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# Local Investigations of Global English in Germany

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Although it is important to consider the global presence of English in language teaching programs, Norton and Toohey (2002) remind that language learning is a situated practice, and learners should therefore be seen as individuals with varying social and historical collectivities. To account for this complex nature of language learning, Pennycook (1994) recommends that English language teachers be “engaged with both the local context and the global domain” (p. 306). In other words, they must address local histories and global practices as well as how these factors meet and intermingle. This chapter focuses on ways to integrate both the local and the global in English language teaching programs. Educators must situate their pedagogy in the specific context in which English is taught to encourage students to express their individual voices in English without sacrificing comprehensibility when communicating globally.



# Sociolinguistic Profile of Students of English at Freie Universität Berlin

## Methods

The first step in accounting for the local and global language uses of a group of learners is to compile a sociolinguistic profile that investigates the use of English in a specific context. This type of analysis, originally outlined by Ferguson (1975), has been used in sociolinguistics to represent situations in which English is used around the world (see Kachru & Nelson, 1996). A sociolinguistic profile highlights the salient uses and users of a language and reveals prevailing attitudes toward a language in a particular context.

I compiled a sociolinguistic profile of students of English at the Freie Universität Berlin (FUB), where I taught students of North American Studies and English Philology from 1998 to 2007. In this context, I was involved in the education of Germany's prospective English language teachers as well as of Europe's future professionals, who will use the language in a wide range of contexts. This profile takes into account a statistical analysis of questionnaires completed by 101 students of English in July 2001 (for further details, see Erling, 2004, 2005). Approximately 200 students were enrolled in English courses at the language center at that time, so about half responded to the questionnaire.

The questionnaire surveyed students' experiences with learning English, their exposure to the language, and their attitudes toward it.<sup>1</sup> It contained 64 questions, with mostly forced-choice responses. This chapter features excerpts from student essays that reflect on the role of English in students' lives; all excerpts cited here are done so with the informed consent of the authors. The texts are cited verbatim, in their uncorrected original form.

## Results

This study found students of English at FUB to be extremely proficient in the language by the time they entered university (see Dognacay-Aktuna in this volume for discussion of language proficiencies of Turkish teacher trainees). They began learning English relatively early: 13% of those polled had started by the age of 9

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<sup>1</sup>An important source for the questionnaire was a study administered by Preisler (1999), who performed a comprehensive assessment of the role of English in Denmark.

and 99% by the age of 13. Many indicated that English played an important role in their lives inside and outside of the classroom. Indeed, 80% of students said they read English reference books at least once a week (18% daily), and 70% said they read in English for pleasure at least once a week (18% daily). Many students also used English at work: 74% of students did so at jobs outside of university, and 60% said they meet English persons at work at least once a week. Irrespective of their career preference, almost all students (97%) expected that they would need English for their professional careers. Moreover, 63% said that they engaged in a free-time activity in which English was used, including acting in an English drama group, listening to English music, writing songs or poetry in English, watching English language films or television, keeping up with the news, and surfing the Internet. In fact, 77% of students said they used the Internet in English weekly (27% daily).

Furthermore, students regularly communicated outside their local or national context and used the vehicle of English to access the global community. They went abroad regularly and used English in that context: 92% of students traveled outside Germany at least once a year (see also in this volume Llorca's study of Catalan teachers). Moreover, 97% of students had traveled to an English-speaking country, and 59% had stayed in an English-speaking country for longer than a month.

Although students were generally well traveled, they did not have to go abroad to speak English. English is often seen as the language of the younger generation, and they encountered it so regularly that many considered it an established feature of their lives in Berlin. An illuminating example of their contact with English is the following student's comment:

I think English is playing a rather important role in my life. If you turn on the radio, most of the songs are in English. If you turn on the computer or surf on the Internet, you need to understand English. At university there are a lot of exchange students from foreign countries, and you communicate with them in English. I'm surrounded by English all the time. We have to admit that we adopted quite a lot of English expressions in German and therefore, without really recognizing it, English plays a major role in our society. Almost everybody has learned English at school (of the younger generation), and it really became a kind of second language in Germany.

