Using Critical Discourse Analysis for understanding knowledge construction in English pedagogy

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This paper makes an attempt to make a better understanding of expert-teacher interactions through an examination of discursive practices by native English speaking 'expert' and English teachers from Asia. I analyzed ten online interaction events with an aim to scrutinize the construction of knowledge and expertise among in an unfolding interaction, and looked particularly into claims of expertise, participants' positioning and identity in these virtual interactions, and any hierarchical differences in their discourses that result from the power differences between the 'expert' and the participating teachers. In order to analyze the data, I used the critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework and draw insights from critical pedagogy. The analysis shows that the 'expert', positioned as the authority of knowledge, suggested solutions to challenges that the teachers in different parts of world are facing, and also articulated his view of good pedagogical practices. The analysis also reveals that the expert's pedagogical ideologies at times compete and contrast with those of the teachers. The study, therefore, questions the effectiveness of the taken-for-granted pedagogical theories and practices from the native English speaking professionals for the teachers in the periphery countries and suggests that teachers in the receiving end need to critically evaluate appropriateness of such pedagogical practices taking consideration of the local teaching/learning contexts.

Introduction

Globalization primarily characterized by the transnational flow of economic, cultural, educational and technological ideas and materials has had a great impact on people's and society's life as a whole. English language— which is not just a neutral means of communication among societies but also the vehicle of cultural and political power—flows from centers of global cultural power into most other societies around the world whose languages and knowledge are not yet as economically and culturally valuable. In case of teaching and learning of English, globalization involves the flow of products of knowledge through channels of power in the form of learning materials, teaching methods, attitudes about what counts as legitimate knowledge, subjects in schools/universities, and so on. This global flow of knowledge in teaching of English carries with it certain ideologies about teaching theories, methods and practices from the center to the periphery, but not so much vice versa. This commodification of English has given rise to a new form of global power to some countries, particularly the USA and the UK, through worldwide ELT industry 'serving the interest of English speaking-countries as well as native speakers and native-speaking professionals' (Kumaravadivelu, 2006:13). These countries have a firm grip over textbook production (Gray, 2002), teacher education and training (Goverdhan, Nayar and Sheorey, 1999), and research on classroom pedagogy. In a similar vein, Holliday (1994) adds another point when he notes that 'almost all the internationally established literature on English language education is published in these countries which at present seem to have a virtual monopoly on received methodology (p. 12). Kumaravadivelu (2006) further argues that the English language and its center-based pedagogy carries with it its colonial form from four perspectives-- scholastic, linguistic, cultural and economic. According to him, the scholastic dimension refers to the dissemination of Western knowledge which makes the local knowledge less valuable; the linguistic dimension refers to the global spread of English and its effects on local languages and knowledge; the cultural

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dimension is concerned with how the teaching of English carries with it the culture of the English speaking countries and makes the local culture less valuable; and finally the economic aspect refers to the financial gain for the English speaking countries and their ELT professionals by the commodification of English teaching.

The countries and the people in the periphery, on the other hand, regard English as a gatekeeper and a major key to upward social and economic mobility. The fallacies that native speakers make the best teachers, textbooks written by the English speaking people are the authentic ones, and knowledge that these English native speakers produce and distribute is the legitimate one are still prevalent among the English teaching professionals in those countries. All these fallacies have given rise to a perceived importance and role of English native speakers-- which Holliday (1994) calls *native speakerism.* Holliday (1994) further argues that the teachers in the periphery countries regard native speakers as the source of pedagogical knowledge, and regard their own practice, experience and knowledge as inferior compared to the people from native English speaking countries. In this way, the role of English as a major international language in most countries in the world has seemingly served the purpose of both types of countries: the English speaking countries are serving their interest by exporting the knowledge in the form of textbooks, teaching methods, teaching professionals, teacher trainers, and several English language teaching projects and programs, and the countries in the receiving end where English is used as an additional language are prepared to consume, albeit with some appropriation and resistance (Canagarajah, 1999), that imported knowledge and consider it as a form of empowerment, democratization and globalization.

In this changing global context, the English language teaching profession has undergone a sea change over the last four decades. The variables of change can be observed almost in all aspects of English pedagogy: who teaches English, who learns English and why, the socio-political context in which English is

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taught and learnt, and the variety of English that is the target of teaching and learning. As a consequence, teacher education has become more challenging but remained with almost the same goal, i.e. to make the teachers able to do the profession (Johnson, 2006). The notion that there exist universal principles and theories of English language teaching that are applicable to all the settings in the world has been questioned and criticized by a number of scholars in applied linguistics and TESOL (Canagarajah, 2005; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Holliday, 1994; Pennycook, 1989). Theories and methods of English language teaching in the past have largely failed to address the realities that actually take place in the classroom (Johnson, 2006). There are also been concerns that the theorized body of knowledge in second language teacher education in the West (e.g. in North America and United Kingdom) have little bearing on actual classroom teaching environments in the countries of the periphery (Kumarvedevalu, 2006; Canagarajah, 2005). Rajagopalan (2005), for example, argues that expert knowledge that is produced by a bulk of research studies fails to take account of the 'specificities as well as the diversities of local environments' (p. 100) of language teaching.

