

English Triumphalism in Academic Writing: The Price of Global Visibility

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Abstract

Within the academic field, it has been said that one has to “publish in English or perish” (Viereck, 1996: 20). Lured by the prospect of international readability, and thereby possibility of higher citations, non-native English speaking (NNES) researchers resort to publishing their work primarily and exclusively in English. While this has created a global academic environment with a common medium of communication, it has been at the cost of other important national languages. Global visibility comes at the price of local or regional invisibility. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of English medium publication (EMP) on local languages. An exploratory research methodology with a critical agenda was employed. Qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews revealed that NNES researchers acknowledge the privilege attached to publishing in internationally indexed journals and employ numerous strategies to facilitate successful publication. However, most participants expressed clear dissatisfaction toward this policy and some indicated that, apart from publishing mainly in English, they also publish in their local language for the purpose of serving their local communities. It was concluded that additional efforts are needed to engage NNES who are competitive at the international level in research that is of local and regional importance in the purpose of promoting linguistic diversity and enhancing collaboration between core and peripheral languages.

Key words: critical applied linguistics (CALx), English medium-publication (EMP), linguistic imperialism, non-native English speaking (NNES)

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Introduction

The emergence of English as the dominant international language of academic publication has been well documented (Ammon, 2003). A database analysis revealed that more than 95% of indexed natural science journals and 90% of social science journals use all or some English (Thomson Reuters, 2009a as cited in Yigitoglu, 2010). Benfield & Howard (2000) further report that the proportion of Medline journal articles in English has increased from 72.2% in 1980 to 88.6% of the overall total in 1996. A similar picture for the field of chemistry is outlined by Sano (2002), who argues that over the period 1970-2000, the share of chemistry journal articles published in English rose from 54.2% to 82.1% overall.

Not only has English dominance diminished the chances of academics who are non-native speakers of English to publish in high impact international journals (Ammon 1998), it has also negatively affected indigenous cultures and languages. Researchers working towards preserving world languages have repetitively pointed to the linguistic impoverishment that adds up over time. According to Canagarajah (1999), multilingual scholars enrich the knowledge base of core academic communities since they write about things that mainstream disciplinary communities do not know of and draw attention to untapped or unknown resources. Thus, their limited participation in global scholarship will indeed impoverish knowledge production (Uzuner, 2008).

Supporters of 'English triumphalism' (Graddol, 2006:10) argue that the spread of English is natural, neutral and beneficial for international communication and mutual understanding. Crystal (2001), for one, claims that conversation without a common language between academicians from different nationalities would prove impossible. Counter to this, are other critics who reject the neutrality of English and argue that it is a form of linguistic imperialism that aims at perpetuating the hegemony of English (Phillipson, 1992). Pennycook (2001:80) argues "English threatens other languages, acts as a gatekeeper to positions of wealth and prestige...through which much of the unequal distribution of wealth, resources and knowledge operates." A less radical stance has been adopted by Canagarajah (1996) who proposes appropriating English to one's needs in the purpose of promoting diversity and a balanced ecology of languages.

Some scholars have investigated the difficulties NNES researchers face when adapting to the literacy practices of English speaking disciplinary communities (Flowerdew, 2000; Lillis & Curry, 2006). Others drew attention to the effects English-Medium Publication (EMP) is having on NNES scholars' academic career (Bidlake, 2008; Medgyes & László, 2001) and choice of research topics and methodology (Flowerdew, 2000; Lillis & Curry, 2006; Paiva & Pagano, 2001; Davis & Tschudin, 2007). However, studies on the effects EMP has on local languages are rather scarce (Mauranen, 2003; Ammon, 1990). This study, which is conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is an attempt to fill this gap. It is based on critical applied linguistics, and aims at problematizing the assumption that the dominance of EMP has no negative effects on languages outside the Inner Anglophone Circle.

Literature Review

This study is located in the field of critical applied linguistics (CALx) and critical pedagogy. The literature review section outlines the theoretical framework, discusses global inequality due to

the spread of English with reference to the current practices in academic publication and lastly investigates the effect of English-Medium Publication (EMP) on the position of local languages.

