# A reconsideration of Smith's ideology of English as an International Language: What it is and what it implies for English language education in Japan

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**ABSTRACT:** It is a simple fact that English is an international language in that it is one of the most widespread linguistic media of international communication. Larry Smith (1983), analyzing the state of English language usage around the world, advocated a new philosophy of 'English as an International and Intranational Language' (EIIL). Smith thought that EIIL was a more accurate term for how English was being used in most of the world than was the cover term 'English to Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL) which included 'English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and 'English as a Second Language' (ESL). Also, Watanabe and Ihara (1990) largely accepted Smith's position of 'English as an International Language' (EIL), and considered prerequisites for realizing multinational-English language education in Japan and how best to achieve them. This paper expands and deepens Watanabe and Ihara's discussion by reexamining past literature and examining others published thereafter, and reconsiders Smith's ideology of EIL and its implications for English language education in Japan. Lastly, this paper touches upon English linguistic imperialism which should be resolved when thinking of international communication.

**Key words:** English Language Education, English as an International Language, Larry Smith

## 1. Introduction

It is incontestable that English is an international language in that it is one of the most widespread linguistic media for international communication. It is the language used most frequently for Internet and international mail and at international conferences, as well as being the principal language of international commerce and aid. It is the language of air traffic controllers worldwide and, since 2001, it has been the global maritime language as well.

English can also be said to be international or global in terms of the number of its users and learners. Kirkpatrick[1], for instance, states as follows:

> All over the world people in ever-increasing numbers are using more and more varieties of English. English has become the language of international communication. Perhaps the most remarkable fact behind this increasing use of English is that the majority of English speakers are now multilingual people who have learned English and who use English to communicate with fellow multilinguals. There are many more speakers of World Englishes and people who use English for international communication than there are native speakers of it.

Not only in the number of the users and learners, but also in the richness and depth of its vocabulary, English is head and shoulders above other languages. For example, the blog site The History of English – English as a Global Language[2] states that:

> The 1989 revised "*Oxford English Dictionary*", officially the world largest dictionary, lists 615,000 words in 20 volumes. If technical and scientific words were to be included, the total would rise to well over a million.

Granted, it is difficult to compare languages due to plurals, inflected forms, slang and jargon, etc.

Nevertheless, the blog site Word Counter[3] suggests that, by contrast, Spanish has roughly 100,000 words; German, 135,000; Russian, 200,000; Italian, 270,000; and French, 100,000.

Historically, the predominance of English is mainly a result of world domination by English-speaking countries during two periods: British imperialism in the nineteenth century, and the economic influence of the United States in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The former sent English around the globe during the nineteenth century and left many Asian and African countries with English used as the official, common, instructional, or science language. At the same time, it has also provided a neutral means of communication between different ethnic groups in India, Singapore, Nigeria, etc. The latter has made the position of the English language crucially important in the areas of the Internet, science, technology, business, tourism, etc.

The joining and mixing of political, economic and cultural influences, and technological superiority acquired during successive centuries has resulted in a great increase in the number of and the geographical spread of speakers of English, especially non-native speakers who use it for international and intranational purposes. It has also contributed to the diversity of English within the total package of 'Englishes'.

This led to the coining of terms such as English as an International Language (EIL); World Englishes (WE); English as a Lingua Franca (ELF); International English (IE); and Global English (GE), and they are often used interchangeably. Some scholars recognize them as nearly identical, whereas others define them as slightly different from each other in their assumptions and focus.

However, it is not our purpose here to engage in value judgements, nor to differentiate between the terms in common use. Rather, we turn our attention to the fact that there is an ever-increasing acceptance of English as a viable candidate for the title of "world's most important international language," and, therefore, that English is being more denationalized and has become more multinational, with more localized standards in this global age.

Larry Smith[4–6], analyzing the state of English language usage around the world, advocated a new philosophy of 'English as an International and Intranational language'(EIIL), although in 1971 Takao Suzuki[7] presented a similar idea of 'Englic' for Japanese students to learn and use for international purposes instead of English per se.

