

An Investigation of Learners' Attitudes towards Pronunciation and Emerging Varieties of English in Outer and Expanding Circle Countries

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Abstract

Considering the pluricentricity of English language and more orientation towards intelligibility in multilingual and multicultural contexts, this article presents an attempt to explore 480 Outer Circle (OC) and Expanding Circle (EC) learners' attitudes towards pronunciation and varieties of English within the framework of global Englishes. Adopting a questionnaire accompanied by interviews with some participants, the analysis shows the degree to which acceptance of pronunciation and pluricentricity of English vary among learners. In particular, the EC participants' exonormativity was found to be greater. The results also highlight the concept of "identity" and nativism myth which shows native-like preference anchors more in EC learners' attitudes compared to OC participants. This article argues that English learners must be made aware of the realities of today's English and global English ownership which can be really helpful to instigate a paradigm shift in language learning to make sure that it is reflective of how English functions globally and all varieties of English in different cultures are respected.

Keywords: world Englishes, EIL, pronunciation, intelligibility, identity, awareness

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1. Introduction

Language attitudes can be defined as “variable and emergent forms of evaluative social practice around a language-related issue” (Ishikawa & Morán Panero, 2016). This is mainly consistent with “language attitudes may lead to L2 learners’ stereotyping English and its native speakers (McKenzie, 2008a). Language attitudes may affect teachers’ and learners’ behaviours, including pedagogical beliefs and choices of teachers, successful achievement of the language by learners and motivation and language practices of the learners. In this case, it is pedagogically significant to unveil learners’ language attitudes toward a target language.

Although World Englishes has provoked discussions in English language education today, it has not intensely penetrated a significant area where English teachers and learners should be aware of different varieties of English and English pedagogy. ELT classes are commonly regulated by native norms (McKay & Brown, 2016, Monfared, 2020) with no attention to pluricentricity of English, as Dewaele (2018) calls as LX user of English (any foreign English users) as gatekeepers of the language. LX English language teachers and learners carry their own English varieties in ELT classes. The use of English has now extended beyond L1 and LX user interaction and the vast majority of communication in English does not involve any L1 users of the language (Graddol, 2006). Statistically, English communication happens among more than one billion competent speakers from Outer and expanding circles (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006). As McKay (2012, p. 42) proposes, “ELT classes should have the propensity to promote multilingualism and multiculturalism, follow localized l2 language planning and policies, raise awareness of learners towards language variation and use and provide an equal access to English learning for all who desire it”.

Although a number of studies have been accomplished on teachers’ and learners’ attitudes towards EIL, there are fewer studies that are concerned with the perceptions of LX users regarding pronunciation and different varieties of English from an EIL perspective. The current study focuses closely on the cognitive, affective and behavioural attitudes of OC and EC learners across two main circles of World Englishes (WE) to help the learners to develop a lens that reshapes traditional dichotomies such as native speaker and non-native speaker in multilingual contexts. The questionnaire format was selected in order to elicit learners’ language attitudes. Comparison of the two circles displaying participants’ distinctive evaluative reactions to their own varieties of English has shown that the emphasis in English instruction and social movement in each country seem to shape attitudes toward a target language.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Main Components of Attitudes

Garrett (2010) divides attitudes into three main components: cognitive, affective and behavioural. They can be affective, because they relate to people’s feelings and evoke an emotional

response, e.g., someone may dislike a British accent; cognitive, because they refer to people's perceptions and knowledge about things, e.g., a belief that British English is the best model of English; behavioural, because they invoke people to act in a certain way, e.g., the employment of a teacher expected to speak a 'standard' model of the English. As it has been stated by Dragojevic et al. (2013), Language attitudes do not exist in a social vacuum, nor are they stable and immutable frames of reference. Rather, they are a product of diverse, and sometimes competing, cultural, historical and ideological forces, and can quickly shift in response to the radically changing political and technological landscape that constitutes the modern globalised world. (See Coluzzi, 2012, p.18)

There are different methods like direct and indirect methods using tools like questionnaires and interviews, Matched Guise Technique (MGT) and Verbal Guise Technique which have been used by scholars to research language attitudes. Table 1 shows a list of studies toward varieties of English among L2 speakers in their L1 context.