Theoretical Framework

This study aims at problematizing the ‘taken for granted’ assumption that EMP is beneficial and does not impact native languages outside the Anglophone circle. It is based on critical applied linguistics (CALx) whose goal is not simply to describe the current situation, but to question the established views and assumptions around practice and theory in language education. CALx springs from “an assumption that we live amid a world of pain” (Pennycook, 2001: 7) and that critical applied linguistics can alleviate that pain and create possibility of change. Critical language policy research is part of the field of critical applied linguistics and aims at producing social change through examining “the processes by which systems of inequality are created and sustained” (Tollefson, 2006: 43). Hence, language policies such as EMP should be viewed with a critical lens, to determine whether and how EMP promotes the spread of a dominant language i.e., English and endangers others. I support the argument that it is important to raise awareness to the detrimental effects EMP is having on languages outside the Anglophone Circle in the purpose of changing the status quo and adopting feasible solutions that will ultimately benefit all.

The Spread of English: A Critical Perspective

For many scholars, the position of English in the world is not accidental. Phillipson (1992) claims that English has been promoted by the UK and the US for their national interests. He further identifies the power expressed in the English language and reinforced by English language teaching professionals around the world as ‘linguistic imperialism’ (1998: 339). Nonetheless, Phillipson’s notion of linguistic imperialism has been criticized by Bisong (1995) who asserts that English is a linguistic choice that does not endanger indigenous languages and cultures. Fishman (1996) likewise rejects the notion of English imperialism and argues that English and local languages can actually complement each other by satisfying different needs and having different social functions. In the same line, Crystal (1997) believes that English was just in “the right place at the right time” (cited in Phillipson, 2000:105) and those who choose to speak it do so freely. Brutt-Griffler (1998, 2002) follows a similar approach in her description of ‘World English’ and De Swaan (2001) maintains that English global popularity is due to the benefits it can provide and that people choose to learn it not just because of the promotion by agents, such as the British Council, but also because of its high communicative potential.

English and Global Inequality

Although English is considered as a key to economic success of nations worldwide, its global spread has propelled significant social, political and economic inequalities. However, Conrad (1996), Davies (1996) and Fishman (1996), concur that it is the world political-economic system rather than the English language alone that is responsible for global inequality. The major threat lies in the weak political status of marginalized languages that promotes the domination of English in education, government, publication and media.

Canagarajah (1999: 41) states that “language in itself is not good or evil - it is how language is used by power structures that implicates it in evil”. Hence, metaphors used by numerous scholars in labelling English as a Tyrannosaurus Rex (Swales, 1997), a killer language (Skuttnab-Kangas, 2006) and a hydra (Rapatahana & Brunce, 2012) seem to be unsuitable. Mufwene (2001: 12) maintains: “Languages do not kill languages; their speakers do, in giving

them up, although they themselves are victims of changes in the socio-economic ecologies in which they evolve". Counter to these are the arguments put forward by Crystal, (2001) and Dalby, (2002) who attribute the cause of language death to the dominance of English and the threatening impact it is exerting on other languages. Accordingly, as people concerned with language matters, we need to encourage linguistic diversity and raise awareness to the relationship between national and international languages in the purpose of preserving the rights of minority, national and immigrant languages (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996).

English Medium for Publication (EMP)

English has become the dominant language involved in the production, reproduction and circulation of knowledge (Short et al., 2001). In this era, to publish in a language other than English is to cut oneself off from the international community of scholars and to decrease one's chance to professional advancement. Publishing in English is the only way a multilingual scholar can be noticed (Medgyes & Kaplan, 1992). The studies of Duszak & Lewkowicz (2008) and Giannoni (2008) also support this argument, whereby survey results revealed that Polish scholars favour writing in English despite the numerous difficulties they face. However, privileging English has a detrimental effect on the evolution of local languages and research cultures. It has been argued that the adoption of the Anglophone normative conventions for the sake of acceptance for publication may involve *epistemicide*, 'the repackaging of a text in terms of the dominant epistemology, thereby rendering invisible rival forms of knowledge' (Bennett, 2012: 45). Wolters (2013) posits that the price of globalization entails that NNES scholars compellingly renounce the cultural embedding of their countries since the agenda of which knowledge counts is set in an Anglophone world, where everything that does not fit to its cultural habits and traditions has little chance to surface.

