

REVIEWS

Teaching and researching English accents in native and non-native speakers (Second Language Learning and Teaching). Ewa Waniek-Klimczak and Linda Shockey (eds.). 2013. Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer. ix + 244 pp.

Reviewed by KAZUYA SAITO*

Whereas much attention has been given to describing the varieties of English spoken not only in the Inner Circle, but also in the Outer and Expanding Circles, an increasing number of researchers have recently begun to study how second (L2) and foreign language learners develop pronunciation aspects of a language under naturalistic and instructed conditions. This book is one of the first attempts to approach this complex topic from psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic and educational perspectives in an interdisciplinary manner.

One of the strongest variables affecting L2 accents is learners' first language (L1) systems. In the case of this volume, most of the contributions focus on L1 speakers of Polish learning English. Highlighting this specific L1/L2 learning context enables us to clearly understand in depth how the unique characteristics of L1 (i.e. Polish) phonetic structures interact to determine the extent to which learners enhance the rate and ultimate attainment of L2 (i.e. English) pronunciation.

Part 1 focuses on how non-native speakers perceive and produce segmental and suprasegmental aspects of English, and how their speech affects native speakers' perceived accenteness and intelligibility judgements. In teaching Vietnamese speakers problematic pronunciation features in English (segmentals and syllable structures) via explicit and implicit instruction, Cunningham (3–14) finds that the teachability and learnability is relatively low for consonant clusters compared to segmental sounds. Szpyra-Lozłowska (15–30) compares whether pronunciation errors at a segmental/suprasegmental level (consonants, vowels, sentence and lexical stress) or a word level (e.g. deformed words typically due to a mismatch between orthographic representations and pronunciation forms) affect accenteness and intelligibility. In ch. 3 (31–48), Wrembel examines what factors interact to affect third language (L3) pronunciation learning, focusing on Polish speakers who have good proficiency in English as L2 and various competence levels in French as L3. The results of foreign accentness judgements show that not only participants' L1, but also their L2 phonological systems make a tangible impact on L3 performance. The study of Gonet et al. (49–58) focuses on to what degree advanced Polish learners of English produce the English velar nasal sound compared to other less problematic features, such as ash, schwa, and full vowels. The results provide some pedagogical implications for teaching these sounds via phonetic training.

Rojczyk (59–72) reports a psycholinguistic experiment where Polish learners of English were tested to perceive lexical stress based on vowel quality and duration when F0 was controlled and held constant. The findings show that learners detect lexical stress without

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the F0 cue which they use in their L1 phonetic system. In Swiecinski's study (73–84), electromagnetic articulography was used to first establish a baseline for the articulatory characteristics of Polish and English, and then compares how Polish learners with different proficiency levels pronounce target words in English. The results show that advanced learners tend to handle separate articulatory settings for Polish as L1 and English as L2.

Part 2 mainly concerns the role of pedagogy in L2 pronunciation learning by highlighting a series of empirical investigations to find out what kinds of teaching techniques (e.g. interactional tasks, corrective feedback) can help learners improve their performance. Pawlak's study (85–102) compares the effectiveness of two different types of corrective feedback (explicit vs. implicit) on advanced Polish learners' pronunciation of selected words in English. The results provide suggestions for teaching L2 pronunciation, especially in the context of communicatively oriented classrooms. In ch. 8 (103–112), Hinton examines how aptitude facilitates L2 pronunciation learning, especially in regards to learners' mimicry ability to accurately repeat input after minimal exposure. The study finds a significant relationship between the levels of learners' mimicry ability and foreign accent-ness, suggesting that mimicry ability needs to be included as a part of aptitude tests for successful L2 pronunciation learning.

Szymanska-Czaplak and Wujec-Kaczmarek evaluate in ch. 9 (113–122) the quality of pedagogic materials used for teaching English pronunciation to Polish students in a secondary-level school setting. The authors find that many materials fail to incorporate pronunciation components relative to grammar and vocabulary aspects of language. In the next chapter (123–138), Henderson conducts a survey on how English pronunciation is taught in the context of 10 European countries. Some of the findings include the fact that most teachers do not necessarily find it difficult to acquire adequate knowledge to teach pronunciation despite their lack of specific teacher training, and that little attention is given towards presenting a wide variety of English dialects to reflect its status as an international language.

Part 3 introduces a list of papers which discuss several controversial topics in phonetics and phonology. In ch. 11 (139–160), Shockey describes how native and non-native speakers look to vowel quality and duration for perceiving and producing short and long vowels in English. As for teaching this complex feature, the author comments that it might be difficult to teach vowel length as a reliable cue. Ciszewski (161–176) empirically examines qualitative and quantitative aspects of stressed vowels in various prosodic contexts. The results identify intervocalic correlations in duration (the durations of stressed and pre-stressed vowels) and two acoustic correlates of stress (longer duration and higher pitch). In the final chapter in this section, ch. 13 (177–190), Porzuczek also takes an empirical approach towards examining how prosodic and segmental factors interact to determine Polish learners' foreign accent-ness when they produce the word *her*.