Smith[4] thought that EIIL was a more accurate term for how English was being used in most of the world than was the cover term 'English to Speakers of Other Languages'(ESOL) which included 'English as a Foreign Language'(EFL) and 'English as a Second Language'(ESL).  He presented some of the features which distinguish ESOL from EIIL under the following categories: Scope and Depth of Language Treatment, "Officialdom" Public Function, Purpose of Learning, Student Population, Language Model, Performance Target, Language Interactors, Cultural Emphasis.

Also, Watanabe and Ihara[8] largely accepted Smith's position and determined which of his categories seemed the most suitable for changing English language education in Japan into one more in synch with the prevailing situation of English usage around the world. The paper also considered prerequisites for realizing multinational-English language education in Japan and how best to achieve them.

This paper expands and deepens Watanabe and Ihara's discussion by reexamining past literature and examining others published thereafter. We will reconsider Smith's ideology of EIL and its implications for English language education in Japan because such EIL education has not yet been fully realized here and has been only cursorily referenced in the official Course of Study.

## 2. EIL and Its implications for English Language Education in Japan

### 2-1. The language to be learned and purposes for learning it

It can safely be assumed that, for good or for ill, English will continue to be the most widely used medium of international communication for at least the next few decades. This means that English has become the common language of a great number of different nations who interact in governmental, academic, industrial, business, religious, cultural, social, and athletic contexts. As mentioned in the previous section, this increase in the use of English and number of English speakers has led to the development of a functional concept of EIIL.  This acronym derives from Smith's term for a combination of English as an International language (EIL), used for communication by people of different nations, and English as an Intranational Language used by people of the same non-English-speaking country as a common language. The function of EIIL is quite different from those of EFL or ESL, which are usually grouped together under the term ESOL. Smith[5], referring to the student population, shows this distinction clearly in the following chart:

According to Smith[5], Fig. 1 shows the more traditional distinction in English instruction which separates native and non-native speakers. The assumption is that non-natives will become like native speakers in their use of English, and that native speakers will make little or no effort to accommodate non-native English. In Fig. 2, there is a place for native English as it is spoken/written to other native speakers of the same country, but there is also a place for native speakers of English studying how English is used by non-natives, as well as how English is used by native speakers of other countries. Under English as an intranational language there is a listing of American English, British English, etc., but this does not refer to native-English-speaking Americans or native-English-speaking British people, etc., but to immigrants and/or resident aliens who use English in the country but who do not allow it to replace their mother tongue. To reiterate briefly, Fig. 1 has only one place for native English speakers while Fig. 2 has two places for them; one for native speakers communicating with other native speakers of the same country, and another for native speakers communicating with internationals, some of whom may be native speakers of English but
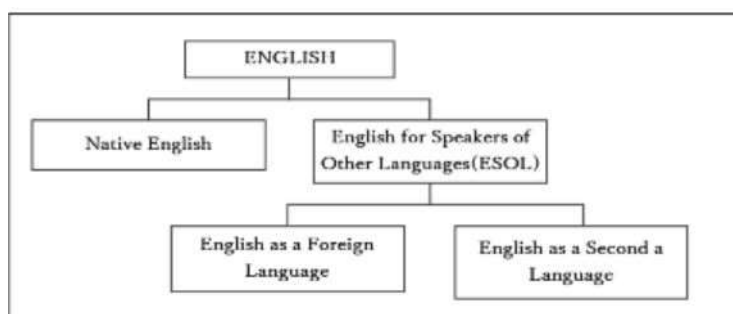