Another consequence of EMP relates to the research itself. To increase chances of publication, local issues most in need of study are oftentimes eschewed in favour of issues that hold more interest for the international scientific community (Lillis & Curry, 2006; Willemyns, 2001). Contrary to these claims is the argument put forward by Peraz -Liantada, (2012) who states that English certainly offers opportunities for scientific exchange, communication with the international community and recognition and prestige for NNES scientists. In this new era of multilingualism and plurilingualism, it is the NNS researchers that need to be worried, for by not learning a foreign language, they risk being left out in this increasingly multilingual and global community. Others including Altbach (2009: 25) and Jacoby (1987: 235) call NNES researchers to take 'responsibility' and to continue 'disseminating their research and analysis in local languages' and to demonstrate their commitment to a public world and a public language.' In fact, the number of scientific publications in languages other than English keeps growing even more rapidly as the scientific communities in non-Anglo countries (for instance, in China, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Southern Europe and Latin America) expand and diversify. However, the vast majority of high impact journals are still in English. Indeed, it is the privilege attached to the internationally indexed journals that propels NNES academics toward writing and publishing in English. The cases of both Hong Kong and China (Flowerdew & Li, 2009) exemplify how publishing in center-based English-language journals is often accorded a much higher status than local publication.

While much of the literature on global English reinforces the position of English by building on the implicit and incorrect assumption that English is the only international language

of academia, numerous scholars advocate the need to counteract English linguistic hegemony so as to ensure balanced language ecology. However, if the rhetoric of maintaining linguistic diversity is to be more than pretty words on paper, solutions have to be found. Scholars need to demonstrate how linguistic diversity should and can be maintained. More studies need to unmask any academic rhetoric that claims English is detached from the forces behind its expansion and serves global equality.

Recognition that national languages are at stake can lead to action, which in turn might neutralize or minimize the threat. More academic and policy attention needs to be directed to the rise of the English language, especially in regionally specific contexts. The spread of English indeed should be viewed with a critical lens to show how privileging English can threaten local creativity and national unity. This research was motivated by my interest in issues around equal participation in producing academic knowledge (Lillis & Curry, 2006) and by my growing awareness of the difficulties faced by colleagues from non-English speaking countries including myself.

The Study

Significance of the Study

Lured by the prospect of international readability, and thereby possibility of higher citations, non-native English speaking (NNES) researchers resort to publishing their work primarily and exclusively in English since Anglophone contexts are often more valued as objects and sites of research than research coming from the outer Anglophone areas. This is attributed to the belief that English-medium publications are of higher status than publications in other languages. However, the promotion of EMP necessarily implies a demotion of local languages. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of EMP on local languages and to explore NNES researchers views regarding the adoption of EMP. This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the foremost consequences, if any, of the adoption of EMP?
2. Cognizant of the reality that EMP is now firmly established and will not likely be deposed any time soon, how can these consequences be minimized?
3. What is the effect of EMP on local languages?

Research Participants

This study used purposive sampling technique, which selects participants “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a, p. 713) and is believed to be a rich source of the data of interest (Du Gay, 1996). Based on my epistemological stance of wanting to explore the meanings academics attach to writing and publishing in a language that is not their native tongue, I used networks i.e., ResearchGate and LinkedIn and contacted 70 academics of which only 9 agreed to participate in the study. Nonetheless, I feel that this number of participants is sufficient to explore experiences from a variety of perspectives. The participants were selected based on two criteria: that they were all non-native English speakers and have done a lot of publications in English. Thus, they suited the purpose of the study and would most likely contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth. All participants hold positions within faculties of humanities, science and social sciences in international and Saudi universities. Their countries of origin are India, Turkey, Austria, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Special attention was put in selecting the nationalities. While one originated from former

colonies of the English Empire i.e., India, others came from countries where English is used as a foreign language i.e., Austria, Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

After identifying the main participants, consent letters were sent detailing the purpose of the study, expectations of participants and issues of confidentiality. Participants were told that they had the option to withdraw from the study at any time. They were also assured that their names would remain confidential and that all *information* provided would be treated with *utmost secrecy*.