Table 1

A List of Studies toward Varieties of English

Study	Country	Research Design
Tokumoto and Shibata (2011)	Japan, South Korea and Malaysia	Questionnaire with 128 university students
Matsuura et al. (1994)	Japan	VGT (Asian and American English) with 92 Japanese university students
Monfared & Safarzadeh (2014)	Iran	Questionnaire and interview with learners
Pillai & Ong, 2018	Malaysia	Questionnaire and interview with learners
Cargile et al. (2006)	Japan	VGT (African American Vernacular English and Mainstream US English) with 113 university students.
Dangleo (2017)	Japan	Questionnaire and interview with learners

Overall, these studies have shown tendencies concerning the degree of awareness of other varieties of English among LX users of English, preferences toward these varieties, as well as their social and cultural meanings in ELT context.

2.2. EIL and Pronunciation

Pronunciation issue in the realm of EIL has been vastly discussed by many researchers in the past few years (Derwing, 2010; Derwing & Munro, 2005, 2013, 2015; Jenkins, 2009; Monfared, 2019, 2020; Munro & Derwing, 2011, 2015). Jenkins's Lingua Franca Core (LFC), can be counted as an efficient pronunciation syllabus for international intelligibility to non-native speakers. Jenkins (2002) mentions that the intuitions that are taken into account for pronunciation are those of native speakers and little attention is given to the international intelligibility for LX users, in spite of the fact that LX users outnumber L1 users of English, but the former remain to be in the periphery, with the latter very much at the centre (Monfared, 2020). McKay and Brown (2016) in their book "teaching and assessing EIL in local contexts around the world" insist on EIL intelligibility standards which emphasize more on communication rather than nativism and provide learners with

awareness of linguistic and cultural differences in the various contexts in which English is learned. Regarding intelligibility, Munro and Derwing (1995) define three key terms in this respect:

1. Intelligibility: “the extent to which an utterance is actually understood”
2. Comprehensibility: “listeners’ perceptions of difficulty in understanding particular utterances”
3. Accentedness: “how strong the talker’s foreign accent is perceived to be” (p. 291)

Though intelligibility is often discussed as if it is about the intelligibility of L1 and LX users, it should rather be framed as the intelligibility of any speaker of English with any other speaker of English including all of the complexities noted in the bullets listed above (McKay & Brown, 2016). Conversely, from an EIL listening perspective, perhaps we should also be thinking about students’ abilities to comprehend in listening, something like their *comprehend-ability*, wherein we as teachers try to enhance (and assess) the students’ abilities to understand when listening to all the varieties and proficiency levels of speakers spoken within IC, OC, and EC contexts.

It seems, then, that EIL intelligibility and comprehend-ability have something to do with the ability to adapt to speaking with and listening to EIL speakers of many stripes. EIL intelligibility standards can foster respect for the local culture of learning and encourage a sense of ownership and confidence in the local varieties of English. Brown (2012, pp. 155-156) proposes some keys to develop EIL intelligibility standards in ELT classrooms.:

1. Respecting the local culture of LX users and fostering a sense of ownership in the local varieties of English.
2. Raising awareness of LX users with linguistic and cultural differences in the various contexts in which English is learned and used.
3. Including models in ELT syllabus based on local appropriation to help learners be “both global and local users of English” who can function both nationally and internationally.

2.3. Pronunciation Pedagogy and Identity

One of the controversial issues in the realm of EIL is native and non-native speaker accent and the cultural identity of the non-native speakers of English and the resistance to “cultural imperialism” through the use of English. A wrong belief is that L1 users have no difficulty understanding each other’s accents because they speak Standard language. Undesirably, ELT materials and sources usually show a highly positive image of nativism, so LX users of English try to assimilate those identities by copying NS accent. For example, using in-depth interviews, Sung (2016) found that ESL learners tendency towards native-likeness can be associated with superiority in status and prestige and high English proficiency. In a survey of Outer-Circle and Expanding-Circle learners’ beliefs, Monfared and Safarzadeh (2014) concluded that the Expanding-Circle learners were more likely to prefer a native-like identity and nativism generally (p. 212). In addition, drawing on quantitative data, Chan (2016, p. 308) found that the more educated the ESL learners

were, the more they liked to show tendency towards 'Anglophone-centric attitudes (especially towards RP) and negative views towards their own L2 accents.

When English functions as a global language and is used by millions of bilingual speakers as an additional language in different multilingual and multicultural contexts, it is necessarily localised and acculturated to local s needs of the users of English (Eslamdoost et al., 2019; Monfared & Safarzadeh, 2014, Qoyyimah et al., 2020). So, it is unwelcoming that NS norms should function as the criterion for measuring LX users' lexico-grammatical correctness, phonological accuracy and discourse-pragmatic appropriacy (lee, 2012).