Realizing that theories and methods of teaching English from the West cannot address the problems and particularities of local teaching contexts, Kumaravadivelu (2006) has laid down a number of principles that characterize the post-method pedagogy arguing for an urgent need to localize the teaching of English. He further specifies his perspectives by using three parameters of pedagogy: parameter of particularity, practicality and possibility. According to him, the parameter of particularity 'seeks to facilitate the advancement of a context-sensitive, location-specific pedagogy that is based on a true understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural and political particularities' (p. 21). The parameter of practicality focuses on the relation between theory and practice- 'encouraging teachers to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize' (p. 21) and the parameter of possibility 'seeks to tap the sociopolitical consciousness that students bring with them to the classroom so

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that it can function as a catalyst for a continual quest for identity formation and social transformation' (p. 21). His point has raised a number of challenging but useful issues, but it is yet to be seen how the research and English teaching profession reacts to the diverse pedagogic contexts having multiple challenges: under-resourced settings, untrained teachers, lack of professionalism, etc.

Nevertheless, there is little doubt that in second/foreign language teaching, acquisition of pedagogical skills and knowledge plays an important role to meet the goals of language teaching programs. Perhaps it is less contested that one way to acquire pedagogical knowledge by the teachers is to learn from the people who know more about the field, have more years of research and teaching experience and can articulate their theoretical and practical knowledge while interacting with other people. Therefore, only by closely examining their discursive practices we can reveal how the expert-generated pedagogical suggestions are understood and received by the practitioners. Critical discourse analysis offers useful analytical tools in examining these practices.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis sees discourses as constructed as well as constitutive (Fairclough, 1992). The principal aim of CDA is to 'analyze opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language' (Wodak, 1995: 204). CDA, therefore, moves beyond explanation and uncovers inequalities in power relations that have a bearing on knowledge production, distribution, and consumption (Fairclough, 1992; 1995a). CDA has been used to study how discourse is constructed and shaped by power relations and ideologies, and 'constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge and belief' (Fairclough, 1992: 12). Foucault, who has had a great influence on Fairclough's understanding and theorizing of CDA, considers discursive practices as constitutive of knowledge and the

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condition for transformation of the knowledge (1972). He regards knowledge essentially a result of 'a particular discursive practice' (p. 183), and that knowledge is put to work in particular institutional settings through those discursive practices (Hall, 2001). Because Faucoult's theory is abstract and does not provide any analytical framework and tools for analyzing the data, I only draw insights from his perspective on knowledge and its social representation that 'discourse constitutes the objects of knowledge, social subjects and forms of self, social relationships, and conceptual frameworks' (Foucault, 1972, quoted from Fairclough, 1992). In addition, Fairclough's (2001) tool kits to analyze the data are the basis for studying the text and its connection to larger discourse and social practice levels.

The study

The study is based on synchronous online conversations between an ELT 'expert' from a native speaking country and other participating teachers from several places in the world (majority are from the Asian countries-- e.g. China, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, etc.). This online interaction took place usually once a month (on every second Tuesday), and each session lasted approximately for one hour. In a typical interaction, English teachers from around the world would ask questions to the expert, and s/he is supposed to answer them.

For the purpose of this paper, I examined approximately ten interaction events, each event lasting approximately one hour. The typical interaction followed a set pattern. The topic for discussion was already announced by the expert in consultation with the teachers, and the Webchat Moderator informed everybody that the discussion formally began. Daniel (pseudonym), the 'expert' then greeted everybody and expressed his pleasure. He started answering the previously submitted questions (if any), and then the participants would start asking questions that were mostly related to the day's theme. The number of participants varied, fluctuating from ten

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to fifteen in each event. There were three to five participants that took part consistently in almost every event. Most participants introduced themselves with their name and country when they joined the interaction, but some participants remained anonymous throughout. The data, however, shows that in course of interaction the participants' identity was sometimes revealed with their use of such phrases as 'in our Indonesian context', or 'Indian students' or 'in my school in Thailand'.