Part 4 introduces several sociolinguistic approaches towards explaining L2 pronunciation development. Josipovic and Stanojevic (191–206) survey what kinds of English models high school and university students as well as business people aim to achieve. The results show that their perceptions vary dramatically in terms of their attitudes towards their own and their conversational partners' accents. They further find that it is necessary to conceptualize various types of models for English as Lingua Franca (ELF) according to different identity constructs, especially with regard to ELF learners (i.e. high school and university students) versus ELF users (i.e. business people). In ch. 15 (207–218), Malarski examines why the Birmingham accent can be perceived negatively (less attractive and

intelligent) compared to other dialects of English. According to the author's experiments, such negative perception is related to the distinctive intonation patterns in Brummie.

Gralinska-Brawata next highlights (219–228) the difficulty that Polish learners of English have in producing a combination of vowel + nasal consonant followed by a fricative due to their transferring of a Polish nasal vowel. As for pedagogical relevance, the author emphasizes the importance of taking L1 influence into account in the context of pronunciation teaching. Zajac (229–240) discusses the applicability of communication accommodation theory to the context of second language pronunciation learning. The author presents a pilot study to show whether Polish learners of English differentiate their speaking styles according to two types of English accents (Received Pronunciation vs. Canadian English). In the final chapter of the volume (241–251), Ostalski investigates how native speakers of General American English produce glottal stops in intervocalic positions and whether their chronological age was predictive of the frequency of glottal stops.

This edited volume covers a wide range of intriguing topics on L1 and L2 phonetics and phonology for theoretical, practical, and pedagogical relevance in an interdisciplinary manner. The extensive knowledge of the authors in phonetics, phonology, and sociolinguistics significantly contributes to the profound quality of the book. Overall, the volume will help both experts and non-experts on phonetics and phonology understand complex research topics and methods, and should therefore be a perfect guide for researchers, graduate students, and language teachers.

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The child language teacher. Anita Pandey. 2010. Manasagangothri, Mysore, India: Central Institute of Indian Languages. ix + 404 pp.

Reviewed by KIMBERLEY BROWN*

Anita Pandey introduces readers to a thoughtfully argued volume designed to introduce a passionate argument that young speakers of English and other languages are not simply recipients of adult native-speaker modeling in order to become fluent language users. Instead, she argues that 'collaborative continuity' is a necessary and effective approach to language and literacy development. Her introduction of this theoretical approach is grounded in a series of ethnographic portraits enhanced with original documents and visual artifacts. This volume provides ample support of Pandey's central argument:

Helping ESL children master the dominant language and culture of our classrooms and beyond, while optimizing their linguistic capabilities—for the betterment of our wider community—is our social responsibility and more advisable than expecting individuals to surrender their home language in the aim of assimilation (360).

Pandey acts as a transformative intellectual (Kumaravadivelu 2002), pushing readers to come to an understanding of the mediating role young learners play in assisting others in their language acquisition journeys. Pandey explores the strength of the human spirit in interactive settings around the world, looking at young learners and their interlocutors,

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some of whom are children, many of whom are adults; some of whom are differently-abled and remind us of the inequalities promulgated in speech events when people who are not in positions of power are othered.

The text is divided into 10 chapters. In the first chapter (1–24), Pandey lays out the underlying tenets of collaborative continuity. She argues that there has been an inadequate exploration of the teaching/learning roles children play. As a result in child-adult encounters most of us routinely minimize or fail to see the facilitative role children and young adults play. Pandey states ‘I contend that an adult’s cognitive and linguistic abilities could indeed be scaffolded by the child or young adult’ (2). Further, she argues that ‘we fail to extend this facilitative possibility into general community-based learning’ (2). In this first chapter of the text, Pandey proposes her collaborative intergenerational model noting the benefits to all interlocutors. Her primary methodologies are ethnography and conversation analysis. In ch. 2 (25–38) she reinforces the argument that without further research we must assume children have a greater impact on language acquisition than given credit. She observes the adult-centric nature of the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) field and notes that both observation and research can remedy this. Her argument here is not unlike the grounding arguments proffered by Johnson and Kachru (1994) and Sridhar (1994) regarding the monolingual bias dominating SLA research, particularly in qualitative domains. Ch. 2 introduces readers to an important globalization phenomenon: children who are the sole providers for their families, whether living on the streets, living in abject poverty, or simply trying to get by, can use second language proficiency to increase their ‘survival toolkits’, increasing their agency and resilience in interactions (36). Ch. 3 (39–132) focuses on research lacunae and the perceptual mismatch between observations made, research conducted, and underlying assumptions. In addition to noting the ‘paucity of research in the area of child-facilitated language and literacy enhancement’ (41), Pandey raises an important issue that needs further research: the notion that the ideal speaker-hearer is not necessarily a native speaker. In the mid 1980s, scholars such as Paikeday (1985) devoted much of their research to this. Dissertation research by Goldstein (1987) later published in the *TESOL Quarterly* looked at the power of young Central American speakers in New York preferred to imitate the AAVE accents of their playground partners rather than the accents modeled by their teachers who were speakers of standard American English. Swain’s (1983) early work looked at the pain and responsibility young bilingual speakers feel when caught between friends and languages. Unfortunately for the past 25 years, until Pandey’s volume, few scholars have urged researchers and practitioners to better document the active agency of young English Language Learners in the language acquisition process. In this chapter, Pandey looks to young people’s literature as one source of written and visual confirmation of the pain and promise of engaging across cultures, citing in particular Suratt’s 1989 volume *Angel child, dragon child* as well as Santiago’s 1999 autobiography *When I was Puerto Rican*. She provides a useful list of the various interactional roles children play. In this chapter, she returns to her underlying argument: children’s instructional abilities are not accounted for in SLA research: ‘The language instructional talent ESL children display in unsupervised interactional contexts is neither illustrated nor cited as evidence of the kind(s) of language exchange expected’ (56).