Of course, policy makers and teachers play an important role in developing learners' awareness of their identity. English teaching should be developed in a way to meet the needs of LX users of English and foster the emergence of their own identities. The main goal of ELT preparation programs in EC and OC countries should be to train teachers who can help learners to communicate successfully with all sorts of speakers no matter which global Englishes they use. LX users of English need to attain self-expression and learn how to effectively interact with others without sacrificing their own identity (Riley, 1998). They should raise their awareness and foster their own realistic model for their pronunciation instead of following native-speaker models. With regard to the aforementioned issues, this research raised the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of Outer and Expanding Circle learners towards the pronunciation of their English variants?
2. What are Outer and Expanding Circle learners' beliefs about the significance of NS accents and their functions in pronunciation standards?

The research questions have been developed to determine English learners' attitudes towards their own variety of English by using the three components of attitude as an analytical tool: cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Garrett, 2010). This study, largely, adopts direct research data-gathering techniques, planning to examine all three components of attitude.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The research was conducted with 480 university students from Iran, Turkey, India, and Malaysia. The Iranian and Turkish participants as members of EC included 240 English majors who had registered in the first introductory linguistics course at the University of the Allameh Tabataba'i in Tehran, Iran and Ankara University in Ankara, Turkey at the time of the research, and the majority of them were senior students, ranging in age from 18 to 35. The other two Asian groups, Indian and Malaysian, consisted of 240 participants from UM University in Malaysia and Delhi university, respectively. All of these students, except for ten students, were majoring in English. Unlike the member of EC, students in the OCs varied greatly in academic year and age: the Malaysian group included 38 sophomores, 35 juniors, 20 seniors, and 27 MA students with ages

ranging from 19 to 40; the Indian group included 45 freshman, 25 sophomores, 18 juniors, 10 seniors, and 22 MA students, with ages ranging from 20 to 50.

Table 2

General profile of Participants

Participants' general Information	Outer circle Learners	Expanding circle Learners
Gender		
Male	112	104
Female	128	136
Educational Background		
BA degree	64	56
MA degree	144	128
PhD	32	56
Age		
21-30	90	64
31-40	64	96
41-50	40	50
50 +	46	30

3.2. Data collection, Instrument and Procedure

This mixed-methods study, as part of a Ph.D. project, utilised both questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire was a revised version adapted from Coskun (2011), Kang (2015), Tokumoto and Shibata (2011) and Li (2009) questionnaires. The questionnaire contained close-ended questions. The items tried to measure learners' perceptions, views and evaluations of pronunciation from an EIL perspective in EC and OC. The participants were requested to respond to items on a 6-point scale (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=moderately disagree; 4=moderately agree; 5=agree; 6=strongly agree) based on their own perceptions.

In the pilot stage, the questionnaire involved 20 items which had been carefully worded. At this stage, the questionnaire was administered to 50 EC and 50 OC learners. The research tool was tested for reliability and validity using SPSS: Namely, Alpha's Cronbach was checked, and the questionnaire was rechecked by a group of ELT experts. The Cronbach's alpha reliability indexes for the questionnaire were .81 for the total sample, .82 for the EC learners and .84 for the OC learners. Exploratory and pilot versions showed some minor problems relating to neutral responses with the six-point Likert scale items and the ambiguity of instructions. These issues were considered in the development of the final version. The final developed version was prepared with 15 items.

The interviews were conducted in English with university students who had previously agreed for the interviews. The interviews took about fifteen minutes and the learners' responses were audio-recorded with their permission. The recordings were played several times to find the themes referred to by the majority of the research participants. The extracted themes were then used to supplement the quantitative data of the research study. All participants in the research were assured

that all the collected data were for research goals only, and their confidentiality would be respected during the study.

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

4.1.1. Cognitive Judgment of the Participant's Own Variant

In order to explore the participants' cognitive goals with regards to speaking English, items 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 12 were selected. These items were further divided into three subcategories: accentedness (item 3), intelligibility (items 6 and 7) and acceptability (items 10, 11, and 12). Based on the results obtained (See Table 3), it can be asserted that the OC learners had more tendency towards keeping their own cultural identity regarding pronunciation compared with the EC learners who had more emphasis on nativism. The total percentage of negative responses was more than 78% among the EC learners, whereas it was about 40% among the Indians and Malaysians.

