An Examination of the Theoretical Foundations of Cross-Cultural Studies through an Analysis of Cross-Cultural Research in ELT*

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❖ ABSTRACT

This paper interrogates the theoretical foundations of Cross-Cultural Studies across the Social Sciences through an examination of the field ELT. Through an examination of ELT's major theoretical and pedagogical moves, this paper illustrates how ELT is by nature a field of cross-Cultural Studies. A closer examination of the history of ELT shows how the colonial genesis of the field indicates a skewed representation of power between native English speaking nations and non-native speaking nations both in terms of academic theories and pedagogies, as well as socio-cultural relations of power. A further analysis of how the field theorizes and represents various relations of power between disparate cultures in ELT literature explicates the dilemma of the objectivity and neutrality of Cross-Cultural research in ELT. In doing so, the analyses included in this paper thus necessarily raises questions regarding the theoretical foundations of research methodologies of Cross-Cultural Studies in terms of the reflexivity of researchers and the problematic of how, or if, relations of power are included in the studies. This paper questions whether studies that do not include these research perspectives properly represent the disparate cultures under study, or are more of a biased, or Orientalized (Said, 1979) interpretation of cultures.

* This work was supported by the Incheon National University (International Cooperative) Research Grant in 2016.

Key Words
Cross-Cultural Studies, power relations, ELT, globalization, research methodology

INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural studies may be viewed as a specific academic field of study as well as theoretical concept that may be applied to many diverse academic disciplines. While the fields of anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies may be best known for cross-cultural methodologies, cross-cultural research is also practiced in a variety of fields in the humanities and social sciences such as applied linguistics, education, comparative literature, communications, business, and many other academic disciplines. Given the globalized nature of human relations, it is not surprising that cross-cultural approaches to research may be seen in most, if not all, of the social sciences. Although this may be a reasonable summation of the breadth of cross-cultural research in the social sciences, it does not signify any clear notion of what cross-cultural studies actually are as a research technique, or if there is any common understanding of what cross-cultural studies are as a field of study or research paradigm. This ambiguity regarding the nature of cross-cultural studies is problematic not only as it clear that it is multidisciplinary in nature, and therefore must have numerous approaches and conceptualizations, but also as it does not clearly infer how relations of power are understood within its research and analyses. While it is simple enough to envision a research project examining a classroom with students from two differing cultures, it is less easy to assume that the methodology employed should, or must, interrogate whether one cultural group dominates the socio-cultural context of the classroom as well as address the cultural biases of the researcher. As such, one may question whether a legitimate cross-cultural study may be ‘one-sided’, where a researcher examines a specific phenomenon of another culture, or ‘two sided’, where two cultures are examined in light of a specific

phenomenon, or if both are reflexive in nature and also examine researcher bias. In any case, none of these possibilities necessarily mandate an examination of the nature and effects of the relations of power between the cultures in question. Without an examination of power relations, it may be argued that all such studies are 'one-sided' as they must necessarily contain some forms of cultural bias (Pennycook, 2007). As such, the validity of any form of cross-cultural study is problematic if it does not address the issues of power inherent between disparate cultures being examined and the inherent cultural biases of the researcher.

The intent of this paper is to examine the nature of the relations of power in cross-cultural studies through an analysis of the field of applied linguistics. Applied linguistics may be easily viewed as cross-cultural field of study as its theoretical base focuses on the teaching of one native language and culture (L1) to a non-native group (L2). While applied linguistics is concerned with the teaching of all languages, it is well known that its base of literature is dominated by English language teaching (ELT), whether literature regards English as a second language (ESL), teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), English as a foreign language (EFL), or the many other acronyms that are used under the umbrella of applied linguistics (Pennycook). For the purposes cohesion and simplicity this paper will hereafter use the more general term of ELT. The current dominant theoretical and pedagogical paradigm in ELT is communicative language teaching (CLT) which focuses on interactive or social constructivist forms of pedagogy where the teaching of language and culture occur simultaneously (Kramsch, 1993, Savignon, 2002). As such, much of the literature base may be seen as cross-cultural in nature. However, some scholars challenge the seeming cross-cultural nature of ELT by questioning the cultural biases inherent in the field from its early history of colonialism (Pennycook, 1998) to its current connections to linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992; Canagarajah, 1999) and globalization (Giddens, 2000; Kincheloe, 2002) by specifically addressing current and historical issues of power. In addition, other scholars add to this literature by examining how issues of power also exist in the construction of L2