I aim to address the following questions here:
1. What discourses are present in interactions that establish the 'expert' authority and construct 'expert' forms of knowledge?
2. How do the participants position and identify themselves in the discursive practices of knowledge construction, distribution and consumption?
3. What conflicting discourses can be observed in interactions, and how do they circulate among the teacher participants? Alternatively, are there counter-discourses to 'expert' suggestions?

Analysis

I present my analysis in the same order of the research questions.

Discursive construction of knowledge

To investigate how the knowledge is constructed and distributed via discursive practices the interaction data were examined paying particular attention to the text that the expert produced. The most frequent sentences that establish the expert's authority of knowledge were his positioning of himself as an answerer of the questions that the participating teachers asked. The following extract, where the teacher's posting is directed to Daniel, can exemplify this:

Excerpt 1: Unified teaching method

1   Naimat: Don't you feel a there is a major difference in Asian Pacific English learners

2   & South East Asian English Learner & Spanish origin English Learner. Do you

3   think a Unified teaching method could help them out?

4   Daniel: There is an Asian English that is beginning to pop up. Actually it is slightly

5   different in each country: Chinese-English, Indonesian-English, etc. This is a natural

6   occurrence. But there is not a real difference in learners themselves. The difference

7   in learning English is how different their language is to English. Because some

8   speakers of some languages have problems with sounds in English that other

9   speakers of other languages don't. Also, some speakers of some languages have

10   problems with some grammar that is different from their language.

This excerpt is an example of how a teacher asks a question to the expert and the expert responds to this question. Here, the questioner is asking whether the expert thinks there is a major difference between English language learners from different parts of the world who have different local languages and cultures. Daniel asserts that there is no real difference in learners themselves, but the nature of each problem varies depending on where and which language background the learner comes from. How does he know this answer? There is no obvious indication in the discourses that Daniel refers to the source. Foucault's (1972) theory on knowledge construction provides insights on how the discourses produce knowledge and meaning through the use of language. The expert, because of his possession of power, has the authority to establish his claims as knowledge through the discourses he uses. In a similar vein, Fairclough (2001) also believes that use of an 'interrogative' sentence by the questioner is an indication that the teacher in the particular context does not know a certain form of knowledge which the answerer supposedly knows. This reflects an asymmetrical power relation between the provider and consumer of information or knowledge

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Daniel uses several other ways to establish his claim of authority of the knowledge. The following excerpt shows another technique that is used by him:

Excerpt 2: Early age like 5 or 6

1   Saida: Teaching English as a second language, is it better to be at early age like 5 or 6 or
2   keep it later for students?
3   Daniel: Saida, this is really a hot topic in the field of teaching foreign languages. There
4   are arguments for both sides.
5   Wang: The most successful language learners are more often the self motivated, more
6   reactive and risk-taking in trying out new languages
7   Daniel: Wang, you are correct. The more engaged and active learners are generally the
8   most successful.
9   Saida: That's right motivation is number one key to learning any language
10 Wang: I would say it's a good idea to expose kids as young as 5 to English, to get them
11   interested, engaged through a variety of means appropriate to their age and
12   knowledge such as jazz chants, rhythms, dramas.
13 Daniel: If you are teaching very young learners, be sure you are teaching appropriate
14   vocabulary. That is, according to Piaget and Vygotsky and others, teach more concrete
15   vocabulary and not abstract words.

In the above excerpt, the discourse unfolds as the participants talk about appropriate age level to teach English, and an effective way to introduce them the new vocabulary items. Here the participating teachers also show some degree of knowledge about motivation, appropriate age, and type of exposure for the students. In order to legitimize knowledge that he is establishing and distributing, Daniel cites the sources of Piaget and Vygotsky in line 14 from cognitive psychology, based on Piaget's developmental theory of mental schemata and its interaction with the outside world, and Vygotsky's principle of zone of proximal development where the gap between the learner's previous knowledge and new knowledge is bridged by

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an assistance from community interactions with teachers, parents and peers. This is another feature that Daniel uses to establish the credibility of the knowledge he is constructing; this is similar to the Fairclough's (1995) notion of *interdiscursivity*-- how new discursive practices build on and draw from the existing conventions and texts. In this particular case, Daniel does not explain the learning theories of Piaget and Vygotsky; he instead assumes a shared knowledge with the participating teachers. This response comes after Wang's mentioning of 'jazz chants' 'rhymes', and 'dramas', which are buzzwords in TESOL. Wang shows familiarity with the Western, particularly the North American, pedagogical practices indicating her awareness regarding the use of 'jazz chants' specifically, regardless of her judgment of the contextual appropriateness and age of the target language learners. Daniel very cautiously cites these two cognitive psychologists in order to legitimize and defend his claim.