Interview Design and Data Collection Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method since they serve my critical enquiry and enable me to critically study situations from cultural, economic, political, and historical perspective. Interview questions were developed in relevance to the critical literature on English hegemony and researchers' experiences; the interview was then piloted to see if it worked as planned and prompts were used to elicit more detailed responses from the researchers. Nine interviews were conducted with researchers of different nationalities, genders, ages and professions. Each interview lasted between 30-45 minutes and was held either in the working place of the participants or through detailed email conversations.

In all instances, the interviews opened with an introduction and explanation of the purpose behind the study. Rubin & Rubin (1995, cited in Du Gay, 1996) recommend that the researcher begin the interview with an informal chat about something related to the topic of the study to put the participants at ease and establish positive rapport. Participants were then asked to give some background information about themselves such as their ages, nationalities, work experiences, research interests and number of publications. The second part of the interview consisted of questions that problematize EMP and examine the effect of English on local and regional languages. Accordingly, participants were asked about their views on the dominance of English in publication, the effect it may impose on their native language, the difficulties they encounter when trying to write and publish in English and the strategies they use to overcome these obstacles.

At the end of each interview, the participants were thanked for their time and shared experiences and were assured that all the data provided would remain confidential.

Findings and Discussion

The dominant themes that emerged from the analysis of the participants' responses are as follows:

Publishing in English indexed journals

All participants attested their preference for publishing in English indexed journals. The reasons they gave were generally to reach a wider audience, to increase citation rates and to accommodate the assessment criteria. Shyam, for one, argued, in English indexed journals, 'global visibility is higher; as such the possibility of citation is more.' Similarly, Gusun stated, 'with visibility comes recognition and recognition opens closed doors' and Nadia maintained that reaching a wider readership is of utmost importance were she to attain 'high academic standards.'

In addition to trying to reach a wider audience, participants' preferred choice is also driven by the prospect of meeting the assessment expectation. Their value to their institution is

primarily based on their research output, which is measured by the number of articles published and the number of times these articles have been cited. Accordingly, both Nadia and Munir stated that although the expectation of faculty members to publish in internationally indexed journals is not always made explicit; it is well understood in general and is quickly assimilated by new faculty members. However, Gusun and Khyam noted that since they work in institutions where English is the sole medium of instruction, it is taken for granted that publications need to be in English medium.

There is also a general agreement among most of the participants that institutional support is provided for those who tend to publish in internationally indexed journals. To this end, Fahed, a senior academic, notes, 'our institution gives researchers grants, helps them to attend conferences, provides annual benefits and uses the publications to extend or shorten contracts.' However, Gusun stated that the institution where she works does not provide any support though its 'departmental policy requires two English journal publications per year from each faculty.'

It is clear that publishing in internationally indexed English journals is the target participants aim at for international readership, promotion and higher citation rates. Publishing in English indeed is the only way a multilingual scholar can be noticed (Medgyes & Kaplan, 1992; Giannoni, 2008).

Inequality and English

Despite the fact that all participants agreed that EMP policy has indeed facilitated communication across the international scientific community, almost all admitted that it has also silenced a large proportion of that community. Fahed, for one, said:

English has sidestepped, ignored and marginalized other communities...but again because you want to be visible...because the level of competition of high...so if you write internally, you will go down and your level will go down.

Similar views were expressed by Nadia, Gusun and Andrea. While Nadia stated, 'NNES writers have some really good ideas, but they are unable to express them in a language other than their own,' Gusun argued, 'English has constrained other communities because not everyone has the language proficiency to meet the demands of publishing in English' and Andrea maintained, 'language affects thinking, and, if the proficiency in a foreign language is not quite what you wish it to be, it has an effect on your writing and thinking.'