identity (Norton, 2006; Rampton, 2006), the ownership of English (Norton, 1997) and the pedagogical essentialization of culture in ELT pedagogy that favors specific representations of L1 and L2 cultures (Kubota, 2001). Viewed through the lens of relations of power, it is clear that the majority of research in ELT is problematic in terms of embedded cultural biases. Moreover, as ELT may be viewed as a field of study given to cross-cultural studies by its very nature, the results of this analysis raise serious questions regarding the theoretical validity of cross-cultural studies across the social sciences. This paper will examine these issues through an analysis of the theoretical and pedagogical practices of the field of ELT, the history of ELT, and how issues of power are embedded in ELT.

ELT and Cross-Cultural Studies

Cross-cultural research and pedagogy in ELT may be best understood to fall under the three separate strands of CLT, Socio-cultural theory (SCT), and critical approaches to applied linguistics. The consensus in the field of study is that CLT does not truly exist as it is an informed approach rather than a methodology (Brown, 2007). Some scholars maintain that CLT does not exist in the reality of ELT practices as local institutional and social contexts necessitate the use of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and the Audio-lingual method (ALM) as the dominant modes of instruction (Canagarajah, 1999; Brown, 2007). As such, the practice of CLT primarily exists as communicative activities applied to a GTM and ALM curriculum as an informed approach (Brown, 2007). Nonetheless, CLT is commonly viewed at the dominant theoretical and pedagogical paradigm in ELT.

The theoretical inclusion of cross-cultural aspects into ELT served as the impetus for the genesis of CLT. Hymes' (1967) seminal paper entitled *Why the Linguist Needs the Sociologist* theorized the necessity for the inclusion of social theories of language into linguistics by showing that linguistic utterances depended on social contexts for the signification of meaning. Central to Hymes theories was the concept of communicative

competence (CC), which theorized that both linguistic (grammatical and phonemic) and social competence was necessary for meaning to be shared through language. Hymes' ideas were soon adopted by ELT scholars (Canale and Swain, 1980; Savignon, 2002) who further theorized Hymes' concept of CC into the separate categories of grammatical, discourse, socio-linguistic, and strategic competencies to develop what came to be known as CLT. Of primary interest to the discussion at hand is the theorization of socio-linguistic competence which is viewed as a means of understanding the 'appropriateness' of individual utterances in terms of their socio-cultural context. This theoretical understanding not only served as the foundation of the sub-field of socio-linguistics, which may also be viewed as a cross-cultural field of study, but theorized the necessity of the understanding and inclusion of the 'target' culture into CLT theory and pedagogy. While socio-linguistics is commonly concerned with the differences in language usage, such as the regional aspects of dialects and creoles, one of the central tenets of CLT is that language is most fruitfully learned within L2 cultural contexts.

In order to fully understand why CLT may be viewed as a field of cross-cultural studies, it is necessary to examine the nature of the dichotomy between L1 and L2 cultural and linguistic contexts. To begin with, it is clear that many nations have instituted universal English education policies as part of their national curriculum for the stated purposes of facilitating the globalization of their national economies (Tollefson, 1991; Pennycook, 2007; Phillipson, 2008; Shin, 2010; NCIC, 2016). This justification for universal English education is significant as it is widely accepted by scholars that globalization is essentially the international dissemination and adoption of American forms of capitalism and cultural practices, which have also been referred to as Americanization (Giddens, 2000) and McDonaldazation (Kincheloe, 2002). The clear implication here is that American English and culture are the target language and culture of ELT. As such, ELT focuses on L2 cultural contexts to both support and facilitate the acquisition of English and American culture, which then naturally tends to focus scholarly work in such areas. Thus, much of the literature in ELT addresses

the similarity and differences between L1 and L2 cultural contexts. Perhaps the clearest indication of the cross-cultural nature of ELT may be seen in Kramsch's (1993) assertion that ELT practitioners would be better off teaching culture through language as opposed to teaching language using culture. Here Kramsch makes a strong statement on the discursive nature of language and culture as being mutually co-constructive aspects of the signification of meaning. Thus, by definition, ELT becomes a field of cross-cultural study by its very nature.