Excerpt 3: Hurting works well for me

1 **Valsa**: In spoken language, is it appropriate for the teacher to correct the students as and

2   when they commit mistakes or at the end of the conversation/ Should it be done in

3   open class so that other students also learn from it or should it be done in private?

4 **Dzung**:   Hi Hela, It worked to me when my teachers hurt me a bit. So hurting works well to me

5 **Chen**:   Thanks. My students say that they do not mind red color, either. Maybe they are used to it

6 **Daniel**: Valsa**,** in correcting spoken language, I usually only interrupt with a correction

7   if the mistake interferes with communication or misleads the audience.

8   Otherwise, I save the correction for afterwards.
            ((some lines deleted))

9 **Daniel**: Regarding making mistakes, I often tell my students that most native speakers

10   make mistakes often. I have them consider their own use of their native

11   language. This seems to relax them.

Quite different from the previous two excerpts, Daniel here cites his own personal experience of correcting errors. He does

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not assert his authority of knowledge as what is the best practice and what others 'should' do; instead he shares with others what he does. Part of the reason he uses his personal experience is motivated by the discourses that the previous participants have used: all of them have used their personal experiences. The implication he draws from his experience is that only the errors that impede communication seriously are to be corrected immediately. That becomes knowledge for other interacting teachers. Similarly in the second move, Daniel establishes that mistakes are not only common among foreign English language learners, but also are the unavoidable part of native speakers. Daniel from his experience knows who makes mistakes and who does not. By establishing this knowledge, Daniel seems to regard the second/foreign language speakers of English as legitimate speakers of that language by comparing them with the native speakers. Moreover, his evaluative words like 'most' to show superlative degree, 'often' to show higher frequency in line 9 seem to make his assertions more true in terms of degree of validity. Because he further does not explain this, his last move can also be interpreted as a teacher's strategy to help the learners build confidence in using language by comparing them with the native speakers of English.

Excerpt 4: Difficult tasks for motivating learners

1 **Ana:** In our country, Uruguay, one of the most difficult tasks has been to motivate

2   teenagers to achieve higher academic goals. What do you recommend?

3 **Daniel:** Ana, your question is a good one. Many folks have asked about motivating

4   teenagers. This seems to be the hardest group to motivate, doesn't it? Maybe that is

5   because they are often more interested in other things than being in a classroom. I

6   think that the key word here is INTEREST. Interest is a major factor in

7   motivation of any kind. I think that we need to select topics and activities that will

8   interest the young people we are teaching.

The questioner from Uruguay is very specific in asking questions, i.e. the question asks for a recommendation for motivating teenagers in Uruguay. Use of hedging as part of display of epistemic stance of the speaker is also one of the strategies to show some degree of knowledge in discursive moves. Daniel here is not sure what works and what does not work. He, however, is supposed to answer the questions in some form of recommendation. Epistemic words like 'may be' in line 4 and 'I think' in lines 6 and 7 are also of ideological interest because they play an important role in authenticity claims or claims to knowledge (Fairclough, 2001), though in a weaker degree in a more implicit way.

Positioning and identity of the participants

The positioning and identity of the participants in these discursive events are mostly influenced by the roles given to them in this particular interaction context because the homepage for the discussion itself identifies Daniel as the English language teaching expert and other people who enter the chatroom are supposedly the teachers who have questions regarding their teaching of English. The following excerpt exemplifies this:

Excerpt 5: Words should not be taught in isolation
1 **Naimat**: What are the do's & don'ts of building our vocabulary? Can you brief?
2 **Daniel**: Dos and Don'ts, that is a good question. Some of the Dos I have just explained.
3 You also need to let the students know which words are to be known for their
4 active vocabulary and which are for their passive vocabulary. Not all words need
5 to be learned for active vocabulary. But you should remember which you say is for which
6 vocabulary. Words should not be taught in isolation.
7 When I was in high school and university, our language
8 teachers made us memorize long lists of words. Most of which were not for an
9 active vocabulary. We had to try and find our own hooks, but it was difficult
10 because we did not always understand the real use of the words.

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11 **Hamid**: How many times do we need to expose the learners to the
   new vocabularies
12   before they internalise them?
13 **Daniel**: Hamid, that's a good question. It's not just exposure that
   needs to happen, but is   actual
14   use of the words that needs to happen. One theory is that a person
   needs to use a word at
15   least five times within a day to internalize it.