Ch. 4 (103–132) examines culturally responsive teaching and other concepts she feels are critical to an understanding of the model she proposes. Ch. 5 (133–216) introduces her central ethnographic research framework and data from three different settings. This chapter begins with a particularly useful chart examining what Pandey terms four phases

of ethnographic research: Ethnographic, Experimental, Experimental Pilots, and Ethno-experimental. This chapter contains solid transcript data laying out settings where children have acted as resources, cultural liaisons, cultural sensitivity aides, and critical sociolinguists. Ch. 6 (217–262) provides a model of what a cross-age literacy program could look like. Ch. 7 (263–284) is a very personal chapter documenting her mother's acquisition of English via the assistance of her two young daughters in a number of countries. Chs. 8 (285–328) and 9 (329–358) continue the detailed ethnographic profiles presented in chs. 5 and 7, this time detailing the conversations between a grandmother with Huntington's disease and her granddaughter, and an artist and athlete Don Laz, who suffered a stroke in his 40s but carried out an active life in spite of the limits on his ability to speak. To some degree these topics may seem either far removed from the original purpose of the text or like very difficult examples of lives affected by disease. In contrast, the level of data and presentation of the power of these individuals as communicators when working with young people as intermediaries are very inspiring. Finally, ch. 10 (359–380) moves from theory and research to the challenges faced in actual school settings. There are more than seven pages of recommendations for educators and policy-makers.

In Pandey's volume we see an intellectual challenge to researchers, thoughtful presentation of data from ethnographic and conversation analysis sources, and activities at the end of each chapter to engage learners. There is an extensive bibliography. This text is most suitable for any teacher education program that tries to expose its students to real-world data and to introduce multiple paradigms of analysis. It would be an excellent library resource. One weakness of the text is that there are an inconsistent number of activities in each chapter and some are more developed than others. A seasoned teacher educator could easily adapt the assignments for the needs of his or her classroom learners.

Collaborative continuity is an appropriate model for our globalized world. Pandey recognizes the agency of young language facilitators who are not typically serving in positions of power in their interactions. As researchers and practitioners, if we can take up her challenge, we may truly move into what Kumaravadivelu (2002) characterizes as a post-Methods condition, one that more closely approximates our increased globalization.

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Understanding English as a lingua franca. Barbara Seidlhofer. 2011. Oxford: Oxford University Press. xiii + 244 pp.

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Understanding English as a Lingua Franca represents an ambitious agenda: the introduction of a new paradigm for the study of English as an international language. The articulation of this theoretical model is tied to the considerable energy and resources that have gone into amassing and analyzing the corpus known as VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English). This book also builds upon an increasing number of publications that report on research findings from this project, which Barbara Seidlhofer directs. As the book's author, she has two primary concerns: 'to present a clear argument for a well-founded conceptualization of ELF' and 'to raise awareness in (mainly applied) linguists and language teaching practitioners about the significance of ELF' (xii). The goal is 'to arrive at "a certain level of understanding" of ELF by both seeking to explain the concept as such and describing how ELF users interact amongst themselves, how they understand each others' ELF' (ix). Her overarching argument is the necessity of creating and gaining acceptance for 'a new concept of ELF in its own right' (10).

As an openly skeptical reader of the ELF literature (Bernis 2009), at least as it had been presented prior to this book's publication, it was with considerable anticipation that I began to read it. Added to my anticipation was the expectation that Seidlhofer, the chief advocate of the ELF cause, would be the right person to deliver the understanding promised by the title. My own experience co-organizing with her a symposium on ELF (appearing in this journal in 2009) reinforced my confidence in her ability to put together a comprehensive, coherent, and convincing case. The book's structure likewise forecasts a robust treatment of all the steps involved in the reconceptualization the author proposes. The first three chapters address conceptual and descriptive issues and an analysis of notions. Among the issues and terms familiar to the readers of this journal are English as an international language, English as a lingua franca, foreign language, lingua franca, Standard English ideology, and nativeness. Assumptions and presumptions considered in need of reconsideration are examined. One singled out as critical is consideration of the assumption 'that English is essentially the standard language claimed as the property of its native speakers and that this should be the norm against which all other usage is evaluated' (61). Reconsideration of assumptions that relate to variety, community, and competence is called for as well in the fourth chapter. It and the following chapter also present spoken data to support the need for such reconsideration. Corpus samples show 'what aspects of English, what norms or rules of the language, are exploited as a performative resource' (97), 'how ELF formal properties function to communicative effect' (120), and 'how ELF functions as a naturally occurring phenomenon' (152). The relationship of form and function in ELF—a matter of keen interest among ELF proponents and critics—is the subject of the following chapter, while the subsequent one responds to the debate on whether ELF is yet another prescription for the teaching of English as an international language. This issue is addressed with a description of Nuclear English and Basic English and a comparison between them and ELF; the latter is determined to be quite different. The final chapter is an application of the foregoing analyses. Seidlhofer's conclusions are brought to bear on English language

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teaching, in particular, the question of why a description of ‘how people actually exploit the potential of an existing language’ (158) is necessary for acquisition planning.