The increasing importance of SCT in ELT literature is another aspect of the field that indicates ELT's cross-cultural nature as a field of study. While the genesis of SCT is generally attributed to the social-constructivist theories of cognition contained in the works of Vygotsky (Lantolf, 2000), it also includes theories regarding the discursive nature of language, culture, and meaning within the sociology of theorists such as Foucault (1984) and Bourdieu (1991). The main idea driving SCT is that human cognition and behaviors are a product of human interactions within the social world. This not only means that language and culture are socially constructed, but that language and the functioning of social structures within societies mediates human biological and behavioral activities. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) make this point clear in their definition of SCT:

> Practically speaking, developmental processes take place through participation in cultural, linguistic, and historically formed settings such as family life and peer group interaction, and in institutional contexts like schooling, organized sports activities, and work places, to name only a few. SCT argues that while human neurobiology is a necessary condition for higher order thinking, the most important forms of human cognitive activity develop through interaction within these social and material environments. (p. 197).

Lantolf and Thorne's theorization of SCT clearly places the focus of cognition, and therefore, second language acquisition, on the social and cultural aspects of human interaction. Moreover, as the positioning of these interactions is within social and material contexts, the importance of relations

of power is implied. Thus, SCT becomes a discursive theoretical regime that views the mutually co-constructive nature between language, culture, knowledge, and power as does the sociology of Foucault (1984) and Bourdieu (1991). If SCT is a discursive field of study within ELT, it follows that as ELT is necessarily involved in the theory and practice of explicating the similarities and differences between two disparate languages and cultures, thus reinforcing the view that ELT is implicitly a cross-cultural field of study. Finally, Johnson's (1999) documentation of the increasing importance and influence of SCT in ELT clearly support the assertion that much of the literature in ELT is cross-cultural in nature.

History of ELT

The history of ELT is generally considered to consist of three theoretical moves including GTM, ALM, and CLT. While other 'designer' methods such as the Direct Method and the Silent Way became fleetingly popular over the years after WWII, GTM, ALM, and CLT are considered to be the dominant paradigms in ELT (Brown, 2007). GTM began with Britain's need to teach colonial peoples English and is considered to be the traditional method of teaching English to L2 learners. GTM primarily consists of the close reading of English literature and the linguistic studies of grammar and syntax. As such, its pedagogy focuses on the cognitive aspects of reading, translation, and the dictation of English texts (Brown, 2007). ALM was derived from the behaviorism of Skinner and was originally developed to serve the military needs for bilingual speakers during WWII (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Brown, 2007). ALM focuses on the use of pattern drills and repetitive tasks in the teaching of English. While culture was imbedded in the texts and drills used for GTM and ALM, the direct teaching of culture did not enter ELT theory and pedagogy until the genesis of CLT in the 1970's (Savignon, 2002).

The general history of ELT is significant to the discussion at hand for two reasons: it shows that meaningful engagement with other cultures occurred only within CLT and that ELT as a field of study began in

the context of colonial relations of power (Pennycook, 1998). While these two assertions may seem to be separate issues on the surface, they are actually closely related as many scholars argue that colonial relations of power began at the inception of ELT and remain embedded within ELT theory and pedagogy today (Tollefson; 1991; Pennycook; 2001, Phillipson, 2008). Furthermore, the implications of these assertions question the nature of cross-cultural studies in ELT due to the obvious inequality between former and current colonial/imperial nations and their subject nations economically, militarily, and in terms of international status. These historical analyses of ELT eventually gave rise to what has come to be known as critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001). This problematic within ELT may also be seen in the dissemination of English as an International Language (EIL) worldwide. While theories of Linguistic Imperialism tie the growth and dissemination of EIL to colonialism linguistic imperialism, and the current move towards globalization, it is not difficult to see that the international growth of English as a *lingua franca* is a product of the economic and cultural domination of the West, particularly the USA (Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 2008). The clear implication of this line of analysis is that ELT theory and pedagogy is dominated by Western thinking and practices. Thus, it also implies that cross-cultural studies within ELT that do not have a 'critical' perspective, that is they do not address issues of power in their analyses, must contain some bias in favor of the dominant power thereby becoming, in effect, primarily one-sided treatises. As there is no implicit requirement to interrogate issues of power in research methodologies, many of the studies done in sociolinguistics and CLT must be questionable in terms of cultural bias. Kubota's (2001) study examining Japanese and American professional educational literature documents how the representations of American and Japanese classrooms affirms this analysis as she explicates how pro-Western academic bias is represented in Japan while it does not accurately depict the actual classroom practices taking place in Japan or America. Kubota's study, and the criticism which followed its publication, clearly how many ELT scholars do not consider issues of power in their work, or see the need

for doing so.

