

DECOLONIZING THE LEARNING PROCESS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM

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Abstract: The English Education Study Program as a place of language learning is an institution where the paradigm of foreign language learning that is still thick with the practice of linguistic colonialism is likely to still take place. This study aims to reveal the existence of this paradigm in the teaching process in the study program as a material for future changes in order to achieve widespread and flexible learning. This change will also promote local culture in foreign language learning. This study uses qualitative descriptive method as a means of revealing the necessary facts. Interviews and observations of the learning process and the interaction between lecturers and students were used as data collection tools which were analyzed using the Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) method. The findings of this study show that the phenomenon of language colonialization is still an aspect that lecturers and students are not aware of. Its existence in the context of teaching in the English department of the Faculty of Education is still at the stage of stratification of the language used as an introduction in class, unconscious restrictions on the use of certain languages, and the widespread use of certain languages over other languages.

Keywords: *decolonization, interaction language learning, , translanguaging,*

INTRODUCTION

English being one of the most widely used and studied languages in almost the entire world is the result of the colonial system launched by the British government. In certain countries that were mostly British colonies, English became an imperial language that was forced to become the main language of communication (Rajendram, 2022). In the context of ELT in Indonesia, English also tends to be considered Hi language (top language) although it is still categorized as a foreign language. English language learning that is carried out both in schools and universities ultimately prioritizes learning with the cultural context of Englishness without paying attention to the needs and cultural closeness of the learners. This form of learning also makes it difficult for learners to place the function of the language they learn in the right context. This study aims to reveal whether the phenomenon of language colonialization also occurs in the English Language Education Study Program of FKIP UPR. By revealing the existence of language colonialization, it can be used as a basis for changing the learning paradigm, especially in PSPBI. This paradigm shift in the future is known as Language Decolonialization.

According to Hsu (2017) decolonization emerges as an effect of colonialism as an act of domination in politics and economics to control a nation and its citizens. As the colonial system of colonization still exists, the reality of colonial invasion is deeply embedded in the

field of education. Modern English teaching is rooted in a long period of economic conquest and global empire. For example, the World Book Company, an American publishing company established in Manila in 1905 to supply colonial English texts for the new American schools in the islands, was made possible by the American colonial occupation of the Philippines.

In the context of colonialism, English language teaching (ELT) consistently contributed to the stigmatization of the linguistic practices of students who identified as minorities and/or racialized. Various aspects of English Language Teaching (ELT) persist in colonized countries, from formal regulations controlling language choice in schools to informal norms, practices and procedures in the classroom (Rajendram, 2022).

There are several important connections that can be made between colonialism and English Language Teaching (ELT). The first, and perhaps most obvious, is the past. It is clear that we must examine the past of ELT in the British Empire and America if we are to understand the evolution of the discipline outside Europe and North America (Sengupta, 2022). Politics and economics are secondary. The current spread of the English language, pedagogy and textbooks can be seen in various ways as a continuation, if not an intensification, of neocolonial relations. The third is cultural, which suggests that ELT's interaction with colonialism has had a lasting impact on ELT practices, theories and attitudes. Many parts of English Language Teaching (ELT) perpetuate cultural notions of colonialism, from classroom procedures to beliefs about the cultural makeup of our students. At every stage of its development, ELT has been overly centralized, with advances in the United States and the United Kingdom driving its growth at the expense of local autonomy. The environments in which ELT functions still show a strong eurocentric bias and disregard for indigenous cultures. Even now, English language teaching emphasizes European literature, especially the works of imperialist Britain, to help students become proficient language users. As a result, students are constantly exposed to the European perspective of the world. Students are encouraged to examine, assess and think critically about the world as it is created and perceived by Europeans even in the ELT classroom. ELT is used to protect the interests of the central group, giving rise to marginalized peripheral groups, and thus serves as a sustaining force of what is referred to as Western imperialism even in postcolonial countries, as it continues to serve as a subtractive rather than additive force in these countries. Moreover, the conceptual legacy of ELT shows an excessive focus on linguistic theory and its separation from educational theory, turning it into a technical procedure performed by local instructors under the direction of Western experts. In addition, Sengupta (2022) mentions the phenomenon of decolonization of English Language Teaching as part of cultural invasion.

It is generally recognized that translanguaging in the English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) classroom helps students in achieving their English competence, and there is a lot of recorded data to support this claim. According to Motlhaka & Makalela (2016), dialogic pedagogy in multilingual settings can be used in translation strategies to help students become more aware of the second/foreign language (L2) writing process. According to Kampittayakul (2018), in a one-on-one EFL lesson, this pedagogical strategy improved Thai learners' interactional skills. According to Beres (2015), learners can achieve better academic results and improve their proficiency in English and first language (L1) by using translanguaging. According to Nagy (2018), translanguaging techniques enable students to participate more actively in language learning activities and develop their language proficiency with greater assurance. Moreover, Romanowski (2019) emphasizes how effective translanguaging techniques are in improving students' language performance and proficiency.

Putrawan (2022) concluded that translanguaging techniques in the EFL classroom are beneficial for both teachers and students, but it is important to remember that students' L1, whether it is Indonesian or local language, should be used moderately to help them understand English easily and to prevent any unfavorable effects. In EFL classrooms, translanguaging is practiced by teachers and students in English, Indonesian, local languages (Bugis, Konjo, Javanese, Balinese, Tae, and Papuan Malay), and even international languages such as Arabic and Korean in addition to English. In practice, both teachers and students have shown support for using translanguaging as a pedagogy in the EFL classroom because they think it is beneficial and has good effects for EFL students.