In the above excerpt, the questioner, Hamid, positions himself
as a consumer of knowledge in a knowledge construction chain.
The questioner's and answerer's positioning of themselves
establishes the fact who possesses knowledge and who does not
(Fairclough, 2001). Because Daniel is supposed to provide the
answer asked to him, his pre-positioned larger socio-cultural
identity as 'knowledge possessor' conforms to his role as a
'knower' and 'answer provider' in this particular micro-
discursive event too. Daniel uses various linguistic devices to
establish himself as the authority of the claim he makes.
Fairclough (2001) argues that use of a typical interrogative
sentence in line 1 by Naimat is an example of who seeks
information and knowledge (p. 105). Similarly, Declarative
sentence as in line 13**)** reflects who is in the position of a
provider of knowledge and information (p.105).

Daniel's frequent use of modals like 'need to' in lines 3 and 4,
and 'should' in lines 5 and 6 expresses the speaker's relational
modality as well as the expressive modality. *Relational
modality* is concerned with the authority of one participant in
relation to others while *expressive modality* is a matter of the
speaker's authority with respect to the truth and knowledge
(Fairclough, 2001:105). Fairclough believes that this use of
models represents the implicit authority claims and implicit
power relations 'that make relational modality a matter of
ideological interest' (p. 106). The data also reveal that Daniel is
strategically positioning himself as the 'knower' of theoretical
knowledge by making a reference to a theory saying 'one
theory is that…' in line 14— this is another important discourse
practice in establishing credibility the knowledge. The

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following excerpt exemplifies another role that Daniel and other teachers play.

Excerpt 6: Materials that are used in real life are authentic

1 **Daniel:** There are several issues concerning authentic materials. The first is the definition.
2   What are authentic materials? According to Dr. Patricia Dunkel, anything that has been
3   taken out of context or out of the reason for the communication is no longer authentic,
4   but is authentic like. What do you think?
5 **Kun:**   They are materials that are used in the real life, like newspaper, magazines, brochures,
6   and the others, right? Materials that are not adapted yet into the classroom use?
7 **Daniel:** Yes, Kun. Newspapers and magazines and books and brochures are all examples of
8   materials that would be authentic.
9 **Daniel:** What about things like radio broadcasts, tv sitcoms, and movies?
10 **Daniel:** I think that even using Dr. Dunkel's definition these are still authentic materials and not
11   just authentic-like.
12 **Daniel:** These are great resources for using in the classroom to get the sounds of English
13   and help with listening comprehension.
14 **Kun:**   What about transcript of a radio broadcast? Also TV?
15 **Daniel:**   This would be authentic-like because you are not using it in its original form. But the
16   scripts are excellent resources for students.
17 **Daniel:** I had a teacher once ask me in a workshop if realia is considered authentic
18   material. How would you reply to that?
19 **Nina:**   Or the students especially EFL students can use authentic materials that are only
20   unique in their culture and describe those materials in English.
21 **Daniel:** That is an excellent thought, Nina.
22 **Daniel:** Authentic material does not have to be just from native speakers, does it?
23 **Nina:**   I would consider realia to be authentic materials.
24 **Nina:**   The idea, I believe, is to have something real to practice their English skills in class.
25 **Ping:**   Authentic communication seems to me the real communication with a real purpose. So I
26   think non-native speakers in ESL setting talk in English outside their class is also

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27   authentic communication.
28   **Daniel:** Daniel Anderson (Submitted question): I agree with Ping. So, we are talking
29   about two things, but are combining them into one item: authentic materials and
30   authentic communication. Should we combine them or separate them?

In this particular excerpt, Daniel and other teacher-participants position themselves with several different roles. The expert here does not only construct and transfer the knowledge, but he also legitimizes other's knowledge by establishing it either valid or not. In Kun's question in lines 5 and 6 about what qualifies an authentic material, Daniel attests Kun's knowledge as valid saying that all books and newspapers count as authentic material in an English classroom. Because knowledge and power are inexorably intertwined (Foucault, 1980), these macro-level discursive phenomena are apparent in the discursive moves and formulas that the participants use in each event. Daniel, because he possesses knowledge, has the authority to decide what authentic and non-authentic materials are. This becomes obvious when he says that authentic materials do not have to be from native speakers only. In line 11, Daniel cites Dr. Patricia Dunkel's definition for authentic materials, and the other teachers take these definitions for granted. No question, however, is raised by the expert or the teachers about the 'relevance' of those materials in their context-specific teaching. As explained earlier, the pre-given identity of the expert is to answer the questions that are being asked to him; he however possesses the authority to ask questions and test other's knowledge too (e.g. he asks a question as 'How do you reply to that'? in line 19). Hence, it is evident that the purpose of asking questions by the 'expert' to other participating teachers is different from the purpose the teachers asking questions to the expert. Asking such questions by the expert reflects his 'position of power' (Fairclough, 2001:105) in this context.