Based on these expectations and the books’ organizational strengths, did the book deliver on its promise? Was the argument comprehensive, coherent, and convincing? Do I now have a clearer understanding of English as a Lingua Franca? Yes and no. First to the ‘yes.’

The most useful general conclusion I have reached is that the phrase ‘English as a Lingua Franca’ has three referents: to a global phenomenon, to a field of research, and to a paradigm.

Understanding ELF as a global phenomenon was not difficult. Seidlhofer writes of the increasing use of English as a result of globalization in situations ranging from business meetings to tourist encounters to diplomatic negotiations ‘across all three “concentric circles”’ (4). Seidlhofer rightly adds, ‘In these contexts, English is used as a convenient common means of communication among people with different native languages. It is the massive and increasing extent of these uses [. . .] that has been primarily responsible for establishing English globally as the predominant international language—English as a Lingua Franca’ (4). So far so good.

ELF as a field of research was not hard to grasp either. As I read Seidlhofer, ELF research constitutes, at least in part, a corrective to perceived limitations of other research paradigms (e.g. Kachru’s paradigm; see especially 74–81). This correction, it seems to Seidlhofer, is necessary because these paradigms are concerned only with Inner and Outer Circle Englishes and focus on international communication only at the local, not globalized level. Seidlhofer wants ELF to fill the gap by attending to and recognizing Expanding Circle users in their use of English for international (i.e. global) communication (48) and to provide evidence that ELF users ‘should be accorded their right to be “norm developing”’ (60). She claims (erroneously in my view) that recognition and legitimacy of ELF have been denied. She criticizes Kachru, who she claims restricts English as a lingua franca to pejorative connotations (cited on 74–75), and also McArthur, whom she takes to task for referring to a traditional sense of the phenomenon as a ‘low-level makeshift’ language (cited on 75). For Seidlhofer, ELF research is a shift in focus from the linguistic, cultural, or social features that differ from those of native speakers and thus identify users with a particular national or regional variety of English (‘variety counting’ 77), generally associated with Kachru and those who work within the WE paradigm (75). In contrast, she states, ELF studies do not focus on difference, but on the functional effectiveness of difference in communication among ELF users (see, for example, 79, 124, and 148). An additional concern is the negative assessments of Inner Circle users toward the (non-Standard forms) of English produced by Expanding Circle users; here Quirk is cited (50–53, 60). Further, ELF research is informed by ‘a postmodern Weltanschauung in its taking account of the radical changes brought about by globalization,’ in particular, by Seidlhofer’s belief that thinking in terms of varieties has to be replaced by thinking in terms of *variation* (73, emphasis in the original). ELF promoters and researchers demand status and identity for their boundary-transcending English just as the bounded national and regional Englishes have been given a status as legitimate varieties in their own right and an identity to be proud of (as a result of WE studies) with such labels as Indian English, Singaporean English, and European English (4, 60, 77, 108). Now to the ‘no.’

Seidlhofer states explicitly that her purpose ‘is not to promote a whole new and superior pedagogical paradigm, but to suggest how an understanding of ELF could lead to a change in our thinking about English and the way it is generally taught’ (201). I find this statement

puzzling in that any change in our thinking about English would entail paradigm change. And much of what Seidlhofer writes does indicate, at least to me, that a foundation for a paradigm is being laid: She provides such elements as a definition, reconceptualization of concepts, and a theoretical perspective. (See Pakir 2009; 2014 for discussion of an ELF paradigm).

Seidlhofer defines ELF as '*any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option*' (7; italics original). Readers of this journal may ask how this definition differs from one in any introductory sociolinguistics text or linguistics dictionary and, therefore, what is new here. However, there is more. The book's 244 pages offer several clues that could be used to derive an extended definition. I did bring some of these clues together in an attempt to do so. Unfortunately, rather than a greater appreciation of what exactly ELF is, I managed only to assemble a set of often contradictory, frequently ambiguous, and occasionally incomprehensible statements.

Here is just a sample: ELF is a language (23), but not a variety (25 footnote 7, 77, 110); it has formal properties, but is functionally, not formally defined (77); it is an English that has taken on a life of its own (111), but is not an English as is Ghanaian English (76); it is both a language and a natural language development (70); it is a virtual language (111). In addition, the definition of ELF would also need to integrate and reconcile other features, to wit, ELF is an alternative realization of some common linguistic resource (111); it exists to mediate meanings to establish common understanding (196). Many questions are begged here. Two crucial ones in my view are: How is it that ELF has formal properties, but is not defined in terms of these properties? How can ELF be a language, but not a variety of a language? Where does such a claim find support in any known linguistic theory?