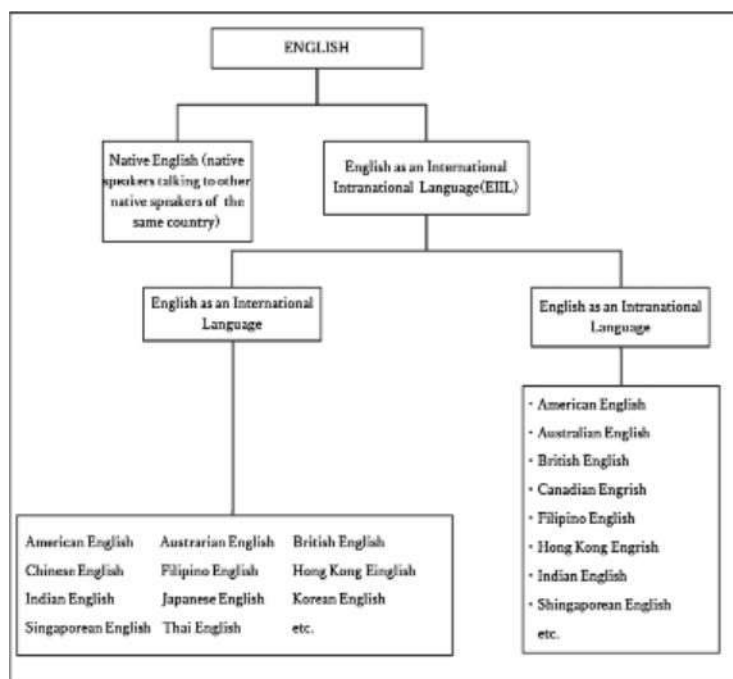**Fig. 1.** ESOL distinction, Smith 1983, p 17.



**Fig. 2.** EIIL distinction, Smith 1983, p 17.

many of whom are not.

From the above, we can understand that the EIL Smith refers to is an aggregate of various varieties of English from around the world used for communicating internationally with people of different nations.

The purpose of learning EIIL is definitely different from that of learning ESOL. The learning of EFL and ESL usually aims at absorbing the cultures as well as the English varieties of native-speaking nations which are most closely related with the learners. However, global circumstances have changed, and nowadays virtually all nations and people around the world must get and send information or communicate with each other for enlightenment and productivity in every arena. This situation has greatly changed the reasons and motivations for learning English: to learn English to facilitate international communication between nations or people around the world, not just for communication between nations or people of native English speaking and non-natives. Referring to the new role of English in international communication, Smith[5] proposes that in most parts of the world EIIL should replace ESOL as a school subject.

It is well known that Japan is what used to be called an EFL context, not a situation where a certain native dialect must be used, much less any particular intranational English dialect, such as Indian English, Singaporean English, Nigerian English, etc. It is also commonly recognized that Japan is still in the process of internationalization in politics, economics, culture, education, sports etc. For example, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, as of 2017, some 1,351,970 Japanese lived and worked overseas. Furthermore, as of 2019, according to the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, Japan, about 1,460,463 foreigners work in Japan. It is estimated that both numbers will continue to increase, and actually, they are on the rise. In the area of sports, for instance, half of the members of Japan's National Rugby Team 2019 are from different nations. Similar situations can be seen with Japanese professional baseball and soccer teams. Going forward, Japan can be increasingly expected to play such an important role in the world that it must come into contact, not only with English-speaking nations, but also with nations whose national languages are not English. Japan is in a situation that Watanabe and Ihara[8] called "Multinational Communication," which means international communication or global communication. Therefore, the English to be learned as a school subject in Japan should be one suitable for international communication for various purposes, that is to say, an EIL dialect.

## 2-2. Language forms

It should be noted that international communication takes place both in spoken and written forms. When it comes to talking about communication in English, we tend to refer only to the spoken form. It goes without saying that speaking and listening are important skills, but reading and writing are skills as important as, or in some cases of communication, more important than the other two skills. At some international conferences and in some international business communication, for example, the written form plays a crucial role in the transaction of affairs. Also, to those who might not have opportunities to go abroad or come into direct contact with foreigners in their own country, the written form is an important and sometimes the only medium for getting information and for understanding other cultures. McKay and Brown[9], referring to the unique features of particular varieties of English, state that:

> In most cases, these features are far more prevalent in spoken, informal English, although they can be used in some professional formal spoken contexts such as call centres. Formal written English, on the other hand, tends to display far fewer of these features and, in many ways, comes closest to what might be thought of as a universal standard of English usage. There is a fairly consistent standard that is displayed in the writing of most academic, professional and diplomatic writing...

Japan is a country where, as Birch[10] puts it so aptly, there are few opportunities for "the overt reciprocal negotiation of meaning typical of spoken interaction" in everyday life and where "there may be more reliance on established norms." However, it is also a fact that spoken forms are used as an important medium of international communication around the world and that they are assumed to be more and more necessary in Japan, too. Therefore, we are concerned both with spoken and written forms of EIL in the English language education of Japan.