In the given discursive event, the participating teachers do not only ask questions; they do actively take part in displaying their

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knowledge, and also answer the questions that the expert asks them. Micro-interactional settings provide the participants an opportunity to set a stage for them for multiple positionings and identities which can be different from their pre-existent identities of, for example, 'knowledge-consumers'. Georgakopoulou (2006) labels these local here-and-now identities as small identities. For example, Kun in lines 6 and 7 does not ask a question for a definite answer, but she wants to display her knowledge and wants to get confirmed by the expert. The participant-teachers (Kun, Nina, and Ping) several times demonstrate their knowledge providing their perspectives and judgment on authentic materials. Interestingly, Ping's argument to see non-native speakers' conversations as authentic teaching material provides a counter discourse to *native speakerism* (Holliday, 1994). Again it is Daniel who positions himself as the 'legitimizer' of Ping's idea on non-native speaker communications.

Conflicting (hegemonic?) discourses

Unequal power relations and ideologies can be naturalized through discursive practices, and such hegemonic practices are accepted without questions (Fairclough, 1995). In most of the interactions in the data, I observed that the pre-positioned identities of the expert and other participant-teachers provide them with different degree of authority in power and knowledge scale. As a possessor of power and knowledge, the expert exerts control over how the discourse develops. For example, in the beginning of the discursive event, he announces that the discussion formally begins, asks the participants that they can ask questions related to the topic, decides whether some question is related to the topic and is thus relevant to the ongoing discussion, asks questions for clarification and confirmation whether they have understood, switches to a next topic, elicits a possible topic of discussion for the next event, and finally announces the conclusion of the chat session. All these hegemonic practices are part of the natural processes of discursive practices, which are also accepted by both the parties. In such interactions where power asymmetry exists, the

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'more powerful participant [puts] constraints on the less powerful participants' (Fairclough, 2001:113) in a number ways. Fairclough (ibid.) mentions four major ways among others: interruption, enforcing explicitness, controlling topic, and formulation. The following examples help to illustrate this.

Excerpt 7: We are talking about two things

1 Daniel : We just had two comments regarding a positive effect of 'hurting' the students.

2 What do you all think about this?
      ((some lines deleted))

3 Daniel: This topic came from one of you during the last discussion. Do any of you have a

4   suggestion for our next topic for October?
      ((some lines deleted))

5 Daniel: I agree with Ping. So, we are talking about two things, but are combining them

6   into one item: authentic materials and authentic communication. Should we

7   combine them or separate them?

Because the discussion among the participants was online, 'interruptions' by the 'expert' were not observed. The above moves by Daniel in three different events show how the power imbalance among the participants gives more authority to the 'expert'. Daniel as a more powerful person in the event enforces explicitness by asking a question (What do you all think about this?), elicits topic from the participants in line 3 and also summarizes what has already been said in line 5. This summarizing or rewording is referred to as 'formulation' after Fairclough (2001:113).

A critical look at the discourses produced by the expert and the participating teachers carry different ideologies, and the expert's answers do not always address the context-specific pedagogical issues that the local teachers bring. I exemplify this through the following example:

Excerpt 8: We have songs

1 **Huang**: Hello! Everyone! I'm very excited to see what we're going to talk about

2   motivation today. My question is: can motivation be taught?

3 **Daniel**: Huang has asked a great question. I don't think it can be taught. It is something

4   that is attached to a person at an emotional level. However, you can teach

5   emotional control, which could be a kind of motivational training.

6 **Nina**:   How can we motivate our students when we have very little EFL learning resources

7   to make students interested in learning?

8 **Daniel:**   Nina, I think we have a tremendous amount of learning resources to work with.

9   We have the students' minds and imaginations. We have the Internet. We have

10   newspapers and magazines. We have songs.

11 **Daniel**: There is much out there for teachers to work with. But most importantly, try

12   getting topics and information from the students. Get them to bring in the

13   resources for us to work with in the classroom.

14 **Nina:**   So the teachers just have to be creative and invite students to be involved in

15   making the learning fun and motivating.

16 **Daniel**: In order to draw more on intrinsic motivation, I agree with you Nina. For

17   extrinsic motivation, we need to bring in the resources we think are appropriate.

18 **Kun:** I agree that the key point for motivating teenagers is interest. And one of the

19   things to make them interested in something is that we come down into their

20   world rather than taking them into our world. What do you think?

21 **Daniel**: Kun, you are right. But we don't need to think of it as coming DOWN to them,

22   But rather engaging them in their world of interest. We don't want them to think

23   we feel like we are condescending to them.

24 **Kun:**   The internet is a very rich resource, especially for teenagers.