At an earlier stage in its development, the renewed interest in Expanding Circle users of English and their use of English for international communication was identified as a movement (Elder & Davies 2006; Berns 2009; Pakir 2009). And in many respects much of what is outlined in this book is consonant with that label given Seidlhofer's repeated appeals for acceptance of ELF. At times she comes across as an impatient activist for the cause. For example, she declares that it is 'high time' for major conceptual adjustments (15), that it is 'high time' for applied linguists and (English) language teachers to develop fresh ways of thinking critically about what 'English' is, given its changed role status in the world (16–17). Her zeal sometimes suggests denial of the efforts of others long involved in promoting fresh ways of thinking about English, including *World Englishes* readers, who know full well that users outside the Inner Circle (or 'ENL territory' as Seidlhofer refers to it) do not necessarily (or willingly) conform to native speaker norms and that ELF users (those on 'ELF territory') use the English they know to negotiate ENL linguacultural norms in the interest of intelligibility and do so via processes of adaptation and accommodation (18). In other words, users in ELF contexts use the same strategies as those of any language or of any variety in the development of their forms of English. Reactions to the recognition of nativized varieties, but not ELF, and prioritization of native speaker norms in some quarters seem to have initially fueled Seidlhofer and the ELF movement and subsequent ELF research. The attention to descriptions of Outer and Inner Circle Englishes, according to Seidlhofer, has 'deflected' the professions' attention from the urgent issues of ELF (19) and it is 'high time that we granted the same right to ELF,' that is, recognize that it deserves to be described in its own right (19). But the question is begged whether or not ELF has been neglected by WE studies. If it is true that ELF is

not a variety, why would WE studies be concerned with the norms (ENL or otherwise) or nativization processes of a non-variety?

Seidlhofer writes of ELF in terms of its functions. Selections from the corpus illustrate how ELF's formal properties 'function to communicative effect' (120). Precisely what 'function' means is not entirely clear. Functions of ELF that are given include pragmatic clarity, which is achieved by repetition, paraphrasing, or both; synonymy and rephrasing; accommodation realized in code-switching; elaborating; translating; and lexical innovation via morphology ('financiate'; 102) and filling lexical gaps ('forbiddleness'; 104). Economy of expression is another function illustrated by the zero morpheme for present simple tense in the third person singular. ELF formal features also have a territorial function as markers of social identity and group membership (147). But are these instead examples of communicative strategies, not functions?

Seidlhofer singles out idiomatizing and metaphorizing as 'probably the most powerful illustrations of [...] the *functions* it [ELF] fulfills' (143, emphasis in the original). With respect to idiomatizing, readers learn that 'it sometimes happens that speakers in ELF interactions indulge in native-speaker idiomatizing, thus uncooperatively and inappropriately positioning themselves in ENL rather than ELF "territory"' (134) just as 'the use of the non-transparent phrase in an interaction with two non-native English speakers appears inappropriate and inconsiderate in [a] specific situation, and is in fact unsuccessful in that it requires repair by rephrasing' (136). Unilateral idiomatizing is exemplified by a person who used the expression *chilling out* in an interaction with another non-native speaker. This lexical choice is interpreted as inappropriate positioning in ENL 'territory' (137). Again, it seems more precise to identify such a move as one of many strategies that speakers of any language—not just ELF users—draw upon for the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning.

For Seidlhofer, 'variety' needs to be reconceptualized because it is too tied to the geographical boundaries indicated by Indian English, Singapore English, or European English. The increasing use of English across boundaries, she argues, requires attention to the lingua franca function of English, which is not limited by geographical boundaries (although ELF in this function seems to have local variations). Instead of thinking about varieties, of 'how far forms of language conform to codified norms' (which Seidlhofer appears to attribute to world Englishes), she wants us to reconsider variation and how the forms of ELF 'function as the exploitation of linguistic resources for making meaning' (73). Further cause for rethinking of variety is Seidlhofer's assertion that, 'We surely cannot simply close our eyes to the contemporary reality of English as a lingua franca just because we cannot neatly slot it into familiar categories of "variety" and do not wish to call its users a "community"' (88). This view she finds compatible with Mühlhäusler's shift of focus 'from the consideration of countable languages to that of human communication' (cited 108). This introduction of 'human communication' relates to 'competence.'

Along with 'English' and 'variety,' Seidlhofer pleads for a rethinking of 'competence': 'What it means to be communicatively competent can no longer be described with reference to norms of linguistic knowledge and behavior that are relevant only to particular native-speaker communities' (92). Again, this is not likely new for most readers of this journal; world Englishes specialists have long acknowledged the urgency of such reconceptualization. Examples include the question of whose language (or variety) and whose competence are valid measures of acceptability and appropriateness in English use (see Berns 1990; Nelson 1992). That communicative competence is not a monolithic,

solely native speaker based construct has long been established in work on approaches to teaching of language for communication (Berns 1990; Savignon 1997, 2002). These publications demonstrate that standards and norms for learners everywhere are matters for local decision makers, not those with vested interests in promoting their particular English and the instructional materials that support it. That the learners formerly known as EFL (now as ELF by Seidlhofer) are likewise in need of such consideration is a *sine qua non* of WE scholarship.

Seidlhofer extends her new perspective on English as a language to its teaching as a subject. The starting point is language teacher education (201), which is to be informed by insights from Widdowson (2009: 211), who she paraphrases thus: ‘Teaching is mainly a matter of guiding the process of learning by unlearning, and the actual input presented by teachers is of secondary importance’ (183). Or, put another way, learners learn ‘how to “language”, how to exploit the potential in the language for meaning making’ (189). This reconceptualization of English as a subject, says Seidlhofer, can be realized by:

[S]etting objectives that are realistic in that they both reflect the learning process and are attainable, and correspond more closely to the requirements of the majority of actual users of the language [...] the purpose of teaching becomes the development of a capability for effective use which involves the process of exploiting whatever linguistic resources are available, no matter how formally ‘defective’ (197).