A few participants expressed their dissatisfaction to publishing exclusively in English indexed journals. Tarek, for example, found that due to English centrality, other languages have become 'peripheral.' Similarly, Ahmad drew attention to the fact that EMP 'negatively impacts the development of national societies, diminishes national language content on the Internet and ultimately leads to the impoverishment of knowledge.' This draws to mind what Uzuner (2008) warned regarding the limited participation of NNES scholars and the impoverishment of knowledge production that adds up over time. This dearth of publications indeed isolates peripheral academics from their international disciplinary communities. Fahed further blamed the low rate, outdatedness and poor quality of Arabic research and Munir expressed a feeling of remorse for not publishing in Arabic, his native language, and argued that he has always felt guilty since all researchers he collaborates with are 'from outside the Arab world.'

Publishing in local languages

Of all the participants, only four (Ahmad, Tarek, Fahed, Andrea) have published in their native language. To Fahed, publishing in one's native language is considered 'a social commitment.' He argued that in addition to fulfilling what is required (i.e. publishing in English), he has written a number of guide books in Arabic for local students: 'I want my students to have access to valuable knowledge.' Similarly, Ahmad has been fruitfully publishing in local journals for he felt it is incumbent to disseminate his research and thoughts to the local academic and non-academic readership and regards publishing in one's native language a 'must when it is about the scientific, economic or social development of the country.' Tarek has also manifested a positive attitude towards writing in his native language i.e., Arabic and stated, 'Being recognized globally, to me, is as important as being recognized regionally...it is important that we promote our language as we are promoting English.'

It seems that Ahmad, Tarek and Fahed are fulfilling what Altbach (2009: 25) calls the 'responsibility' of scholars 'to disseminate research in local languages.' For Andrea, writing in German, her native language, is particularly difficult due to the fact that 'English and German have a different direction of thinking'. Whilst 'English is more reader oriented, German focuses more on the content.' However, it is worth mentioning that Nadia declared that she has no regret for letting go of her native language in favor of English; in fact, she sees it as a 'matter of appreciation' to write or speak in the other person's native language. This point was also echoed by Gusun who explicitly stated that it was her choice to write exclusively in English. These arguments bring to mind Mufwene's (2001: 12) logical dispute that 'Languages do not kill languages; their speakers do, in giving them up, although they themselves are victims of changes in the socio-economic ecologies in which they evolve.'

It should be emphasized that all nine participants explicitly pointed out that research published in languages other than English will not be globally recognized and its citation and circulation will be limited. In fact, Nadia noted that such research 'gets buried' as it is 'globally invisible.' This concurs with what Gibbs (1995), Phillipson (2001) and Tardy (2004) posit that work not published in English tends to be undervalued or even ignored, thereby falling into the domain of 'lost science.'

Obstacles faced and strategies used when publishing in English

Studies presented by different scholars (e.g. Flowerdew 2000, 2001; Burrough-Boenisch 2003; Lillis & Curry 2006), collectively attest that writing in English creates insurmountable problems to non-Anglophone researchers whose first language is not in the same language family as English. Of all the participants, Khyam, of an Indian origin and Fahed, of an Arabic origin pointed out that due to 'limited' vocabulary (Khyam) and linguistic incompetence (Fahed); they sometimes face difficulties expressing their ideas. This feeling of unskillfulness resembles that voiced by Flowerdew (1999: 235) who argued that his sample of Hong Kong academics felt handicapped by a 'less rich vocabulary' and 'less facility in expression.' According to P8, NNES scholars face an extra 'headache' when writing academic texts. 'Our texts', he clarified, 'require a lot of editing in regards to both content and language whereas with a native speaker, only the content is edited to make the message stronger.'

The rest of the respondents, namely Khyam, Ahmad, Zaid, Tarek, Gusun and Andrea stated that they do not encounter any linguistic difficulties as they consider themselves 'fully

bilingual.’ However, Gusun noted that ‘there were times when I felt like I can write so much better if I was writing in my native language i.e., Turkish.’ She further drew attention to how time consuming the process of writing in English can be since ‘I want to make sure the draft I send out to reviewers is a mature one so when the feedback comes, it is not overwhelming.’ Zaid on the other hand, feels more competent in L2 as he stated, ‘due to under-use of lexical and stylistic devices, I have lost the ability to write academically in my native language and therefore write solely in English.’