25 **Hoang:** How can we teach emotional control then?

26 **Daniel**: Hoang, this is a great question.

27 **Hoang**: Daniel, we don't 'teach' motivation, but we can inspire, can we?

28 **Daniel:** Yes, we inspire them. We give them a feeling of success. They can only feel

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29 success when they have a goal and see themselves reaching that
     goal. This is
30 why it is important for students to know our goals and what it
     means to be
31 successful. That is why I like to use rubrics whenever I give a task
     or an
32   assignment.
33 **Milly**:   Hi, This is Milly from Macao. Daniel mentioned to have
     students to bring in
34   the resources.   But they believe it is the responsibility of the
     teachers, not them.
35 Moreover, some students tell me there are so much info on the
     Internet right
36 now that they can copy and paste when needed. With regard to
     speaking, since
37 Macao is still very much a Chinese-dominated economy, many still
     do not sense
38 the urgent need to have good English now - and they may rush to
     intensive
39 short courses when the need arises.
40 **Daniel:** Milly, good points. Why are they learning English? That is
     the key question and
41 the right answer will be motivational to them if it is meaningful to
     them.

Discursive practices always involve some degree of 'ideological diversity, and indeed conflict and struggle, so that ideological uniformity is never completely achieved' (Fairclough, 2001:71). In pedagogic practices also when there are two or more ideologies on what constitutes a good teaching practice, there are conflicting and competing discourses. Critical discourse analysis makes these discourses apparent. In the excerpt above about 'motivating the students', we can trace the articulation of teacher-centered pedagogy by the participating teachers which contrasts greatly with Daniel's articulation of learner autonomy and student-centered teaching. For example, in lines 6 and 7, Nina regards teacher's role prominent using such phrases as 'we motivate our students', 'to make students interested in learning', and in lines 14 and 15 she further asserts that 'teachers have to be creative', 'they have to involve the learners', and 'make learning interesting and fun' while giving little attention to the student roles for their own motivation and learning. Daniel, on the other hand, emphasizes

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the students' principal role in their motivation and learning in lines 12 and 13. Again in lines 19 and 20, Kun thinks that it is the teacher that has to be responsible for student learning and gives the teacher the 'agency' role for student motivation. Daniel immediately opposes that and reiterates that 'students must be engaged in their own world of interest (lines 21 and 22). The teacher-fronted and student-centered teaching practices become more obvious when Milly brings the case of Macao where students think that teachers have the responsibility to bring in the resources for teaching and learning. Milly's use of 'but' in line 33 shows a contrast with Daniel's view of giving the students an agency over their own learning.   Fairclough (2001) believes that use of logical connectors like 'but' show the difference in ideology that produces competing discourses. Daniel's emphasis to use internet resources in lines 9 and 10 as materials for teaching/learning purposes can be looked critically from two points in this particular. First, Daniel's response is supposed to answer Nina's pedagogical question in an EFL setting, but he does not ask Nina if Internet is easily available and if that can be used for classroom purposes, and if the Internet use is relevant and culturally appropriate in that context. Rather the answer comes in a prescriptive way, without taking account of the local constraints, that the teachers can make use of the Internet as a resource for students. Daniel's suggestion becomes more questionable when Milly mentions the problem of student plagiarism-- a Western concept for academic writing-- which Daniel had not thought of before.   The implication is that language teaching principles and practices have to be contextualized according to the realities and constraints of a particular setting-- a point which Kumaravadevalu (2006) recognizes as a 'parameter of practicality'. All these phenomena cannot be adequately explained from this micro-analysis of the data because they relate to larger 'social practice' and require 'explanation'-- 'the relation between interaction and social context' (Fairclough, 2001:22). These articulations of teachers' beliefs on motivating learners also reflect two broad branches of the English language teaching

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profession mostly prevalent in Native English speaking countries and Asian countries where English is used for a limited purpose, and teacher's adoption of particular 'methodologies is influenced by non-pedagogic factors generated by the politics of the professional-academic culture' (Holliday, 1994:91).

The following excerpt helps us to understand how Daniel addresses specific pedagogical questions.