### ***Three Clusters of English Users***

When I began analyzing the data collected from the questionnaires, it became clear that there were certain patterns to students' answers. To find out more about these patterns, I performed a Ward cluster analysis, which is an exploratory statistical

technique used to sort cases into groups or clusters so that the degree of association between members of the same cluster can be brought out (Kaufman & Rousseeuw, 1990). To partition the data, I chose eight variables that best represented the students' attitudes toward English:

1. Apart from your native country, to which country do you feel most connected?
2. Which countries have you visited (for longer than a month)?
3. If you were to name the type of English you speak, what would you call it?
4. Which model of English do you try to imitate when you speak English?
5. When you read novels or watch movies or documentaries dealing with the history and culture (or any other aspect of society in general) of an English-speaking country, which country do you prefer to read about?
6. Whom do you like best, the Americans or the British?
7. Which country would you prefer to live in if you were forced to choose between the United Kingdom and the United States?
8. What do you like best, British English or American English?

Table 1 shows the results of the Ward cluster analysis. The plus or minus tendencies in the table were established by calculating how far the cluster mean for each response deviated from the mean of the population for that response (which is 0). On the whole, the first cluster was positive, but not exceptionally so, about its choices for the American answers; likewise, it was equally negative about the British answers. However, the second cluster responded more strongly: They had very positive feelings toward the United Kingdom and British English and rather negative opinions about American English and living in the United States. The third cluster had no obvious tendency concerning the variety of English that they imitated and the country they felt most connected to or interested in. Their attitude toward the United States was ambivalent or negative, and they displayed only mildly positive attitudes toward Britain, living in Britain, and hearing British English.

Once the clusters were established, I conducted interviews with five students: Alina, Beatrice, Diane, Oskar, and Steffen (two students each from Clusters 1 and 3 and one student from Cluster 2).<sup>2</sup> The interviews were loosely organized, using

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<sup>2</sup>These student names are pseudonyms, and the real names of the interviewees have been protected.

what Schiffrin (1994) calls a *stepwise format*, in which the next discussion topic is based on the respondent's previous answer. Thus, the interview resembled a conversation. The benefit of conducting research in this way is that I received highly personal accounts of the students' experiences with and feelings toward English. I later performed a detailed content analysis of the transcribed interviews, comparing comments to the results of the statistical analysis. These students' in-depth accounts of their experiences with English provided further insight into the quantitative results and helped compensate for the limitations inherent in the questionnaire's forced-choice questions.

#### *Cluster 1: The U.S.-Friendly Cluster*

Cluster 1 (with 54 members) included students who felt somehow connected to the United States. As can be seen in Table 1, these students expressed a preference for American English and modeled their own English on this variety; they had cultural and historical interests in the United States, liked Americans better, and would prefer to live there if given the choice. This group was somewhat enthusiastic about the United States, but the members were equally as strong or exclusive as those in Cluster 2. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to call them the U.S.-friendly cluster.

Steffen and Diane represented the U.S.-friendly cluster. Steffen was what I would call a U.S. enthusiast. His hobbies included anything concerning English and English-speaking countries, especially the United States. After high school, he had gone there for 6 weeks, and this visit had prompted him to study North American Studies at university. Steffen sounded convincingly American because of native-like intonation and the use of weak forms. His speech was also flavored with the conversational fillers *um*, *like*, and *you know*. His pronunciation was marked by nasalized vowels, rhotic /r/, and the use of a flap for intervocalic /t/. Steffen said he loved English and that he took every opportunity to use it. He watched cable television in English, listened almost exclusively to American bands, wrote e-mails to friends in the United States whom he had met on his travels, and read more in English than in German. Steffen even looks like an American college student in his baggy T-shirt and khaki shorts. He laughed embarrassedly when I asked about his taste in clothing and struggled to explain his preference:

Yeah, I don't know. [laughs] I feel like I'm totally, I don't know, like, despising Germany and, I don't know, trying to be American. I don't know. I don't know. It's so weird. I don't know why I like the American dressing style better than the