## 2-3. Student population

It goes without saying that EIL communication covers both native and non-native speakers. Students studying EFL, ESL and English as an intranational language are all non-native speakers of English; however, for EIL communication, both native and non-native speakers make up the student population. Nakayama[11] advocates that native speakers should be taught in such a way as to allow them to interact

effectively with non-native speakers. This is where EIL departs from ESOL communication. Smith[12] states along the same lines that native speakers must be taught what to expect of other internationals when they communicate with them in either spoken or written English. For example, native speakers are encouraged to take every opportunity to listen to non-native speakers on tape, read English business documents produced by multinational corporations, and read literature written in English by non-native speakers. Fortunately, Strevens[13] points out that in Nigeria and India, for example, spoken forms are used as an important medium of international communication. In addition, Smith[14] suggests that reading English literature written by non-native speakers can be of great help to native speakers because they can know how non-native speakers structure their information and argument when using English, although literature-loving British people, for example, have likely already experienced reading English literature written by Joseph Conrad from Poland, and George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, and James Augustine Aloysius Joyce from Ireland, etc. Smith[14] further argues that native speakers must also sharpen their perceptions of what may go wrong in an intercultural conversation and recognize the need for talking with the other person about what has gone wrong when there is a communication break down. That is to say, Smith[14] emphasizes that native speakers must be sensitized to the probability of misunderstanding and be prepared to deal with it.

Suzuki[15], in recommending the use of Englic, whose concept is almost the same as EIL, claims that if the Japanese endeavor to master, for example, British English, it must be assumed that British people have already made a determination as to what is "right" in English language usage, putting the Japanese at a disadvantage from the outset. An ideal international language must be one that is as equidistant to as many people as possible. Now that English has the position of an international language, every effort should be made to bring it much closer to non-native English-speaking people to make it equidistant, although consideration will be given as to how to get over the problem of English language imperialism in Chapter 3.

Although native English speakers need to shift their attitudes and assumptions towards EIL, there are some urgent changes required of non-native speakers as well. As Smith[14] indicates, they must, on their part, make themselves more familiar with the ways other non-native speakers use English and thus become more tolerant of the many valid English varieties. A Japanese businessperson will not be very successful with a Chinese if he or she expects their counterpart to do business just like an American simply because he or she is using English. Japanese students will lack intercultural understanding if they learn only the American way of life just because they are learning English. It is time for non-native speakers to shift from a native-speaker dominated viewpoint to an any-speaker-oriented attitude towards English. Our position is that users of EIL, both native and non-native, should be educated in the distinctive features of other varieties of EIL. For example, they could be informed about the use of "lah" at the ends of sentences in Singaporean or Malaysian English. The particle doesn't change the meaning of a sentence but does indicate stress or tone. ("Sorry! Cannot, lah!") It might be helpful in business transactions for a non-native speaker of English to know that when a Japanese person says, "Yes" to a proposal, he or she may not actually be indicating approval but may simply be translating the Japanese word "Hai," which may mean assent or may also have one of several other meanings, such as simple acknowledgement that an interlocutor is listening attentively.

## 2-4. Language interlocutors

It should be made explicit that the interlocutors in EIL communication are nationals of different countries, that is, EIL communication is carried out between (a) native speakers of different nations, (b) native speakers and non-native speakers, and (c) non-native speakers of different nationalities.

In an EFL situation, the language interlocutors are generally the same. The local non-native speaker interacts with the native speaker (L2⇔L1). This may be in written or spoken form and it may be productive or receptive. However, the flow of information from native to non-native tends to be overwhelmingly one-way because the non-native speaker presumably wants to learn native English and its culture, and the native speaker is in a position of providing information and knowledge about English and its culture. Conversely, the flow of information from non-native to native is limited except, for example, when the non-native speaker introduces him- or herself, provides superficial information about his or her culture, or asks questions about English and its culture etc. In an EFL situation, the native speaker may not be seeking information as much as trying to teach or inform. An American, for example, who really wants to know about Japanese language and its culture would likely study such things in a Japanese classroom in the USA (in a JFL situation in the US) or come to Japan to study as a foreign student.