Excerpt 9: Listen to VOA

1 **Gabriel:** Military language instructor--Is there any specific strategy to deal with students
2   who overestimate themselves and take for granted their peers?
3 **Daniel:** Gabriel, this is a classroom management question. Yes, do group work and put them in
4   groups where they will be challenged and not always dominating some
5   of the more quiet students.
6 **Niry:** Teacher's Resource Center -- How to help students in a French speaking country to
7   speak English fluently
8 **Daniel:**Niry, reading, listening and lots of speaking practice. Listen to radio (VOA for
9   example), songs, movies. Read novels and short stories.
10   Practice with anyone you can.
11 **Niry:**   Teacher's Resource Center Tamatave1 - How to meet peoples' different learning
12   styles in a large class?
13 **Daniel:** Niry, try using a lot of group work, and vary the activities. Teach one or two
14   things, but vary the activities you use to teach those things. Have some visual
15   aids, some oral/aural activities, and have some experiential activities where
16   students can try and use the new items.
17 **Binvenu:** As teachers, we have the obligation to comply with the curriculum, but in the
18   same time, we would like to have our learners get a good command of the
19   language. What kind of advices do you have for a teacher to
20   balance these concerns.
21 **Daniel:** There should not be a conflict. The problem comes when the curriculum is too

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22   staked and there is not enough time to even get through the
      curriculum. In that
23   case, set priorities and teach what are the highest priorities, giving
      students the
24   time to explore those things.
25 **Benvenu:** Many documents are considering Internet as a tool for
      English teaching and
26   learning. But wonder if this could be true in a developing country
      where there is
27   no lab in schools
28 **Daniel:**   You don't need language labs to learn a language. But if
      you have a computer
29   with speakers and a microphone, you can use it like a lab. The
      answer is yes.

Fairclough (1992) believes that hegemonic practices and hegemonic struggles take the form of discursive practice. In this particular discursive event where the participant-teachers ask questions to the expert, his answers to these questions embody certain ideologies of him expressed in terms of his knowledge and belief systems, his positions and his relationship with others. In a series of questions asked to the expert, the participant-teachers get prompt replies on what they can do for a particular problem or challenge related to the teaching of English. In the first question by Gabriel (lines 1, 2 and 3), for example, the Daniel does not ask the questioner for clarification or example on what the question really meant; rather the answer comes in the form of a declarative sentence first then in the form of an imperative sentence. The same pattern of asking and answering questions repeats over other discursive turns. Neither the questioner asks for further clarification, or makes a value judgment of the expert's suggestion focusing on whether this expert's response really answers his question, and whether he can apply those ideas in his classroom, nor does the answerer make a follow-up question on whether this answer makes a sense for the questioner. In such unequal power relations, less powerful people often show alignment with the more powerful ones, taking the form of conversation as natural. Similarly, regarding the last question dealing with the lab (lines 25 to 29), the expert does not ask further whether these developing

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countries have computers or the internet at all in schools; the answer instead comes as a direct piece of advice.

A critical look at the exchanges in the above excerpt shows that there is hardly any evidence that the expert's answers to teachers' question can solve the practical problems that the teachers are facing in their classroom. Most of the questions asked above bring local issues regarding the teaching of English; the responses, however, come as if there are some universally applicable principles and techniques in classroom pedagogy. Most responses are in the form of imperative sentences issuing a 'suggestion' or a 'command'. This again reflects who has the knowledge so that s/he can provide suggestions, and who uses those suggestions (Fairclough, 2001). There is little recognition of local constraints. When Daniel in line 21 says-- There should not be a conflict-- he does not really realize the contextual challenge the teachers are facing while teaching English. This particular example again is an evidence that teaching of English has to be localized in a way that is appropriate to a particular socio-political setting.

Concluding remarks

This study aimed to raise meta-awareness of English professionals by critically examining the discursive practices of native speaker of English and the practicing teachers in countries where English is used for limited purposes. This particular example of globalization of public discourse (Fairclough, 1995b) supposedly targets to empower and promote independence in English teachers by learning from the native speaking English 'expert'. The discourses between the expert and the teacher-participants, however, show that the interactions between them do not simply involve the neutral transfer of skills, knowledge and competencies, but also reflect the transmission of particular ideologies- beliefs, values, and assumptions- through these global channels.

Because English will continue to spread and occupy more prominent roles in this globalized world, only the contextually

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relevant pedagogy can address location-specific issues and challenges. Because every culture of pedagogy is unique in terms of students, teachers, mode of teaching, philosophy of teaching, and courses and curricula (Holliday, 1994), only the pedagogy that is 'responsive to the lived experiences of learners and teachers, and to the local exigencies of learning and teaching' (Kumaravidevalu, 2006: 21) can provide a possible way to face the emerging pedagogical challenges. The resolution of the conflict that results from the 'collision' of the global teaching methods with local teaching cultures 'should involve a call for local teachers to work out their own solutions, appropriating what they deem suitable from without, while relying on home-grown strategies that have ecological validity' (Block, 2008:40). The last excerpt in the study is a successful example of how the local teachers can interact and learn from each other. The future research in this area should focus on how the local teachers can theorize their pedagogical practices that reflect and address the context-sensitive needs and issues.

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