

‘ELT for a Global World’

Changing English in a changing world

Unit 14

The future of English Topics for student research

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Task

Home assignment (+ Slides 3-4):

1. How does Crystal envisage the future of English?
2. Do you agree with Crystal?
3. Who else among the authors quoted below endorses Crystal's view?

The future of English

- Emergence of new Englishes:

“... raises the sceptre of fragmentation – the eventual dissolution of English into a range of mutually unintelligible languages (as happened when Latin gave rise to various Romance languages, such as French, Spanish, and Italian, over 1,000 years ago).”

(Crystal, 1997, p. 134)

The future of English

- Achebe (as cited in Crystal, 1997, p. 136)

“The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience ...”

The future of English

- Crystal (1997)
 - a new form of English to arise: World Standard Spoken English (WSSE)
 - US rather than UK English

The future of English

- Crystal

“In a future where there were many national Englishes, little would change. People would still have their dialects for use within their own country, but when the need came to communicate with people from other countries they would slip into WSSE.”

(Crystal, 1997, p. 137)

The future of English

- Crystal:

“The concept of WSSE does not replace a national dialect: it supplements it. People who can use both are in a much more powerful position than people who can only use one. They have a dialect in which they can continue to express their national identity; and they have a dialect which can guarantee international intelligibility, when they need it.”

(Crystal, 1997, p. 138)

The future of English

- McArthur (2001)

“... it seems likely that it will be a valued dimension in whatever World Standard Spoken English (...) is likely to emerge in the near future, or (as he and I both consider to be the case) the kind that is already increasingly available internationally, despite all the vagaries of speech.” (p. 11)

Task

Class discussion:

1. How is register defined by laypeople and by applied linguists? Give examples of register.
2. What is the difference between register and genre?
3. According to Widdowson (Slides 10-17), which one of the two can hold English together and how?

The future of English

- Widdowson

“We should, [...], expect that English will divide up into different languages in the natural evolutionary process just as others have done in the past, quite simply because it is the very virtual nature of language to do so. As French and Italian develop from Latin, so Ghanaian and Nigerian develop out of English.”

(Widdowson, 1997, p. 142)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“But we also need English as an international language for global communication. [...] Does it not mean that there must be some custodians of the common code to keep it global, to regulate, legislate, set the standard?”

(Widdowson, 1997, p. 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“So one way of resolving our dilemma is to let English diversify into kinds of independent dialect, but keep it in place as a range of registers. Speciation in the one case is counterbalanced by specialization in the other.”

(Widdowson, 1997, 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“Registers relate to domains of use, to areas of knowledge and expertise which cross national boundaries and are global of their very nature.”

(Widdowson, 1997, p. 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

Communities:

“not local ones which we belong to by upbringing, the shared socio-cultural experience of everyday life, usually mediated through the spoken language. They are global communities which we have to qualify to belong to through the secondary socialization of education and training, involving a heavy investment in the written language. They are defined not by experience but expertise.” (Widdowson, 1997, p. 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“And learning to become members of these communities necessarily involves learning the variety of language, the register, which has become established as conventional for their communication.”

(Widdowson, 1997, p. 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“... change is naturally and endonormatively controlled from within by the requirements of communication across the international community of its specialist users.”

(Widdowson, 1997, p. 143)

The future of English

- Widdowson

“It follows from this that registers will regulate themselves in the interests of global communication. There is no need of native-speaker custodians (...).”

(Widdowson, 1997, pp. 143-4)

The future of English

- Trudgill (Inner Circle)

English lexis: convergence (← Americanisation of English)

English phonology: divergence

English grammar: change takes place more slowly

(based on Trudgill (1998) in Jenkins, 2009, pp. 100-1)

The future of English

- Graddol

“At one time, the most important question regarding global English seemed to be ‘will US English or British English provide the world model?’ Already that question is looking dated with the emergence of ‘New Englishes’, and dictionaries and grammars that codify new norms.”

(Graddol 1999 as cited in Jenkins, 2009, p. 101)

The future of English

- Graddol (2006)

“We are entering a phase of global English which is less glamorous, less news-worthy, and further from the leading edge of exciting ideas. It is the ‘implementation stage’, which will shape future identities, economies and cultures. The way this stage is managed could determine the futures of several generations.”

Task

Class discussion:

The future of English

1. Who do you think has put forward the most likely scenario?
2. How do you envisage the future of English?

Student research

Slides 22-28:

Suggested topics for student research

Student research

- Library research/argumentative essays:

Can language laws/civil movements stop the spread/dominance of English?

Standard English/Received Pronunciation: a thing of the past?

Will English fragment into mutually unintelligible varieties like Latin?

Is the native speaker obsolete?

Student research

- Library research/argumentative essays:
Comparison of ELF with other lingua francas
(present and/or past)

Student research

- Data collection and analysis

Corpora:

Using corpora to solve linguistic problems

Corpora in language teaching (benefits for teachers)

Corpora in language teaching (benefits for learners)

Google in language learning/teaching

Student research

- Data collection and analysis

English in Hungary:

English in the street – linguistic landscape of an area

English in the media

English in the household (labels, instructions)

English in advertisements (written, TV)

Features of Hunglish

English borrowings in Hungarian

Student research

- Argumentative essays

Language pedagogy:

SE/RP as targets/models

The changing role and status of native/non-native speaker teachers

Raising learners' awareness of the international use and varieties of English

Testing time for testers? What norms should be adopted in language testing?

Student research

- Essay

Language pedagogy:

How to bring outside input into the classroom?

- Data collection and analysis:

Language pedagogy:

Varieties of English in the classroom

Varieties of English in coursebooks

Different accents of English in listening tasks

Student research

- Essays

Language pedagogy:

Reasons for the low level of foreign language proficiency among Hungarians

How to make foreign language education more effective in Hungary?

References

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- Jenkins, J. (2009a). *World Englishes* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- McArthur, T. (2001). World English and world Englishes: Trends, tensions, varieties and standards. *Language Teaching*, 34, 1-20.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1997). EIL, ESL, EFL: Global issues and local interests. *World Englishes*, 16(1), 135-146.