**Table 1. Results of the Ward Cluster Analysis**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>1 U.S.-Friendly cluster (n = 54)</i>	<i>2 Pro-British cluster (n = 13)</i>	<i>3 Lingua franca cluster (n = 34)</i>
Most connected to: United States	+	–	–
Country visited: United States	+	–	–
Variety of English spoken: AE	+	– –	–
Variety imitated: AE	+	– –	∅
Read about: United States	+	–	–
Like best: the Americans	+	–	–
Country prefer to live: United States	+	– –	–
Variety like best: AE	+	–	–
Most connected to: United Kingdom	–	++	∅
Country visited: United Kingdom	∅	+	–
Variety of English spoken: BE	–	++	–
Variety imitated: BE	–	++	∅
Read about: United Kingdom	–	+	∅
Like best: the British	–	+	+
Country prefer to live: United Kingdom	–	++	+
Variety like best: BE	–	++	+

Note: AE = American English; BE = British English; ++ = very strong tendency to positive response (cluster mean  $\geq 1.0$ ); + = strong tendency to positive response ( $1.0 >$  cluster mean  $\geq 0.2$ ); ∅ = no tendency ( $0.2 >$  cluster mean  $> -0.2$ ); – = strong tendency to negative response ( $-0.2 \geq$  cluster mean  $> -1.0$ ); – – = very strong tendency to negative response ( $-1.0 \geq$  cluster mean).

German one. It's probably because it's different and something new, not something I've seen my entire life. I don't know why. It's all part of me being attracted to the States. I don't know.

For Steffen, the United States represented something new and exciting, and his experiences there had left a strong impression on him, affecting his study choices, musical tastes, and style of dress.

Steffen was extreme in his tastes and therefore may not have been a typical example of someone in the U.S.-friendly cluster. Diane was perhaps more representative. Like Steffen, she had been influenced by American music and literature in her teenage years. Diane had maintained German-like intonation patterns and made grammatical mistakes in English, but she was very communicative. Her first contact with English outside Germany had been on a 3-week trip to the United Kingdom, where she attended a language school when she was 14. She said that her English is more American because American culture had such a great impact on her: "Maybe also from the movies or from the music or when I went there [to the United States], like when I was 16 or 17." Since finishing school, Diane had been to the United States twice and remained interested in the country. Even though she said she disagreed with many of the policies of the U.S. government, she still had many personal connections with the country: "I think there are many beautiful people I know in America. And I don't want to say, 'I don't like you anymore or you have a bad country. Or your president, or whatever, is bad.'"

Although Diane criticized some aspects of the United States, she has many positive associations with the country, including music, literature, traveling, and friends. Although she was interested in the United States, her connection with English went further than an affinity with that one country. As a child she had spent 6 years in Egypt, where English was often the language of communication among foreigners. She also had spent 2 years traveling in India and Nepal, where her main language of communication was English; she had even taught English lessons to Buddhist nuns in the Himalayas. Because of all this, she said she felt close to English.

### *Cluster 2: The Pro-British Cluster*

Students in Cluster 2 were inclined to have stronger preferences than those in Cluster 1. This considerably smaller group consisted of only 13% of the students surveyed (13 students), but they were much more homogeneous in their choices: They strongly preferred British English and modeled their own English after this variety. They overwhelmingly felt connected to the United Kingdom and would prefer to live there than in the United States. They were more likely to have been to the United Kingdom (although some had been to the United States), to be interested in British culture and history, and to like the British better than the Americans. Although this group's zest for Britain is interesting, equally significant is their distaste for the United States and their strong aversion to American English. This group was therefore called the pro-British cluster.



The following member of this cluster tried to explain his enthusiasm: “I cannot really say why; probably I was born with this enormous interest in Britain. I like their style, music, and pronunciation.” Most of these students had some experience in the United Kingdom that left them fascinated with the country. The representative member of this group was Alina, who had started learning English in the fifth grade and held the Cambridge Proficiency Certificate for English. She had spent an exchange year in England during school, and since then she had been back on vacation and did an internship at a local paper in Brighton in 2000. Alina chose North American Studies as her main subject because she wanted to study something that involved the English language, but being already familiar with England, she wanted to learn about something different.