The participants' judgment of the intelligibility and acceptability of their own English was also evaluated. The results presented in Table 4 showed that the OC learners had a significantly more positive attitude toward the intelligibility regarding accent in terms of the perceived intelligibility to NSs compared to the EC learners.

To evaluate the perceived degree of acceptability of the learners' own English, three different issues were regarded in the current research: international business, pedagogical interaction and personal cross-cultural communication. As shown in Table 5, it can be asserted that there was no noteworthy difference between the OC and EC learners' attitudes in the context of international business, pedagogical interaction and in personal cross-cultural communication.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics, Results of Independent T-test, and Effect Sizes for Accented Judgment: Item 3 (N=480)

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Effect Size
3. I have a non-native accent.	EC (N=240)	3.24	1.27	20.97	478	.000	1.13
	OC (N=240)	4.61	1.13				

*P<.01

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics, Results of Independent T-Test, and Effect Sizes for Intelligibility of Accented English by 'Native Speakers': Items 6 and 7 (N=480)

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Effect size
6. NSs can easily understand my accentedness English.	OC (N=240)	3.73	1.36	4.31	478	.000	.397
	EC (N=240)	4.24	1.20				
7. NNSs can easily understand my accentedness English.	OC (N=240)	3.61	1.29	8.89	478	.000	.813
	EC (N=240)	4.66	1.29				

*P<.01

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics, Results of Independent T-Test, and Effect Sizes for Acceptability Judgment: Items 10, 11 and 12 (N= 480)

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Effect size
10. My pronunciation would be acceptable in international business.	OC (N=240)	4.15	1.04	.21	478	.890	.022
	EC (N=240)	4.08	4.24				
11. My pronunciation would be acceptable for other English learners.	OC (N=240)	3.98	1.04	2.53	478	.323	1.09
	EC (N=240)	4.24	1.14				
12. My pronunciation would be acceptable in personal cross-cultural communication.	OC (N=240)	4.01	.95	3.27	478	.947	.032
	EC (N=240)	4.32	.98				

4.1.2. Affective Constituent of Attitudes toward the Participants' Own Variant

In order to evaluate the affective intentions of learners with regard to speaking their own English, items 1, 4 and 13 were chosen. As shown in Table 6, the OC participants were significantly more self-assured in their own variety of English than were the Iranian and Turkish participants. For item 4, which attempted to explore the learners' happiness with their own accent, the results showed that the OC learners were considerably satisfied with their own accent than were the EC participants.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics, Results Of Independent T-Test, and Effect Sizes for Affective Judgment: Items 1, 4 and 13 (N = 480)

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Effect size
1. I am confident in my English pronunciation.	OC (N=240)	4.01	1.02	20.97	478	.000	.034
	EC (N=240)	3.67	.96				
4. I am happy with my accent.	OC (N=240)	4.10	.96	11.70	478	.000	.744
	EC (N=240)	3.40	.92				
13. I feel happier when I listen to a native speaker than a non-native speaker of English.	OC (N=240)	4.42	1.11	9.39	478	.000	.854
	EC (N=240)	3.09	1.90				

*P<.01

4.1.3. Behavioural Judgment of the Participants' Own Variants

In order to explore the learners' behavioural intentions or actions of their own varieties of English, items 2, 5, 8, 9, 14 and 15 were selected. Table 7 shows the OC learners' stronger attitudes in their own non-native accent than Iranian and Turkish EFL participants. The results also indicate that the OC participants showed less unwillingness in showing their own accents than the EC learners. EC learners were more eager to look like a 'native speaker' of English and pursue native-like pronunciation compared with the OC participants.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics, Results of Independent T-Test, and Effect Sizes for Behavioral Judgment: Items 1, 4 And 13 (N=480)

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Effect size
2. I speak English with a native-like accent.	OC (N=240)	2.67	1.17	20.07	478	.000	1.85
	EC (N=240)	4.80	1.13				
5. I hesitate to show my accent.	OC (N=240)	3.07	1.24	16.12	478	.000	1.480
	EC (N=240)	4.84	1.15				
8. I would like to keep my own accent.	OC (N=240)	2.90	1.38	7.53	478	.000	.696
	EC (N=240)	3.84	1.32				
9. I would like to sound like a 'native speaker' of English.	OC (N=240)	4.07	1.32	5.96	478	.000	.551
	EC (N=240)	3.32	1.40				
14. I would like to participate in an English learning program that introduces non-native varieties of English.	OC (N=240)	2.99	1.35	9.00	478	.000	.822
	EC (N=240)	4.06	1.25				
15. I would like to participate in an English learning program that teaches only native varieties of English.	OC (N=240)	4.25	1.17	8.18	478	.000	.752
	EC (N=240)	3.30	1.35				

