all in one place. We try to avoid combining incomplete forms with other feedback at first, so that they can reveal interesting details. We're using a software tool, and we're exporting all of the data to a spreadsheet that's visually appealing. Throw away any of the information we've gathered because it could be a game changer for our research. After categorizing and sub-categorizing our students' feedback data, we divided it into high-intensity feedback forms that include all positives and low-intensity feedback forms that include just negatives. Following the organization of input into these two

attributes, I will be able to simply examine what went right, alright, or bad, as well as what should be discarded entirely. I'll be able to focus on all aspects equally and uniformly if I categories responses as positive or negative. I received nearly no negative tick input and a lot of positive tick feedback, which keeps me encouraged to keep working on my study discoveries. I received around 88 percent positive response and only 12 percent negative feedback out of a total of 100.

3. Findings:

My findings here may be discipline-specific but also cut beyond disciplinary boundaries, individual academics have associated their particular postcolonial approaches with or distinguished them from other researchers and perspectives. I include a brief but by no means exhaustive list of some of the disciplinary diversity and interdisciplinary connectedness within the humanities that can be found among postcolonial approaches by historians as an example and for the benefit of foreign language educators who may wish to pursue postcolonial studies further. The messiness is, without a doubt, part of the complexity of theory in general, and especially highly sensitive. To that end, I'll try to give a quick overview of how some of these essential terms and concepts, such as imperialism, colonialism, and coloniality, influence language teaching in practice. The ultimate goal is to incorporate some of the vast body of postcolonial research into our own critiques, understandings, and practices of foreign language education when compared with English as a foreign language.

Imperialism has been glossed as "the practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory" while colonialism, which is "almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on a distant territory" (Said, 1993, p. 8, quoted in Ashcroft et al., 2007, pp. 40, 111).In spatial and causal terms, imperialism or neoimperialism has been described as "the phenomenon that originates in the metropolis, the process which leads to domination and control," while its "result, or what happens in the colonies as a consequence of imperial domination, is colonialism or neo-colonialism" (Loomba,2005, p. 12). Without getting into the terminological nuances and debates, the imperialism–colonialism dynamic helps us understand foreign language education as part of a complex global and local web of interwoven practices, policies, and ideologies involving, among other things, distance, historicity, power, and control, as well as inequalities created by hierarchical ordering and classification. In the case of English, imperialism and colonialism, a complex web of historically enacted ideologies, policies, and practices emanated from the metropolitan centers of power in the European capitals of empire. We can achieve with language and who we can be as speakers if we follow the metropolitan paradigm of a native standard speaker. On the other hand, beyond the distantly located normative centre in, say, the idealized educated native speaker in India and other countries, these world

language practices also give birth to the frequently challenged emergence of new practices in a variety of local and global contexts.

4. Discussion

Rather than blindly accepting the next version of educational reform or accountability, we should consider the ethical implications of who is included in our linguistic reinventions or reconstitutions. Who is going to be impacted? And how do you do it? As language instructors, we can benefit from a poststructuralist perspective similar to that of Judith Butler, who has highlighted the ethical implications of subjectivity, or my performance in terms of who I am at any given time. Butler (2005) defines ethical reflection as providing an account of me that must reflect the social context in which I arise, which necessitates a reliance on social theory to comprehend these social conditions.

The quests and desires for talking subjects become more interesting and the impression level gets much higher while people start a conversation or greetings in their own slang to other cultural peoples. After looking more for epistemology and etymology during the conversation between inter-cultural communications, they didn't forget the most basic human instinct for language. One could raise the question "what does this mean?" using the word or phrase while we start a conversation during intercultural communication. Is that not creating more vulnerability and susceptibility? The answer we got no but it created more certainty and understanding the language to the core. Language teaching and learning must cut across those boundaries by virtue of being truly foundational in doing the academic work of any given discipline in the humanities and social sciences, without discounting the institutional requirements and advantages attached to specialization within constituted academic disciplines. In this approach, a critical decolonial perspective constantly aims to go beyond the constraints that foreign language education imposes and constructs in a specific historical moment and local environment: "to give substantial theoretical support for broader views of foreign language teaching and learning as socio-cultural, historical, and social semiotic practices" (Kramsch, 2000).