Alina’s English was marked by the use of long vowels in words like *can’t* [ka:nt] and the nonrhotic /ɾ/. She said she preferred British English because she found American English arrogant, and she thought that the British variety sounded more cultivated or modest. She especially disliked Germans who speak American English. She expressed annoyance with students of North American Studies who “think they’re great and that everything that is American is great.” She got frustrated with uncritical, unquestioned acceptance of everything American. It is not that she was not interested in the United States and, when asked, she did not think that she was anti-American. She had also been on holiday in the United States, but she definitely prefers the United Kingdom. When I asked her why, she replied, “England is just, I can’t say, it’s just that when I go there, I like it.”

### *Cluster 3: The Lingua Franca Cluster (ELF Users)*

The factor that unified Cluster 3 is that they did not identify with either the United Kingdom or the United States. This sample consisted of a significant percentage of the population (34%). These students said they did not aim to acquire a particular native model of English but rather “good” English or a mixture of varieties depending on the context. They said they felt this would allow them to communicate in all English-speaking environments. The most common answer to what variety of English they speak was some kind of hybrid, for example, “American-German English,” “Ambricit English,” or “a mix of Englishes with a German accent.” If these students had a preference for a native variety of English, it was for a variety such as Australian or Irish. They were not particularly interested in either British or American culture and history—preferring instead India, African countries, or other European countries such as Italy, Sweden, or France. As these students expressed no feeling of

connection to the United States or the United Kingdom, they can therefore be seen as the lingua franca cluster, a cluster that views English as a tool and a link to the global community. One example of the views of a lingua franca cluster student can be found in the following reaction: “I suppose I study English because it’s become the Latin of the 20th century.” These students were not necessarily studying English because they were interested in the United States or the United Kingdom but because they viewed language as a means to communicate internationally. In fact, 68% of this cluster agreed that “English is a tool for communication, and I don’t identify with any English-speaking culture.”

The only partialities that students in the lingua franca cluster expressed were that they preferred the British to the Americans, would prefer to live in the United Kingdom than the United States, and preferred British to American English. This preference for Britain may be explained by the fact that these students’ attitudes seemed to be European in orientation and Britain is part of Europe. Moreover, British standards of English have traditionally been taught in European schools and reinforced through further education. As one student noted, “In Germany, for instance, at school you learn British English, and I think that most of the other countries in the EU still do, too. . . . We’re in Europe so let’s have it British English.” In this case, British English was seen as the most appropriate variety for Europeans to learn.

One member of the lingua franca cluster was Oskar. His English was clearly influenced by German intonation and pronunciation, although he rarely made grammatical mistakes. Slight traces of an American accent could be heard in his use of rhotic /r/ and in some vowels, such as in the word *bad* [baəd]. However, there were no strong features of any national variety. Oskar’s model of English is what he called “the best English possible”; his goal was to be understood. For him, English is a means of communication, and he was not interested in having a native-like accent or identifying with an English-speaking culture: “I’m not from an English-speaking country, so why should I?” He said that when speaking English, he didn’t purposely try to show that he was from Germany, but he also did not try to hide that fact. As a child, Oskar had gone to an American international school in Bangalore for 2 years. He had traveled to both the United States and the United Kingdom but had not spent a significant amount of time in either country. His reason for studying North American Studies was that he was good at English. Although he read in English about 50% of the time, he did not use English often in his daily life—not much at university and not at all in his private life. Oskar said

he had become disenchanted with the United States. Like Diane and Alina, he was annoyed that many students were fascinated by American culture but were not critical of it. Oskar expressed rather negative attitudes toward the United States. When asked why he would rather go to the United Kingdom rather than the United States, he said,

I must say that I kind of, I'm fed up with American culture. It's just too much. And I think, I don't think that going there would give me anything I don't get here. I mean, I live in Germany, I can go to a Dunkin' Donuts, I can go to Wal-Mart even . . . but I don't bother. And so why should I go to the States?

It is interesting that although Steffen and Diane associated literature and music with the United States, Oskar thought of Dunkin' Donuts and Wal-Mart. Because of his experiences with American chains, Hollywood films, and uncritical students of North American Studies, Oskar believed that he knew the United States and therefore had no further interest in the country.