*P<.01

4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data gathered from learners' responses to semi-structured interviews with 42 participants (22 EC and 20 OC) – aimed to complete the quantitative perceptions in two ways: (1) by providing learners' views on pronunciation in ELT classes in an unstructured way to support the quantitative results; and (2) by elucidating their views towards pronunciation relating to EIL. Manual coding of the survey learners' open remarks showed 35 references to EIL, 25 of which were negative, 18 positives and two mixed. Those learners who believed in the presence of EIL in ELT classes mostly pointed to attaining local accent and fostering their own cultural identity. Those who were against the inclusion of EIL referred to Standard English and superiority of native accent over other accents.

As it has been mentioned by Sifakis (2004), there are two types of approaches in communication, cultural bound (C-bound) approach and norm-bound (N-bound) approach. C-bound view puts emphasis on the process of cross-cultural comprehensibility between language users as a communicative aim in itself rather than on notions of accuracy and standardness while N-bound perspective gives more attention to accuracy and standardness. EC participants' replies revealed that most of them are in favour of nativism and because of that they are not pleased with their own accents. Those who were also fairly satisfied with their accents mentioned that they should try to foster their native-like accent. OC participants' responses illustrated that most of the participants like to concentrate more on mutual intelligibility than pure pronunciation and they are eager to be proud of their own local English accent and their own cultural identity in the global world.

Here are some OC participants' comments concerning their happiness with their own accents:

OC (15): *I'm happy with my own local Indian accent because transmission of message is superior to keeping an accent assimilated to native speaker.*

OC (74): *I'm fairly happy because I don't have a problem in mutual communication with other Malaysians.*

EC participants' views also revealed their reluctance to their own accents. Those who were also fairly happy with their accents stated that they should try to foster their own native-like accent.

EC participant (20): *About me, I'm more catholic than Pope. I have an endless hope to learn English with American accent.*

EC participant (41): *I should do my best to seem like a native speaker. Other accents are non-sense.* Remarks by the OC students also show that they believe more in intelligibility than native-like pronunciation:

OC participant (24): *Meaning plays an important role if a person has a "native-like accent". Accent has no role in generating meaning.*

Participants were also questioned about their attitudes toward instructors' English in ELT context. For more supportive evidence, see the following replies to open-ended questionnaires:

EC participant (17): *Pronunciation is just native like accent. When my teacher has native accent, it gives me more confidence and it helps me to have a more attractive accent in the future.*

OC participant (56): *My instructor's accent is secondary as long as it doesn't hinder communication.*

Participants were further asked a question as an open-ended part of the survey: If you study pronunciation only, the best place would be.... The results reveal that participants' favourite places to study English pronunciation varied across the two World Englishes circles. More than 80% of the learners from the EC chose the United States for their best place to study pronunciation; for learners in the OC, only 20% made this choice. Respondents in the OC selected the United Kingdom first and the United States second for their favourite country to study. On the other hand, 35% of the participants in the OC selected their home country and only 10% in the EC replied in this way.

5. Discussion

Listening to participants' attitudes in two circles of the World Englishes, we found a need for language program policymakers and instructors to respect the local culture of LX learners and consider their demands and expectations when learning English. The present study aims to raise LX learners' awareness towards English in multilingual and multicultural contexts. As McKay and Brown (2016) argue the way to go is to foster English language and cultural behaviors, recruit well-trained instructors from local contexts, include materials and activities based on local and international situations and help LX users of English feel better about their English learning. The boundaries between varieties of English have become blurry and LX users should draw on their plurilingual repertoires to communicate. This involves the development of a curriculum that

considers the multilingual and multicultural reality of English across the globe, rather than settling for a skewed one in which only nativism is acceptable. Traditional foreign language teaching, which insists on a separation between language and culture and favours L1 norms, may not sufficiently prepare LX learners of English to efficiently communicate with speakers from different context (Matsuda, 2017, 2019; Kirkpatrick, 2015; Monfared, 2019; 2020).