Further difficulties mentioned by the respondents relate to their work being rejected by international journals. Scholars such as Swales (2004) contend that the main rejection criteria for NNES writers’ manuscripts are content-based aspects such as lack of clarity in presenting results rather than linguistic ones. Gusun stated that many of her papers have been rejected due to ‘incomplete data collection and analysis’ whereas Nadia related the high rejection rate to the fact that ‘reviewers are generally unfamiliar with the methodology I use.’ Similarly, Munir and Fahed argued that rejection was due to the fact that ‘content did not fit the journal criteria’ whereas Ahmad, a senior expert in the scientific and technological fields further stated, ‘it seems that there exist a certain form of rivalry’ and that ‘some journals are governed by certain schools.’ A similar argument was confirmed by Nadia: ‘reviewers come from a different paradigm than me.’ She further stated, ‘it is sad that much of our work gets rejected.’ These interpretations support Canagarajah, (2002) and Lin’s (2005: 38) arguments which suggest that NNES scholars’ papers need ‘to be framed by the perspectives of the Anglo-European center theorists’ and those of Lillis & Curry (2006) which highlight the strong influence literary brokers have on the content of academic texts produced outside the Anglophone circles.

The literature has revealed a range of strategies used by NNES scholars at various stages of writing for publication (Burrough-Boenisch, 2003; Li, 2007; Li & Flowerdew, 2007). A strategy emphasized by Fahed is that in order to get published in center journals, he regularly asks native speakers colleagues to check and edit his English whereas Nadia, Ahmad, Tarek and Munir pointed out that they usually resubmit their work to other journals since they frequently disagree with the reviewers’ comments. It is worth mentioning that one respondent, Gusun, showed a positive attitude toward reviewers’ comments whereby she stated, ‘I agree with the reviewers’ comments; therefore, I revise and either resubmit to the same journal or shop for another one.’

Demotion of local languages

One of the criticisms of EMP is its threatening impact on local languages. To this end, participants were asked to summarize the effects of EMP, if any, on their local languages. Of all participants, three (Khyam, Munir and Fahed) concurred that the dominance of English is double edged as it carries both negative and positive consequences; two (Nadia, Ahmad) expressed criticism of the status quo and three (Gusun, Zaid, Andrea) stated that the effect is neutral. On the positive effects, Khyam stated that since there are more than 22 scheduled languages in India, his country of origin, it would be more feasible to use English for scientific publications and adopt other local languages in social science disciplines as the latter is ‘generally based on field studies that have relevancy with the concerned geographical areas.’ This argument concurs with Canagarajah (1996) who proposed appropriating English to one’s needs. Munir also felt some positivity in the adoption of English as he stated that by writing exclusively in English, he is

‘contributing to the promotion of a universal language, which has always been the dream of people and Fahed maintained that English linguistic style needs to be incorporated into Arabic, his native language, since it is ‘more straightforward’, ‘clearer’ and ‘to the point.’

As regards to the negative effects, Fahed argued that English is ‘undermining, diluting and erasing our culture’ whereas Munir admitted that by promoting English, he is doing harm not only to his native language i.e., Arabic but to other main languages as well. The result, in his perspective, is ‘the dominance of English at the expense of other local languages.’ Nadia, originally from Egypt, further highlighted the negative consequences of EMP by stating:

This policy makes me less likely to try to write in Arabic because it won’t benefit me internationally...I feel ashamed of this...I want to keep pride in my own identity and language yet to be successful academically, I need to keep focusing on English and ignore Arabic.