Beatrice, the other representative of the lingua franca cluster, had grown up in Ghana, where English was the language used at school. At the age of 12, she had moved to Germany. At the time of the interview, she was studying English philology and wanted to be a teacher. English had been like another mother tongue for her before moving to Germany, but now she believed her English was not as good as her German. Ghanaian English is the variety that Beatrice said she spoke, but she said she had learned written British English in school, both in Ghana and in Germany. When I asked her whether she preferred British English to American English, she expressed no real preference. Beatrice chose to study British English because she thought her English was more British, but, as she said, "There is nothing British about me." Still, she said that if she wanted her language skills to be good enough to teach English in German schools, she would have to spend some time abroad. At the time of her interview, she had plans to spend a year studying in London.

### ***Going Native Versus Being Neutral***

That many students, such as Beatrice and Oskar, do not orient themselves toward a *native* variety of English is further demonstrated by their responses to the question of whether they believed it was more advantageous to have a "native-like accent of one variety of English" or "a neutral variety of English that does not represent one culture or country." Although 56% of the students surveyed said that a native-like

accent of one variety of English is more advantageous, 39% said they felt that it is better to have a neutral variety that does not represent one culture or country. (Five percent of students chose not to answer this question.)

For those who said they preferred to speak with a native-like accent, the most common reason given was to pass as a native speaker of English. A primary concern of these students was to not stand out, not sound different, and be accepted in a native-speaker community. As one student noted, "You're not recognized as foreign (or at least not right away)." Similarly, some students expressed that their goal was to not be perceived as German: "My personal goal is to speak English so fluently with all its special qualities one day that nobody can expose me as a German native speaker anymore." Some of these respondents were also concerned with what they called "authenticity"; they said they considered a native variety to be more natural, original, or pure.

Many of those who said they preferred to speak a neutral variety of English remarked that it was preferable to speak a variety in which everyone in the world can communicate on equal grounds. As one student noted, "There would be less problems understanding each other." Some of these students said they considered neutral English to be more "open" or "flexible." One student stated that neutrality allows a speaker to have "higher potential of communication in every English-speaking part of the world." Others claimed that times of globalization require a neutral lingua franca: "In a world of internationalization and globalization, would it make sense to learn a culturally restricted variety?" Another student responded similarly: "There should be an international language which doesn't depend on a special country/tradition." Not only did these students consider "neutral" English to be easier to understand for everyone, they also claimed that it is easier to learn. As one student remarked, "It's hard to achieve a native-like accent of one variety."

However, pragmatism was not these students' only purpose. Like those who preferred a native variety of English, students who preferred a neutral variety also showed a concern for authenticity. In contrast to the students who wanted to hide their nationality, these respondents said that they could not and did not want to escape their identity, as the following comment demonstrates: "If you're not a native speaker, you shouldn't try to sound like one." These students asserted their authority over the language by incorporating their local identity into English and refusing to hide or be ashamed of their nonnative accents.

## Analysis: Global and Local Identities in English

This study clearly illustrates that the individual experiences students have with English influence their use of and attitude toward the language. The cluster analysis reflects different types of language learners whose needs for the language vary, and these results suggest that students subscribe to various *imagined communities* of English (Anderson, 1991; Norton, 2000). Their preferences for certain varieties may be correlated with the fact that they are imagining different interlocutors. Along these same lines, Corbett (2003) notes that “some learners might wish to integrate seamlessly into an L2 [second language] subculture (for example, an academic or professional community) whereas others might wish to retain a distinct cultural identity while also [being required] to communicate with a range of L2 speakers” (p. 36). Students who aim to live and work in an English-speaking environment may want to acquire a native-like accent; however, those who imagine themselves working in a global environment, using English as a lingua franca, may have different objectives.

This study shows that one of the communities that FUB students align with is the United States. This tendency can be explained by global trends as well as local influences. The situation may be similar to that in Denmark, where Preisler (1999) found that the younger generation has positive attitudes toward American English because of the dominant influence of the United States in popular domains such as film, music, and literature. Adding to this is the strong U.S. military presence in Berlin, which lasted until the early 1990s; many students who grew up there had contact with the American forces. In the past, there was a generally positive attitude toward Americans in Berlin because of U.S. support during the blockade of Berlin and in rebuilding the city. Moreover, FUB was originally financed with American funds, and the university is renowned for having a strong North American Studies program, which attracts students interested in American literature, culture, and politics. Finally, this positive attitude toward the United States has a mythical component, best described in Diane’s words that the United States is “a big legend when you grow up in Germany.”