Again, how these insights are new or particular to the learning of a language for the purpose of international communication remains unclear to me. Is not effective use through exploitation of one’s linguistic, strategic, socio-cultural, rhetorical, and strategic competence essential to the successful expression, interpretation, or negotiation of meaning in the context of communication in any language or variety, any register or domain? Similarly puzzling is Seidlhofer’s assertion that language teaching professionals need to be open to the fact that: ‘What is achieved, and put to use in ELF, is clearly not the English that has been *taught*, but the English that has been *learnt*’ (186, emphasis in the original). What makes ELF unique in this regard?

Seidlhofer is absolutely right in arguing for closer study of the use of English for international communication. A deeper and broader understanding of how users exploit their grammatical, strategic, sociocultural, and rhetorical resources to make meaning would give valuable insight into the dynamics of human interaction in localized as well as globalized contexts. She is also right in arguing that such an enterprise depends upon a sound conceptual basis, and if necessary, reconceptualization of established terms and long held assumptions, and perhaps even a paradigm shift. This book, in spite of its promise for such reconceptualization and its broad sweep, unfortunately has not delivered a model that is either sufficiently clear or coherent enough to successfully sustain the project Seidlhofer so passionately champions.

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RESPONSE to Berns

Reviewed by BARBARA SEIDLHOFER*

All developments in theory and practice in our field, as in any other, can benefit from critical comment. So I welcome this review, and thank the Reviews Editor of *World Englishes* (WE) for giving me the opportunity to respond.

Obviously, people read books in different ways and for different reasons, and Margie Berns clearly reads mine from a world Englishes (WE) perspective. As we know from discourse analysis, texts are inert objects that readers will always assign preferred meanings to, and this is as true of her review as it is of my book, and, of course, true also of this response to her review. I will therefore not attempt to correct the misinterpretations (in my reading of her review) that she presents after having given at the beginning a perfectly fair summary of the content of the book. It would require more space than is available for this response to address the many particular points of misconstrual and explain them as an inability or refusal to see beyond current dominant models of thinking (sometimes referred to as ‘paradigm paralysis’). I trust that readers of this journal will ultimately come to their own conclusions, and I hope that some will actually read my book and arrive at their own interpretations.

Instead, what I propose to do is to identify two main issues that Berns finds difficult to understand and re-state the objectives of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research as it has evolved particularly over the last ten years or so in the hope that I can clarify what ELF is essentially all about.

WHAT’S NEW?

Berns quotes the definition of ELF I offer at the beginning of the book and comments, ‘Readers of this journal may ask how this definition differs from one in any introductory sociolinguistics text or linguistics dictionary and, therefore, what is new here’. I do not make a claim that there is something new here, but it is customary in academic work to define one’s terms of reference, especially at the outset of a long piece of writing. What

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Berns does not mention, however, is that my definition is immediately preceded by a discussion of how ELF has actually been defined differently, and sometimes in ways that suggest that native speakers of English do not participate in ELF interactions:

While these definitions [that exclude English as a Native Language speakers (ENL)] could be said to highlight a particularly striking feature of ELF, namely that the majority of its users are not native speakers of English, it has to be remembered that of course ELF interactions include interlocutors from the Inner and Outer Circles, and take place in these contexts too, such as meetings at the United Nations headquarters in New York, tourist cruises around Sydney harbour, or academic conferences in Hyderabad. I therefore prefer to think of ELF as any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option. Due to the numbers of speakers involved worldwide, this means that ENL speakers will generally be in a minority, and their English will therefore be less and less likely to constitute the linguistic reference norm (Seidlhofer 2011: 7).

With the context restored, it is surely obvious that my purpose here is not to stake any claim for novelty but to make clear what exactly I shall be talking about in the rest of the book. In presenting a definition, I am just setting out my terms of reference.

Berns's – frustrated – quest for what is 'new' (e.g. p. 5, 8, 9) or even 'unique' (p. 9) helpfully gives me the opportunity to stress, again, that ELF research precisely does not claim that ELF is at all unique, but on the contrary that the very processes that unfold in ELF communication – such as negotiation of meaning, accommodation, creativity and playfulness, as features of any natural use of language – occur in conventionally studied languages and varieties as well, and that we are familiar with them from these studies. What ELF research does for us, however, is that it makes these pragmatic processes much easier to perceive, it brings them out into sharper relief because our perceptions are not dulled by encountering only what is expected and codified, taken-for-granted and familiar. 'Familiarity breeds contempt', the saying goes, and a fresh look at ways of communicating and the use of unconventional linguistic forms opens our eyes to underlying processes that were obscured by familiarity. As I stress in the Preface, the empirical findings I present in the book are intended 'to exemplify various phenomena and processes, and especially, to show that none of these are actually unique to ELF' (xii).