The beginning of concern over the Western domination of academics in general, and ELT specifically, is often attributed to Said's (1979) seminal work *Orientalism* where Said theorized how current academic views were created in colonial contexts where scholars, journalists, and government officials defined colonial populations according to their own points of view, without any input from the local populous. According to Said, over time this 'knowledge' became fields of academic study, such as ELT, that not only dominated academic theory, but also Western points of view regarding the peoples and governments of other nations. Pennycook's (1998) seminal work *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* clearly defines the move in ELT towards post-colonial analyses of power relations in ELT by documenting the shocking way Hong Kong citizens and institutions were defined by their British colonial masters, as opposed to the socio-cultural realities of these citizens until the end of colonial rule. This post-colonial position of resistance to Western academic domination gradually influenced theories in ELT through literature on critical applied linguistics (Pannycook, 2001), linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992; Canagarajah, 1999) and the development of World Englishes (WE's). WE's is generally considered to consist of three separate theoretical strands including the examination of English as EIL, the analyses of different international forms of English, and post-colonial perspectives of English in terms of Western domination versus local needs (Kachru, 1992; Seargeant, 2008). While the first two strands are more concerned with the status of EIL and the linguistic differences therein, it is the last strand that concerns the discussion at hand as it specifically situates itself between the institutional and social needs of local educational contexts and the concomitant influence and biases of Western academic theory and power of globalization. Thus, the post-colonial strand of WE's may be seen as a more cross-cultural field of study than the first two paradigms as it more closely examines the interaction between two academic and social cultures.

Issues of Power in ELT

Perhaps the most representative issue that illustrates the nature of incongruent relations of power within ELT theory and pedagogy is the dichotomy between native (NS) and non-native (NNS) speakers of English (Tollefson, 1991; Pennycook, 2001; Pederson 2012). This dichotomy and its influence on ELT is complex as it includes the negotiation of meaning, the ownership of English and the right to signify, the construction of identity, and the various aspects of globalization affecting language learning. The legitimacy and impact of the NS-NNS dichotomy has been an issue of contention in ELT for decades. While Kachru's (1992) theory of the Circles of English documents the three historical Diasporas of English (inner [the historical bases of English], outer circle [the colonial/imperial spread of English], and expanding circle [nations that use English for international communications]) was meant to illustrate the post-colonial issues of power in the historical and current practices of ELT, it is nonetheless still widely used a model to justify the NS-NNS dichotomy (Rampton, 1990; Pederson, 2012). The circles of English are relevant to the discussion at hand as the inner circle defines nations of primarily Caucasian ethnicities and Western cultures, while the outer and expanding circles represent former nations under colonial/imperial influence and nations who feel that they need to institute EIL educational policies in order to economically compete in an increasingly globalized society. In each case it is clear that English, and the discursive economic and cultural issues that accompany it, overshadows the power of local languages and cultures (Pennycook, 2001; Phillipson, 2008). Thus, the use and continuing spread of EIL becomes more an issue of the exertion of Western power, than an issue of necessary international education and communication.

Within the dominant paradigm of CLT, the transmission of meaning is theorized as a negotiation of meaning between two interlocutors (Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 2002). Although this conception of meaning is evocative of an egalitarian theory, it is problematic given the unequal relations of power embedded in the NS-NNS dichotomy. Critical scholars within ELT argue that as socio-linguistic competence adjudicates the

appropriateness of utterances within a socio-cultural frame, it is clear that the appropriateness of individual utterances must be weighed heavily on the L1 side of the equation, thus demystifying the claim of the equality within a negotiation of meaning (Rampton, 1990; Pederson, 2012). In addition, other scholars of the social use of language maintain that equal relations of power between interlocutors cannot exist; one party always has the upper-hand in any negotiation of meaning (Foucault, 1984; Bourdieu, 1991). Thus, issues of power embedded within the language, both within the internal construction of meaning and in its performativity, preclude any true negotiation of meaning, or the right to signify, giving the balance of evocative power to the NS side of the dichotomy.