Although attitudes toward the United States and American English were overwhelmingly positive at FUB, several negative opinions were also expressed, especially toward Germans who blindly embrace U.S. cultural and political values. Students from the three different clusters—Alina, Diane, and Oskar—expressed distaste for the German readiness to adopt all things American. However, even

those students who seemed most disillusioned with the United States found something that they like about it. For example, one student “really dislike[d] the American patriotism” but nevertheless loved American literature. Perhaps this seemingly contradictory behavior is just another aspect of local and global forces combining: Only aspects of U.S. culture that are consistent with the local values are accepted or adopted.

This study also found that a large number of the students at FUB (34%) did not relate to a “traditional” English-speaking community, which finding suggests that students are well aware of the global dimensions of the English language. In response to this, some students seemed to be forming a global identity that extends beyond associations with English-speaking countries. Brutt-Griffler (2002) suggests that a global culture is forming on the basis of a global system of common political structures and media outlets: “An identifiable shared subjective knowledge is emerging, buttressed by cosmopolitan, multicultural world urban centers” (p. 176). Berlin, as the capital of Germany, which is a central member of the European Union, can be seen as one of these urban centers. English is seen primarily as a key to participation in this global culture, as is evident in the reflections of one student who hoped that through English we could achieve “the identity of a globalized humankind.” As another student noted, “In times of globalization . . . it is important to speak English to be a part of the new, international world.” Through English, these students are relating to a global culture without necessarily abandoning their national and/or local identities. Diane serves as a perfect example of this phenomenon. When asked about her identity, she said, “I would like to say I’m a citizen of the world,” but she also identified herself as a Berliner, a German, and a European. Thus, English is seen not only as the language of traditional English-speaking countries, but also as a vehicle to express local identities, to communicate at a European level, and to signify identification with certain global trends. Therefore, these varying needs for English should be reflected in students’ English language education.



## Implications for English Language Teaching

Keeping in mind the students’ various imagined communities, a pedagogical approach that provides for these different types of learners is needed. Here, I describe measures that I think should be implemented as a response to the increasing use of English worldwide, including the promotion of expertise, the integration of an intercultural approach, and the incorporation of critical literacy and a sense

of agency into language education. Such practices are designed to foster students' skills in negotiating their local and global demands for English and thus fulfill the language-learning needs of students in all three clusters: U.S.-friendly, pro-British, and lingua franca.

A crucial factor in accommodating the various types of language learners is to move away from teaching languages as purely national constructs. Decke-Cornill (2002) criticizes German universities for adhering to the Herderian notion that one language is representative of one nation, so that study programs persistently remain "embedded in the philological realm of British and American studies, both culturally and linguistically" (p. 14). In the current study, although the majority of students at FUB oriented themselves to regional variety of English, a large number consciously embraced a lingua franca variety. Moreover, many students expressed an interest in learning about other English-speaking cultures and other varieties of English beyond those of the United States and the United Kingdom, and nearly all noted their need for the language in global contexts. Therefore, their English language education should not continue in a national tradition, near-nativeness should no longer remain the goal of their language training, and their courses should be designed to prepare them for communication with all speakers of the language (see also Atay, Dogancay-Aktuna, and Llurda in this volume on the goal of English language teaching [ELT]).

A move away from a nationalist approach to English teaching entails the increasing study of contexts outside the United States and the United Kingdom where English is used. As English is often used in lingua franca situations, students must be exposed to a wide range of accents to increase their ability to perceive L2 varieties. As Jenkins (2000) suggests, the emphasis in teaching oral skills should be placed on communication, reception, and accommodation. This means that speakers must adjust to one another to understand each other. Courses in English should therefore place more emphasis on the ability to communicate using the medium of English rather than on teaching a particular form.