It should also be remembered that I did not write this book exclusively for *WE* readers, who are likely to have a much more open mind towards certain sociolinguistic issues than others concerned with the description and teaching of English. The readiness of many applied linguists to rethink old and tired notions of national languages and the primacy of native speaker norms has little correspondence in the currently dominant practice of English language teaching (ELT) or language education policy, as anybody familiar with the globally extremely influential general-purpose English proficiency tests and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages will be able to confirm. Even less is it the case that these normative notions are called into question in high-stakes encounters across the world such as asylum procedures, language planning, international publishing, and interpreting – where persisting with a concept of 'English' riddled by nation-language ideology often leads to issues of misunderstanding, alienation, inequity, and disenfranchisement – and, in ELT worldwide, to unimaginable numbers of unnecessarily disaffected learners. So Berns's repeated complaint along the lines '[a]gain, this is not likely new for most readers of this journal' seems rather limited in its outlook.

VARIETY AND COMMUNITY VS. VARIATION AND COMMUNICATION

It is in this area that Berns confesses to the greatest problems with *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*. She writes:

Many questions are begged here. Two crucial ones in my view are: How is it that ELF has formal properties, but is not defined in terms of these properties? How can ELF be a language, but not a variety of a language? Where does such a claim find support in any known linguistic theory?

There are actually three questions here, and the third one about linguistic theory is particularly pertinent. But let us take them in turn. A facetious answer to the first question would of course be that we might equally ask, 'How is it that a coffee pot, or a song, or a morpheme has formal properties, but is not defined in terms of these properties?' The observable existence of the formal properties of an object/entity simply does not mean that it has to be defined in terms of these properties. And Berns's second question could be seen as a variant of the first one – I do not actually say that ELF is 'a language'. The word 'language' of course occurs frequently in my book – it could hardly be otherwise since I am talking about how people communicate. However, in the linguistics literature the word is often used loosely to refer not to human language in general but to its manifestation in particular languages. But there is a crucial difference between 'language' and 'a language' that is often overlooked, and this difference is especially relevant to the study of ELF.

As I understand Berns's questions, they revolve around the theoretically most challenging part of my argument as to how ELF might be understood as language without its being a language. And it is true that this cannot be directly accounted for by any particular known 'linguistic theory'. But why should it be? Getting to grips with the complex phenomenon of global communication via ELF in our increasingly 'virtual' world calls for a broader outlook than can be provided by any one 'linguistic theory'. This is now being increasingly recognised. Mainstream sociolinguistics has been busy describing and delineating varieties, wedded as it has been to conventional (often national) notions of communities inhabiting a certain physical space and engaging in daily face-to-face contact. As the recent literature on, for example, transidiomatic practices (Jacquemet 2005), global Englishes and transcultural flows (Pennycook 2007), mobile resources (Blommaert 2010) and translanguaging practice (Canagarajah 2013) has made clear, such anachronistic notions of community, variety, competence, etc. are no longer commensurate with the way people live and communicate in today's fast-moving, mobile, technology-driven globalized world. As Pennycook (2009: 204) puts it, '[w]e need to escape from the circles, tubes and boxes based on nations that have so bedevilled world Englishes and linguistics more generally'.

This is of course more easily said than done. But first and foremost we need to strive for an understanding of the nature of communication, of how it is that people are capable of achieving communication without conforming to an encoded standard version of the language or established norms of usage. We want to know how the online exploitation of communicative resources works in a range of contexts which are of their nature inter-communal, involving people from very different linguacultural backgrounds. How do the linguistic forms they produce function to establish relationships and negotiate meaning, no matter which primary communities speakers come from? How do they manage to communicate when the medium of communication is ever 'under construction'? So the main focus of attention in ELF studies as distinct from WE is not the sociolinguistics of

of Anglo-Normans, the ‘plantation’ of English and Scottish people to Northern Ireland (*Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*. Northern Ireland), the language shift from Irish to English, and the influence of IrE on other varieties via emigration. Following chapters introduce the characteristic features of grammar (31–55), vocabulary (56–75), sounds (76–88), and pragmatics (115–138). These sections rely on examples from previous literature and corpora, such as the International Corpus of English, as well as selections from sources like message boards and email messages. Each chapter includes activities which reinforce learning (e.g. distinguishing distinctive features as in the sample sentence *The computer has died on me*) and also suggest possible avenues of linguistic field work. Ch. 6 (89–114), on fictional representations of IrE, and ch. 8 (139–151), on using corpora, introduce elements closely related to Amador-Moreno’s research. The final chapter, ‘Implications for EFL Teachers and Learners’ (152–162), suggests that the guided study of IrE can be of great benefit to students in Ireland and beyond.

This publication is generally an accessible introduction to IrE, and language variation in general. WE researchers who would like to develop their fundamental knowledge about the key issues in the study of IrE will be well served by the further reading sections. The ideas of Amador-Moreno are a good base from which to begin brainstorming and reviewing research ideas. For undergraduate and possibly postgraduate WE-informed classes, the text, activities (and suggested answers) will create an understanding of IrE by identifying the stereotypical features of ‘local’ and ‘fashionable’ speech in Dublin, for example. The fieldwork idea activities offer opportunities to clarify how these features actually operate in the locality. In this way, this book can serve as a starting point for guiding learners to examine any context, if supplemented with other resources.