In addition to the problematic of the relations of power within the signification of meaning, the very designation of the NS is questionable. Many linguistic scholars have studied the issue and have concluded that Standard English (SE) does not exist in reality as there are so many disparate dialects of English, and as such, both SE and the NS are myths that are perpetuated through individual, social, and media representations of meaning (Carter, 1999; Crowly, 2003; Pennycook, 2007). Nonetheless, it is clear that the power of SE and the NS-NNS dichotomy remain a dominant force in the ELT practice and that American English is the preferred form of English (Pennycook, 2001; Pederson, 2012). The seeming paradox between these two assertions may be resolved through the post-structural (discursive) understanding of representation, or how symbolic signification becomes a mental construct. According to Hall (1997), representation is a theory of symbolic meaning constructed through the discursive processes of social interactions, education, and media. As such, the symbolic meanings that individuals and social groups internalize are constructed from spoken language, paralinguistic behaviors, the artifacts humans create, and both written and visual texts (media). Key to this discursive understanding of signification and meaning is that more than one representation exists within a society of any specific thing. This understanding of representation is significant as it shows how SE and the NS exist as a commonly held belief within the individuals and institutions of ELT. In order to demonstrate

the workings of representation, Hall documents the visual representations of African peoples from the early colonial period to the present, demonstrating how racial bias is both socially and linguistically encoded over time. Arguably, the same processes are responsible for the continuing impact that SE and the NS have over ELT curriculum and pedagogy (Pederson, Pennycook). In Korea, the dominance of SE and the NS may be clearly seen in the curriculum and pedagogy of public education, the large numbers of English teachers from designated NS nations are employed in public schools and private language institutes, the vast amount of money spent yearly on English education, and the course texts that are dominated by Western scholars (Shin, 2010; Pederson, 2012). This shows that while it may be said that SE and the NS do not exist in reality, they do exist as firmly held mental representations that have real effects in the practices of ELT and the social and institutional structures of nations with universal English education policies. Thus, the relations of power in ELT become more heavily weighted towards the West.

The social power of representation may also be seen in the issues of the ownership of English and perceptions of globalization within ELT. The issue of the ownership of English is a widely discussed and contentious issue within ELT that is commonly referred to a 'linguicism' (Rampton, 1990; Phillipson, 1992). Specifically, linguicism contains two separate strands that question the stature of English in comparison to other languages and who serves as the ultimate arbiter of the structure of English, its appropriateness of use, and who may be classified as an NS, . The first strand of linguicism maintains that English has become so widely used because it is superior to other languages in its ability to communicate complex concepts more easily and efficiently. The second strand rejects this idea but stresses the necessity of having centralized control of the structure and socio-linguistic appropriateness of English in order to maintain English as a viable language (Rampton, 1990; Pennycook, 2007). While the first strand of linguicism is largely disregarded within ELT, the second strand is widely supported as it necessitates a specific view that SE not only exists, but that it is necessary as without a centralized view of SE,

ELT may not be fruitfully taught and that international dialects of English will gradually become mutually unintelligible, thereby leading to linguistic and communicative chaos and the eventual demise of English (Pennycook; 2007). However, many ELT scholars within CLT (Kramsch, 1993; Norton, 1997), Critical Applied linguistics (Fairclough, 1985; Pennycook, 2001) and World Englishes (Kachru, 1992; Seargeant, 2000) reject both strands of linguicism as they assert that SE and the NS are myths that uphold and sustain the domination of Western academics in local ELT contexts. In addition, WE's literature documents the mutual intelligibility of the different international dialects of English as well as the differing social and institutional contexts where Western approaches to ELT, such as CLT, are not suitable (Seargent, 2008).