Finally, a move away from teaching nationalist models of English requires that language teachers place emphasis on expertise in language and not *native-speaker* norms (for further details, see Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001; Rampton, 1990). Prodromou (2003) has found that successful nonnative English speakers speak the language differently than native speakers, but this does not necessarily imply that their use is in any way deficient. In fact, nonnative users of English often have advantageous linguistic skills that native speakers do not (Medgyes, 1994; Seidl-

hofer, 1999). Successful users of English as a lingua franca can mediate between global and local languages and cultures and thus offer alternative models by which students can orient themselves. Corpus studies investigating successful communication in lingua franca contexts—such as those being undertaken by Durham (2003), Jenkins (2000), Mauranen (2003), and Seidlhofer (2002)—will certainly provide further insight into possible models of L2 English.

A further advantage of teaching English from a lingua franca perspective is that this approach fosters and facilitates intercultural communication. Although language development and improvement will certainly remain a central goal of education, in the age of globalization and Europeanization, communication in English cannot be successful without intercultural understanding and mediation. Corbett (2003) outlines an approach to English language education that involves teaching not only about cultures in which the English language is used but also about negotiating between these cultures. Ideally, English speakers with intercultural skills can critically reflect on and value each culture that they have contact with, including their own. As a result, they are in a position to serve as mediators between groups that use different languages and language varieties. An important part of teaching intercultural competence is promoting pragmatic awareness of potential difficulties in cross-cultural interactions as well as providing students with strategies to negotiate these differences successfully (Davies, 2004). These strategies include developing ways of seeking clarification, establishing rapport, and minimizing cultural differences (McKay, 2002, p. 127).

The pedagogical practices mentioned so far focus primarily on oral communication in English. However, FUB students indicated that the frequent use of English in Europe—whether academically or professionally—requires them to be equally proficient in written English. Thus, university writing instruction must also address the global use of English. This can be done by using a genre-awareness approach in which students are taught to observe the common goals and features of texts depending on their context. However, although it is important to teach writing with an identifiable social purpose, simply fostering genre awareness may not be enough to hone students' critical skills in English. Leppänen (2003) warns that "the conventions and norms of academic writing in English can delimit the possibilities writers have to express their personal selves and cultural, gendered, and ethnic identities in writing" (p. 54). As a consequence, balance must be sought between imposing a rigid model for imitation and allowing for the identities students that want to present when writing in English.



With this in mind, Harwood and Hadley (2003) propose ways for teachers to ensure that students have access to the standard forms of the language that are linked to prestige while simultaneously encouraging them to appropriate the language for their own ends. To achieve this, Norton (2000) suggests that instructors provide students with “an understanding of the way rules of use are socially and historically constructed to support the interests of a dominant group within a given society” (p. 16). In a similar vein, Fairclough (1992) argues that students’ linguistic practice “should be informed by estimates of the possibilities, risks, and costs of going against dominant judgment of appropriate usage” (p. 54). Teaching in this way entails linking any alternative discourse practice to new interests and goals, ideally opening up a space in which learners can choose to follow globalized norms or to appropriate these toward their own cultural ends. This practice grants students access to the global community in English and also allows for diversity and difference in their writing.



## Implications for English Language Teacher Education

A pedagogical approach such as the one outlined in the previous section demands that TESOL professionals be open to other norms of English and be able to practice critical language awareness and intercultural communication (see also in this volume Atay’s chapter on intercultural awareness in ELT). As Grau (2005) points out, “prospective teachers need to be qualified to make competent and informed choices of topics, methods, and materials that correspond to their learners’ needs” (p. 271). Therefore, in addition to changes in ELT, specific modifications should be made to English language teacher education programs.

First, language educators should be made aware of the local and global uses of English. They “must be made aware that English is no longer a unitary language, that there are so-called Englishes, each with its own identity and recognition in social, economic, and national contexts” (Braine, 2005, p. 283). Many ELT professionals are familiar with Kachru’s (1985) model of three concentric circles of English-speaking contexts. Although this categorization helps account for the historical spread of the language and was influential in the legitimization of World Englishes, the division of language users into severe categories according to their national distinctions no longer suffices as a means to describe the role of English in the age of globalization. For ELT professionals to move away from teaching languages as purely national constructs, their training programs must depart from

nation-based theoretical platforms that do not take into account the intercultural contexts in which the language is used (see also Bruthiaux, 2003).