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

The outcome of prioritizing our own language is, we will create our own identity that who we are and what is our roots, so that it might bring more deep characteristics of human from basic to what we not expect in a good way…for example while greeting in our own slang hearers will get amuse and will repeat our words, it may change the speakers speaking environment with much attention and clarity that what we are going to speak and with whom we are going to speak and bring more awareness to the speaker and hearer and the intensity of

understanding would be high when compared of greeting in western language . These viewpoints bring up opportunities for border-transgressive thinking, which can theorize the displacement of standard analytic and pedagogic categories, as well as conventional representations of language and speakership, beyond the bounds of constructed boundaries. The easy reductive binaries of native/non-native speaker, first language/second language, and error/correctness, for example, have been formed in shifting colonial and imperial ecologies since the very beginnings of language education, as explained in the preceding section. Interdisciplinary, retheorized, and inter cultural foreign language education would aim to move beyond the still-dominant binarism of confined languages and identities to decolonial third spaces (Bhabha, 1994; Kramsch, 1993; Pérez, 1999).

The marginalization of those variable practices and speakers associated with them that are deemed to fall outside the discursively policed boundaries of the supposed linguistic, cultural, and pedagogic unity surrounding language and education has been linked to this reduction–invention of humans and our languages. In short, while all people have been given the opportunity to participate in language and education, language and education have also been built in ways that exclude some humans from full involvement. There is a double coloniality and a twofold decolonial task in foreign language teaching. "On the one hand, students in foreign language programme present imperial hyper power" (Chua, 2007). Occupy a complex and asymmetrical position as native or non-native English speakers in relation to other peoples, languages, and cultures. Foreign language learners and educators, on the other hand, participate in linguistic utopias of maximally homogeneous study objects (Pratt, 1987). Traditionally, the notion of a minimally changeable and maximally homogenous (i.e., standard) language has been favored in the study and teaching of "French" or "Spanish or English. Colonial, imperial representation of monolingual, native speakership and competence is far beyond the grasp of all but a few if any non-natives, as well as many native speakers of colonial and immigrant heritage languages.

This too shall pass this is a trending phrase now a day's but I want this too shall pass swiftly, movably, gently, happily , and most importantly satisfied probably, by giving much way to show our own language by prioritizing especially when it comes to the term of intercultural communication. To build up a better society, culture, communication, and above all to accept who we are in reality rather than the imagination.

References

Raja, R. (1967). *Kanthapura*. New York: New Directions.

Said, Edward W. (1994). Culture and imperialism. New York: Vintage Books,

Kramsch, C. (2000). *Second language acquisition, applied linguistics, and the teaching of foreign languages*. Modern Language Journal, *84*(3), 311–326.

Kramsch, C., & Whiteside, A. (2008). *Language ecology in multilingual settings: Towards a theory of symbolic competence*. Applied Linguistics, *29*(4), 645–671.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Loomba, A. (2005). *Colonialism/postcolonialism* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2007). *Post colonial studies: The key concepts* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Pérez, E. (1999). *The decolonial imaginary: Writing Chicanas into history*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Pratt, M. L. (2008). *In the neocolony: Destiny, destination, and the traffic in meaning*. In M. Moraña, E. Dussel, & C. A. Jáuregui (Eds.), *Coloniality at large: Latin America and the postcolonial debate* (pp. 459–475). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Chua, A. (2007). *Day of empire: How hyperpowers rise to global dominance—and why they fall*. New York: Doubleday.

Train, R. W. (2007a). *Language ideology and foreign language pedagogy*. In D. Ayoun (Ed.), French applied linguistics (pp. 238–269). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kaster, R. A. (1988). *Guardians of language: The grammarian and society in late antiquity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. London: Routledge.

lipson, R. (1992*). Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Said, E. W. (1989). *Representing the colonized: Anthropology's interlocutors*. Critical Inquiry, *15*(2), 205–225.

Stroud, C. (2007*). Bilingualism: Colonialism and postcolonialism*. In M. Heller (Ed.), Bilingualism: A social approach (pp. 25–49). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thieme, J. (1996). *The Arnold anthology of post-colonial literature in English*. London: St. Martin's Press.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: Attitude and identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dussel, E. (1995). *The invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the myth of modernity* (M. Barber, Trans.). New York: Continuum

Butler, J. (1997*). Excitable speech: A politics of the performative*. New York: Routledge.

Modern Language Association. (2007*). Foreign languages and higher education: New structures for a changed world*. Retrieved from http://www.mla.org/flreport

DeFranzo, W. by S. E. (2021, September 22). *5 reasons why feedback is important*. Snap Surveys Blog. Retrieved May 2, 2022, from https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/5-reasons-feedback-important/

Copyrights