At the heart of the issue of the ownership of English is what is commonly referred to as 'voice', or the right to signify, or make meaning in English. Clearly, linguicism based approaches that firmly state the need for SE and NS designations also require the unequal power relations embedded with them (Pennycook; 2001; Canagarajah, 2002; Pederson, 2012). A good example of this is the commonly used terms of *authentic* language and *meaningful* learning that are so important to ELT curriculum and pedagogy (Brown, 2007). This point of view necessarily means that written classroom texts must be written by qualified NS speakers and that audio language samples recorded by native speakers are the only appropriate form of English to be used in the classroom. The significance of this curricular and pedagogical view is that classroom discussions generated by students in English may not be considered as authentic English, and as such, deprives students of the ownership of not only the language, but of the meanings they are making. Thus, students and other designated NNS speakers of English, are not only deprived of the ownership of the language they are learning and using, their right to make meaning is sublimated under NS domination, thereby effectively silencing them. This effect may also be seen in Kachru's (1992) *Circles of English* where the majority of English speakers around the world are designated as NNS speakers, but not given equality in the signification of meaning, thereby classifying them as second

class citizens in the international English speaking community. The effects of the issue of ownership and voice may also be seen in Korean English education where foreign English teachers may only be hired from designated NS speaking nations, while many qualified Korean English find it difficult to find a teaching position (Shin, 2010). Similarly, the issues of SE, the NS/NNS dichotomy, the ownership of English, and the concept of voice are also related to the concept of 'othering' prominent in Sociology (Foucault, 1984; Bourdieu, 1991) and Cultural Studies (Hall, 1997; Giroux, 2005), whereby specific groups of people are socially marginalized according to their race, class, gender, or sexual preference. Clearly, the 'othering' that underlies the representations of SE and the NS/NNS dichotomy in ELT represent a bifurcation of power within ELT between Western academic theories and cultures and the nations that make up the so-called outer and expanding circles of English. In addition, it is equally apparent that the discursive relations between language, culture, and power are not merely attributable to the dominance of Western thought in international academia, but are also deeply embedded within the international representation of globalization.

The relationship between globalization and ELT is easily seen in Korea. Not only does the National English Curriculum clearly state the justification for university English education as 'Globalization' (NCIC, 2016), long-term foreign residents of Korea often remark on the marked increase of English storefront signs, the proliferation of shirts with English slogans, the increasing abundance of advertising using English and Western peoples, and the hybridization of cultural forms such as fusion-food and hip-hop music and culture (Kincheloe, 2002; Pederson, 2012). The significance of globalization to the discussion at hand is that while the dissemination of EIL is obviously an integral aspect of globalization, the discursive connections between language, culture, knowledge, and power are also present in how nations and individuals are affected by the processes of globalization (Giddens, 2000; Kincheloe, 2002). As such, the dominant effects of the representations of SE and the NS in ELT and how they reflect the ownership of English and the silencing of NNS English users

are not surprising.

Of perhaps greater significance to the discussion at hand is the manner in which the definitions of globalization have changed over time. It is clear that the majority of scholars theorize globalization as "Americanization" connoting globalization as a global adoption of the current neo-liberal American form of Capitalism, where 'greed is good' (Kincheloe, 2002; Shin, 2010). Not only does this reflect the growing economic disparity between the rich, poor, and the diminishing middle classes in advanced economic nations, it also shows a growing diaspora of American socio-cultural behaviors, cultural forms, and artifacts, hence the definition of globalization as 'McDonaldization' (Kincheloe, 2002). While this definition of globalization may seem accurate on the surface, current scholarship rejects this authoritarian view as it is clear that different nations adapt to globalization in myriad ways. Thus, the term glocalization has become the preferred term as it defines how local cultures adapt the various pressures and necessities of globalization according to local needs, thereby creating hybrid cultural and linguistic forms (Kincheloe, 2007; Sung, 2007). One of the more salient aspects of these recent theorizations of globalization as glocalization is the contention that as America's exports of consumer products has declined over recent years; it has more realistically become an exporter of culture, such as media forms, musical forms, fashion, fast-food, drug use, and the neo-liberal ideologies of American style capitalism (Kincheloe, 2002; Shin, 2010). Such analyses not only justify the validity and growing importance of WE's within ELT theory and pedagogy (Kachru, 1992; Seargeant, 2000, it also points to the growing importance of studies examining how learning English affects the construction of individual and social identities. (Norton, 2006; Pederson, 2012). Given the widespread impact of glocalization, within governments, educational policies, and social structures and behaviors, it is incontestable that the identities of young English learners are being affected. Moreover, the discursive nature of language, culture, knowledge, and power clearly illustrate that language learning is not a neutral form of study, but a Trojan Horse filled with a diversity of foreign ideas and behaviors that must

have effects on individuals and their societies (Norton, 2006, Pennycook, 2007).