Further problems with Kachru's (1985) model become clear when considering the context of FUB, where English is used as a means to participate in the international community and to transcend linguistic, national, and cultural borders. English not only allows these students access to a greater range of entertainment, media, music, literature, and academic texts than their national language alone would, it also gives them a greater range of expression. Furthermore, this study shows that English plays a role in these students' construction of identity; they connect their mastery of English with other factors, such as a link to a global community or being *alternative Germans* or *model Europeans*. Therefore, theories and practices in ELT should take into account the varying attitudes that students have toward English and the role that their proficiency in the language plays in the construction of their identities.

Moreover, English language teachers should be aware of different views of globalization processes and attitudes toward the role that English plays therein (Erling, 2004; Sonntag, 2003). Phillipson (1992) propagates a common, but simplistic, view of the global spread of English by asserting that the English language, and in particular the ELT profession, is used as an instrument for imposition of power, which results in cultural and linguistic leveling. Despite the wealth of critique against him (e.g., Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Holborow 1999), Phillipson's theory inspires nationalist responses. In Germany, for example, his views have been taken up by activists who express a desire to protect the German language, people, nation, and culture from being overly influenced by Anglo-American language and culture (see, e.g., Gardt & Hüppauf, 2004; Gawlitta & Vilmar, 2002).

However, this fear of English is not always reflected at a local level. Only 25% of the FUB students surveyed expressed unease about the effects of English on their native language, and 75% said the presence of English in their society is useful because it increases their knowledge of English and broadens their cultural horizons. These students largely see English as a source of cultural enrichment and as a means to participate in the global community rather than as a homogenizing force (Berns, de Bot, & Hasenbrink, 2005; House, 2003). Such varying attitudes should be taken on board by ELT professionals, who need to understand the complex dimensions of globalization and the contradictory responses and mix of effects it has everywhere it has influence (see also the suggestions by Wu & VanderBroek in this volume).

Finally, ELT professionals can gain insight into the politics of English as a global language and enhance their professional development by undertaking studies of the use of English in the specific contexts in which they are working. Situated case studies such as this one shed light on the complex processes of globalization and capture factors that are not taken on board by generalized theories. Such studies also help language educators fulfill the needs of learners in a particular context. The current study has several pedagogical implications for the teaching of English at FUB, some of which may be relevant for ELT professionals around the world. However, because of the varying nature of language use in individual contexts, the results cannot be wholly transferable. Thus, ELT professionals must look at “the prevailing sociocultural situation of the learner group in question, then at their needs and desires within this sphere” (Bartlett, 2001, p. 33). English is a global language with a diverse community of users who have various goals and motivations. As a consequence, only a situated pedagogical approach can acknowledge the global forces prompting students to use English and account for the various identities and world views being expressed through the language.



## Conclusion

A situated pedagogy of English requires ELT professionals who can promote awareness raising and tolerance of difference. Thus, language programs must be led by successful multilingual speakers who can guide others in learning how to negotiate between languages and cultures. Given the role of English as a lingua franca in Europe and the rest of the world, ELT must place continued emphasis on intercultural communicative competence. Such a pedagogical approach prepares students for the relatively unpredictable needs of lifelong use and promotes “a global critical literacy through the medium of English” (Wallace, 2002, p. 111). Developing critical awareness in students helps them navigate the difficult course between following standards and expressing individuality. It gives them an appreciation of standard English as well as other World Englishes.

In the age of global communication, there is no sense in promoting the outdated notion of purely national linguistic standards. ELT programs must move away from preparing students for communication with (only) native speakers and from enforcing near-nativeness as the goal of language training. English courses should reflect the diversity of the language and provide learners with the cooperative skills that they require in their lives. These courses should also encourage

students to skillfully voice their individual opinions and identities in English. By implementing a situated pedagogy, ELT professionals can address the various global and local uses that students have for the English language and can help mitigate the struggle that each of us has in belonging to and/or resisting through this language.

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