Rajendram (2022) proposes translanguaging techniques to decolonize English Language Teaching, because according to Wei and Garcia (2022) Through translanguaging, ideas such as “additive bilingualism” have been represented and opportunities to acknowledge the dynamic multilingualism of children in classrooms taught with the dominant language have been created. By doing this, we see them through the lens of translanguaging and reject the racialized linguistic belief that their language is inferior.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To reveal the problems discussed above in depth and breadth, the research team applied a descriptive qualitative approach based on narrative. With this approach, a broad but in-depth picture of the language learning process carried out at PSPBI will be obtained. The learning process referred to here includes linguistic activities in the classroom and interactions that occur between learning participants (lecturers and students).

Data obtained through the process of interviewing learning participants and observing classroom activities will be analyzed using the Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach which focuses on finding an in-depth view of a phenomenon in a particular context based on qualitative data. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a narrative that describes broadly and deeply the phenomenon of language colonialization that may appear in PSPBI FKIP UPR.

The data collection process begins with the selection of prospective subjects, namely lecturers at PSPBI FKIP UPR who are willing to have their classes observed and recorded learning activities. Observation and recording are carried out only if the lecturer concerned is willing and is carried out using an audio-visual recording device.

Subjects will also be interviewed with unstructured interview techniques which are expected to explore more deeply and with a more flexible context but still on the expected path. Interviews will be conducted with lecturers who give their willingness to be interviewed regarding the learning process they carry out in the classroom. At least 5 lecturers will be selected to be interviewed.

The data that has been collected will be arranged systematically and analyzed using the Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach which focuses on exploring key ideas in a phenomenon. With this approach, it is expected that a narrative will be compiled that explains the phenomenon of colonialization in ELT at PSPBI FKIP UPR.

The expected result at the end of this research is an overview of the form of ELT (English Language Teaching) at PSPBI which will be a benchmark for the phenomenon of

colonialization in it and as a first step for the ELT decolonialization process in the curriculum review that will be carried out at PSPBI.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. Use of binding and inflexible linguistic aspects

In class lecturers tend to use aspects of language that are too standardized and often do not allow students to use their language more flexibly. This fixation has the effect of prioritizing English and tends to weaken the accents and dialects that students bring. On several occasions, lecturers have corrected students' pronunciation and vocabulary use when communicating in class, although in this context, correction is not really needed because it does not interfere with the purpose of communication itself.

Based on the interview results, the lecturer himself admitted that this attachment was due to the assumption that the students he taught were prospective educators who should have native-like competence. But in reality, this view actually creates a sense of inferiority among the students themselves. They end up assuming that the more they resemble natives, the better their language skills. This assumption is the result of colonialization in language. As prospective educators, PSPBI students are indeed expected to master English language skills to a certain level but not to make them like native English speakers themselves.

b. Adoption of Norms

In the process of language learning, the application of target language norms often causes the original norms that apply in the local language to be forgotten, even though language learning can actually be carried out on the basis of local language communication norms. This study also found a tendency to ignore local norms and overemphasize the application of target language norms. Where in the delivery of certain materials, the depiction of events or events mostly uses events that occur in the context of the target language and the application to the local context is forgotten. Some lecturers also tend to emphasize giving examples in the target language without providing equivalence in the local language context.

C. Continuous Quest for 'Native-Like' Competence

Native-like competence refers to the level of language proficiency at which non-native speakers demonstrate fluency, accuracy, and cultural understanding comparable to native speakers. To achieve native-like competence, not only linguistic aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) must be mastered, but also cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and pragmatic conventions associated with the language. This implies a high level of familiarity and comfort in using the language in various contexts. Keep in mind that while native-like competence is an aspirational goal, effective communication and functional proficiency are more realistic and achievable goals for most language learners. Native-like competence is not strictly necessary for effective communication. While achieving native-like fluency is an admirable goal, functional proficiency is often sufficient for effective interaction.

While achieving native-like fluency is an admirable goal, functional proficiency is often sufficient for effective interaction. Effective communication relies on conveying ideas, understanding others, and achieving mutual understanding. Functional proficiency allows one to express oneself clearly, understand context, and engage in meaningful conversations. Even among native speakers, language proficiency varies widely. Some native speakers struggle with

grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. Effective communication depends more on clarity, context, and active listening than native-like perfection.

Understanding cultural norms, context, and pragmatics is essential. Non-native speakers who understand these aspects can communicate effectively, even if their language use is not native-like. While the purpose of communication is important, in casual conversation, small mistakes can be forgiven. However, in professional or academic settings, clarity and precision become more important in order to eliminate misunderstandings.

The application of norms in communication refers to the process by which individuals in a group or society internalize and conform to established guidelines and expectations for how they interact and communicate with each other. These norms serve as the basis for effective collaboration, shaping behavior and promoting a culture of trust and cooperation. When people adopt communication norms, they adhere to agreed-upon rules, such as active listening, respectful dialogue and clear boundaries, thus ensuring smoother interactions and shared understanding within groups and organizations.

It must also be realized that language evolves over time. Thus, native-like competence may give rise to outdated linguistic expressions. Ultimately, keeping up with language trends is more important than imitating native speakers. This also applies as understanding the culture of the target language is important, but not to become a native speaker of the target language itself. In conclusion, while native-like competence is valuable, effective communication depends on functional skills, cultural awareness and context.

CONCLUSION

In the learning process that takes place at PSPBI UPR, there are several processes that lead to language colonialization but are not realized. First, the attachment and unfamiliarity of using aspects of the target language. Second, the application of the norms of the target language without regard to the norms of the local language controlled by language learners / students. In conclusion, this event is based on the pursuit of language competence that resembles native speakers of the target language.

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