Some suggestions for improvements include providing a glossary, as this book is designed to be accessible to non-linguists, and the text often discusses, without explanation, issues such as determiners and polysemy. There is an over-reliance on two writers (Patrick MacGill and Paul Howard) for the literature examples. Chapters provide rudimentary summaries only: they could benefit greatly by including notes on possible future developments. Despite these points, the book is an innovative attempt to simply present the kaleidoscopic reality of language variation in Ireland. The activities provide an impetus for interested minds to develop ideas further.

The discussion of literature, an important element of the Irish context, is welcome as other sections of the book closely align with the two other areas of focus of the International Association for World Englishes (IAWE) triad, language and pedagogy. The corpora chapter, in particular, provides a solid foundation for the learner to proceed with initial investigations. The feature chapters provide a basic overview, with enough information and suggested reading hints to enhance understanding of language variation and WE.

Amador-Moreno’s volume includes good examples and clear explanations of the defining social dynamics of English as spoken in Northern Ireland, which in turn is the subject of *Dialects of English: Irish English. Volume 1: Northern Ireland*, by Karen P. Corrigan. The six counties of Northern Ireland are politically part of the United Kingdom (UK), and separate from the twenty six counties of the Republic of Ireland. English in the latter region is the subject of a companion volume by Kallen (2013). The six Northern Ireland counties, plus 3 adjoining counties in Republic of Ireland, make up the ancient province of Ulster. Here religious affiliation is a key marker of ethnic group membership. Catholics usually hold one-island, nationalist aspirations, while Protestants generally are loyal to the UK and

prefer the separation of Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland (i.e. are unionist in their outlook). The latter are largely of Scottish heritage, who traditionally have used the socioculturally and historically distinct Ulster Scots variety. Corrigan, in addressing the debate of whether Ulster Scots is a language or a dialect, chooses to refer to it as one of the varieties of Northern Ireland. It remains mutually intelligible with other varieties of English in Northern Ireland (17). Ulster Scots is part of the linguistic ecology of Northern Ireland, along with other IrE varieties and Irish Gaelic.

Corrigan overviews research relating to distinctive phonological (29–50), morphosyntactic (51–8), and lexical/discourse features (79–103) of English in Northern Ireland, while ch. 1 (1–28) discusses the physical geography of the region and its social dynamics. Ch. 5 (104–128) discusses the linguistic ecology, factors such as demography, geography and status that potentially impact the language evolution of Irish Gaelic and Ulster Scots. Ch. 6 (132–161) provides an annotated bibliography of the literature on English in Northern Ireland, historical aspects of Northern Ireland/Ulster Scots, and the varieties' formal and functional features. The chapters that focus on the linguistic features outline the results of previous literature, as well as an analysis of a corpus of 28 speakers selected from a general sample representative of the region. The majority (20) of the speakers align to the nationalist community, while the remaining align to the unionist community. The corpus contains a sociolinguistic interview, reading text (e.g. *Comma gets a cure*), and a sentence reading task for each speaker. The latter two elements of the corpora are available online, alongside interview extracts and basic transcripts. The feature chapters also include anecdotes about the local language nuances and possible causes for miscommunication.

Overall this book provides a thorough and systematic assessment of the language situation in Northern Ireland. Selective discussions note where there is room for further investigation. Prescient thoughts are presented on innovative research, such as the application of discourse analysis techniques to sectarian conflict-related interaction (102).

The concept of linguistic ecology is comprehensively used to outline the changes in the status and use of Irish and Ulster Scots. I would like to see Mufwene's (2002) feature pool concept applied to the varieties of English used in Northern Ireland. The publication could benefit greatly by cross-referencing the linguistic feature chapters and the annotated bibliographies. Notes explaining reasons for including publications regarding the intra-dialectal divergence of prosody in Ireland and England (141), for example, should have been added under the relevant entries in the annotated bibliographies. The addition of a name index would also help researchers make connections efficiently. The dialectological approach adopted in the study fulfils the purpose of outlining general lines of variation, but can be supplemented with the results of small-scale studies, such as those conducted amongst ethnic minorities (e.g. Bangladeshis) in Northern Ireland (24). These type of studies are not highlighted enough by Corrigan, and could tell a lot more than the sociolinguistic regional surveys that Corrigan suggests (50). The recordings are a great resource, and if they could be available as mentioned in the publication (with phonetic transcriptions and ELAN text files, not currently available on the publication website), it would be a great example of how to make work freely accessible and applicable for linguistic comparison and analysis. I also suggest the addition of speakers to the corpus data to make a balanced sample, maybe using a research assistant with comfortable access to the unionist community. Regardless of these points, this publication is a much-needed in-depth review of the language situation of a region that has not yet been fully explored.

The background materials in chs. 1 and 5 offer a thorough and accessible review of the historical and cultural situations that underlie the dynamics of language variation in this region. Corrigan provides an exemplar of how WE studies can relate historical background to current developments. The depth of knowledge that underpins and informs both the three feature chapters and annotated bibliography is unrivalled: this is a one-stop publication for those beginning to review language as it is used in Northern Ireland. Those wishing to undertake further studies will encounter all the previous literature, alongside recent samples that can be referenced for initial exploratory research. The anecdotes provide a human side to the research that makes this an interesting read in itself.

With Corrigan providing specifics about Northern Ireland, and Amador-Moreno a general introduction to the language situation in all of the island, these two works give the reader clear ideas from which further explorations of language in Ireland can begin.

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