This feeling of regret resembles that voiced by a Slovakian scholar in a study by Curry & Lillis (2004: 680) who remarked, ‘I am ashamed. We should do more.’ To this end, Ahmad recommended having a well-enforced policy for publications, through which Arabic is used to discuss national issues for as he further elaborated ‘such issues are being overlooked.’ This brings to mind the belief Curry & Lillis (2004) held on how local concerns are eschewed in favor of matters that hold more interest for the international scientific community. Nadia and Andrea further recommended supporting local publications since more linguistic diversity brings with it more diversity in thoughts and traditions’ and Fahed explicitly pointed out that Arabic scholarship has much to offer to the West; thus, ‘one should play in the arena of research internationally, but do something for his community.’ Lastly, Munir spoke of Arabizing education and supporting Arabic research, which in his viewpoint need to be a unified effort across the Arab world: ‘the Arabic culture needs to be respected and preserved because as long as we look down on our own culture, and aspire to adopt different international cultural patterns, Arabic will never gain the respect it deserves.’

Clearly, these arguments have been echoed by Baker (2001) who encouraged a balanced ecology of languages where interaction between users of languages does not allow one to spread at the cost of others and where diversity is maintained for the long-term survival of humankind.

Limitations and Recommendations

As a small-scaled exploratory study relying on interviews as the primary source of data, the research reported in this paper has obvious limitations. In regards to the selection of the participants, it is possible that those who volunteered had strong opinions regarding EMP. However, I, as a researcher, was alert for possible biases and inconsistencies in respondents’ answers. Additionally, the use of one data collection tool could also be considered as another limitation: an additional tool i.e., documentaries would have enhanced the validity of the study. However, the fact that I had only limited contact with the respondents prevented me from compiling additional data. Lastly, since the participants in this study were not randomly selected, it is unlikely to generalize the findings of the study to a larger population.

The study has definitely provided additional insight, as most views presented were consistent and validated the complexities EMP imposes and its negative effects on regional and local languages. Nonetheless, more research needs to be conducted with larger sample sizes as it may offer more insights into the publishing practices of multilingual scholars. Another area that needs to be

addressed is to examine the challenges, if any, monolingual scholars face in getting access into core disciplinary communities in the purpose of corroborating findings with the present study.

Concluding Remarks

Taken as a whole, publishing in the domestically indexed journals and publishing in internationally English indexed journals does not carry the same weight, with the latter enjoying more prestige, wider international recognition and higher citation rate. The findings in the study revealed that participants consider international refereed journals as the most important form of research publications for career advantage, and by far regarded English as the predominant language of publication. Despite the fact that all participants agreed that EMP policy has facilitated international communication and knowledge dissemination, most concurred that it has also marginalized, constrained and sidestepped national communities. However, it is worth noting that a few participants namely Ahmad, Tarek and Fahed feel responsible towards local communities; thus, in addition to fulfilling what is required (i.e. publishing in English), they have written a number of books and articles in their native language for the purpose of enriching local knowledge and serving their communities. Some participants (Khyam, Fahed) have also pointed out they sometimes struggle expressing their ideas in English while others considered themselves fully bilingual and stated that they do not encounter any notable difficulties. Nonetheless, all attested that their work is often rejected by international journals due to content-based aspects.

I believe that the so far unchallenged practice of EMP, which is part of the diffusion-of-English paradigm, should be challenged for three main reasons: First, EMP disadvantages NNES scholars who face numerous obstacles in their attempt to successfully write and publish in English. Second, EMP propels inequality between central and peripheral countries and leads to knowledge impoverishment. Third, EMP has detrimental effects on the status of local and regional languages. Therefore, I would first suggest that it is necessary for NNES researchers to engage in research that is of local and regional importance to help preserve their cultures and languages. Second, language policy makers need to provide academic writing support and training to NNES scholars and encourage linguistic diversity for it not only provides us with various linguistic properties but also preserves other languages, and sparks creativity and flexibility generated by interaction between languages (Dalby, 2002). By reaching a wide readership within and outside the academia at the local and regional levels, NNES scholars will eventually nurture the readership, stimulate discussion, and achieve an impact.

About the Autor:

Randa Sibahi has spent over fifteen years working with international students as an ESL instructor in Saudi schools and colleges, She is highly motivated, and a very enthusiastic educator. Her ultimate aim as an educator is to help students become global citizens who have the 21st century skills that will enable them to succeed and prosper in the next decades. She is currently an Ed D student at the University of Exeter.

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