Underlying the analyses discussed in this paper is how the apparent inequality of academic and economic power relations between Western and EIL learning nations manifest themselves in terms of socio-cultural and individual development, and more to the point, if the hybridization of language and culture favors one side or the other. It is clear that current scholarship theorizes that the Western side of the equation holds more sway in an increasingly glocalized world. This assertion raises serious questions regarding the nature of cross-cultural studies in all academic disciplines as it intimates the danger of the misrepresentation of culture and unintentional cultural bias within much cross-cultural literature. Scholars in the fields of sociology (Foucault, 1984; Bourdieu, 1991), critical literacy/pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2004, Pederson, 2012), and cultural studies (Giroux, 2005) maintain that researchers must include a reflexive approach to their research in order to avoid a biased, or 'Orientalist' approach to the study of culture. This means that not only should researchers define their own context as researchers, and attempt to reveal their own inherent biases, but should also include the responding voices of those who have read their final analyses (Lather, 1994). It is clear that without an attempt at reflexivity and the inclusion of analyses of power relations, the meanings related in some cross-cultural literature are problematic.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate that many academic disciplines engage in cross-cultural studies in order to raise theoretical questions that may serve to generate an academic dialog regarding the theoretical foundations of cross-cultural studies. By examining how ELT may be considered as a field of cross-cultural studies not only showed how ELT is, by nature, a cross-cultural field of study, but also how critical theoretical analyses of the field raised problematic questions regarding how the relations of power between disparate cultures may be represented in much of its

professional literature. The theoretical argument that ELT is a cross-cultural field of study was relatively simple as the field necessarily must engage in the comparison/contrast of native and target languages and cultures (Savignon, 2002; Pennycook, 2007). While the discussion illustrating the obvious logic of this cross-cultural affinity demonstrates that cross-cultural studies are also included in the professional literature of many fields of study such as sociology, cultural studies, education, and comparative literature, it was beyond the scope of this paper to directly address the nature of such studies. Nevertheless, the theoretical analyses of the history of ELT and the workings of relations of power within the field raised serious and disturbing questions as to the objectivity and neutrality of cross cultural studies across the humanities and social sciences. Although the issues of the inequality of power relations between Western academic thoughts and the rest of nations learning EIL, such as the representations of SE, the NS-NNS dichotomy, the ownership of English and voice, and the effects of globalization are represented in ELT literature, it is nonetheless well established that these issues remain embedded in ELT theory and practice. As such, the example of ELT necessarily also raises questions as to how these issues of power are represented in cross-cultural studies across academic disciplines.

Specifically, the questions that this paper raises are; 1) Are the subjects in such studies given voice, or is their voice merely a representation of the interpretation or analysis of the author, in what might be termed an Orientalist practice?, 2) Does the author engage in a reflexive form of research that attempts to illuminate her inherent biases?, 3) To what extent does Western academic thought dominate international academia?, and, 4) To what extent does globalization affect academic thought and socio-economic policies? As it may be argued that the primary purpose of cross-cultural studies is to foster greater understanding and empathy between cultures for their mutual benefit, these theoretical questions need to be closely examined in cross-cultural studies in order to engage in more viable and socially just research, as well as to not repeat the mistakes of the past. As such, more research into the nature of cross-cultural studies

needs to be done to ensure that the cultures represented have equal voice and representation. The danger of not doing so is stated clearly in Labov's (1993) study on African American Vernacular English (AAVE) which used sociolinguistic research to claim that AAVE was as legitimate a language as English. AAVE, better known by the politicized term 'Ebonics', at that time generated a political furor over the highly politicized idea that K-12 education was teaching children 'Black English' instead of SE. What is germane to the discussion at hand about this case is that Labov, in his introduction, related that the issue was a political manifestation of racism in the public schools and had nothing to do with the pedagogical practices within American K-12 education. However, the real significance of Labov's analysis is that he also stated that his opening analysis could not be included in his study as it did not fall within the research parameters of sociolinguistics at that time. While such research parameters no longer impede current sociolinguistic study, although the majority of sociolinguistic work still follows this stricture, it remains a cautionary tale of the potential dangers of ignoring the impact of power relations within the humanities and social sciences. As such, it is incumbent upon those of us who are engaged in cross-cultural studies to consider the possible implications these issues have on our work and our fields of study.

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