In terms of attitudes towards varieties of English, participants in both circles generally view English as a valuable and necessary language for communication and success in various domains such as education and employment. However, there are some negative attitudes towards English among some learners who may feel pressure to conform to native speaker norms and may experience linguistic and cultural discrimination. Regarding attitudes, the findings of this study reveal that EC learners have an exonormative orientation toward English at this point in time. They believe that NS pronunciation is the only 'correct' form of the language, which, thus, naturally should be used by LX users. During the last decades, EC instructors and LX users of English have been displeased with 'Non-native accents' and have attempted to have a 'native' accent (Coskun, 2011; Monfared, 2019, 2020; Sharifian & Sadeghpour, 2021), particularly the American accent. The results of the study also show that OC participants were more in favour of keeping cultural identity with more emphasis on mutual intelligibility than EC learners. OC participants' satisfaction with their accent can be because of (1) their more attention to mutual intelligibility their communication than pronunciation and (2) their readiness to foster their own local English accent in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world (Crystal, 2008; Jenkins, 2009; Monfared, 2020; Monfared & Khatib, 2018).

Intersection of identity and attitudes towards varieties of English is a complex and dynamic process that can influence language acquisition and communication. Regarding the stance towards English among participants in both groups and identity, English learners' identities in both circles clearly is under the influence of the ideology of 'native-speakerism'. English participants in both circles construct multiple identities based on pedagogical and social contexts which mirror the different social and linguistic groups to which they fit in (Petric, 2009). Closely associated with the issue of learners' identity, Dewaele (2018) believes that there is a myth that L1 user of English is superior to LX user of English. According to Monfared (2020), in the battle with the myth of 'nativism' and the ideology of the superiority of the L1s, LX users show a pseudo identity which is linked to nativism in order to be cared by their instructors and by other LX users. This pseudo identity can lead to feelings of inferiority and a lack of confidence in using English, which can hinder language acquisition and communication.

In addition, LX users in the EC believed that their instructors' production should be native-like, showing that LX learners are still in favour of Inner Circle (IC) models. This result proposes that LX users' expectations need better synchronization in the contexts of global Englishes. Actually, more than 80% of the students in the EC still like to strive for IC norms. This result supports a previous finding that English language learners are in favour of nativism (Kang, 2010,

2015; Tsang, 2017, 2020; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). For instance, in a qualitative study, Tsang (2017) conducted that most participants perceived American accents and British accents as reflections of good ESL teachers and learners. According to Jenkins (2006), non-native speakers somehow feel obliged to acquire near-native English accents in order to be accepted by other learners. However, in the contexts of globalized Englishes, modification of this pattern is urgent. When English is acquired by millions of bilingual speakers from multilingual contexts, it is necessarily localized and acculturated to local needs of learners. So, it is unacceptable that IC norms should predominate and serve as an index for measuring LX users' phonological accuracy, lexicogrammatical correctness and discourse-pragmatic appropriacy. (Li, 2009, p.82). Dewaele and McCloskey (2015) believe that shaping more cross-cultural activities in ELT classes as well as endorsing a more positive racial climate with more orientation towards local cultures on campus by schools can be a promising step forward in this regard.

6. Conclusion

In sum, the significance of this study is that it tries to investigate whether learners from EC and OC hold the same beliefs and attitudes towards pronunciation norms and instructions, and especially, whether they evaluate all English accents in the same manner because they can differ according to sociocultural and political factors (Dewaele, 2005).

Within studies of globalization, 'glocalization' is a term which refers to the adjustment of a global product to meet local needs and norms, and make it more marketable in various parts of the globe (Monfared, 2020). It must be considered that ELT courses should include a sociocultural component to focus on raising students' awareness of the interdependent relationship between language and culture and teaching culture as an integral component of language teaching and develop a lens that reshape traditional dichotomies such as native speaker and non-native speaker (Alptekin, 2002; McKay, 2018, Monfared, 2020). Incorporating cultural awareness and sensitivity into language teaching can enhance students' language learning experience and promote intercultural communication (Monfared, 2020). The results of this paper can attract the attention of teachers in EC and OC towards language teaching and learning and can help them to raise the learners' awareness towards any biases or nuances regarding varieties of English. Teachers should help learners not to be blind followers of such closed attitudes towards other varieties of English and should create a safe and inclusive classroom environment where all students feel valued and respected, regardless of their English proficiency or accent.

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