In an ESL situation, the interlocutors may be a local non-native speaker and a native speaker (L2⇔L1) or the interaction might be between a local non-native speaker and other local non-native speakers from different ethnic groups (intranational L2⇔L2).

Conversely, in an intranational situation, the interlocutors are generally in-country nationals. They are local non-native speakers interacting with other local non-native speakers from different ethnic groups (intranational L2⇔L2).

In Japan, since it is in an EFL situation, English language education seems to have almost all of the emphasis placed on interactions between native speakers and non-native speakers, British or Americans and Japanese, for instance. The language model was British English before World War II, and since its end, American English has been preferred. For the first two years after its inception in 1987, the AETs (Assistant English Teachers now called ALTs, Assistant Language Teachers) employed in Japan through the JET [Japan Exchange and Teaching Program(me)] were all native speakers, the majority of whom were British and Americans.

However, it should be remembered that English is also used between native speakers of different nations, for example, Americans and Australians. More significantly, English is used more frequently today than ever before between non-native speakers of different nations, e.g., Japanese and Indonesians. Interactions between non-native speakers of different nations are increasing to such an extent that they might bring in their wake new communication problems among users of various EIL varieties. In order to cope with this situation properly, the trainees and students of educational institutions and academic sectors in non-native nations should be taught how to interact with other non-native speakers.

In addition to interactions between (a) native speakers of different nations (L1⇔L1), and (b) native speakers and non-native speakers (L1⇔L2), EIL varieties are now used between (c) non-native speakers of different nations in international settings (international L2⇔L2). Therefore, we stand firmly on the position that special attention should be paid to the latter category.

## 2-5. Cultural emphasis

It should be noted that the cultural emphasis may be placed upon the cultures of specified countries in which the students are interested (Culture Specific), or it could be placed on ways to learn about different cultures and how to develop a greater tolerance for differences in culture (Culture General).

In an EFL situation, the cultural emphasis is placed upon the cultures of English-speaking nations. Some text materials, for example, may deal with what the British do on holidays and what Americans have for breakfast.

In an ESL situation, the cultural emphasis is usually placed similarly to that in an EFL situation, but sometimes the text materials may be introduced in such a way as to deal with the cultures of local ethnic groups within the country.

In an intranational situation, the cultural emphasis is placed on the dominating cultures within the country.

However, here is a problem to consider. Why is it necessary for the cultural emphasis to be placed on the culture of English-speaking nations, especially in an EFL situation? It is often said, and in fact it is true, that language and culture are inextricably tied together. But it is also true that there is no such thing as the culture of English-speaking nations. We know that there are many different cultures within English-speaking countries; for example, there are at least four cultures in the United Kingdom: English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish. Also, in many different African cultures, English is used as their official or common language. Taking these facts into consideration, we would like to emphasize the fact that the use of English is not a homogenizing factor which causes cultural differences to disappear, but rather that it offers a medium through which to express and explain these differences.

Language and culture may be inextricably bound together, but we must be aware that English language has many varieties. So, it follows that English cannot be tied only to the cultures of American or British people. English could also be tied to the cultures of India, the Philippines, and Kenya when used by those non-native speakers. In this sense no one needs to acquire the culture of only English-speaking people to become good users of English. The cultural emphasis in learning EIL could be placed on the cultures of nations chosen by the students. This attitude towards the relationship between language and culture will help students to grow more tolerant of cultural differences. What is more, as McKay[16] points out, in an EIL classroom there are three principles that should inform how cultural content is handled: first, the cultural materials should be used in such a way that students are encouraged to reflect on their own culture in relation to others, thus helping to establish a sphere of interculturality; second, the diversity that exists within all cultures should be emphasized; finally, cultural content should be examined so that students consider what assumptions are present in the text and in what other ways the topic could be discussed. These items

are also in harmony with the aims of the teaching guidelines concerning intercultural understanding of our Course of Study, both now and for the past several decades.

## 2-6. Language model

It should be remembered that the English language model can be any "educated English," either native or non-native. By model we do not simply mean the English of the classroom teacher, but also the written and spoken text is considered to represent the so-called "standard" English. The textbook and the listening materials would be included in this category. It goes without saying that the teacher could be greatly influenced by the text. However, in fact, in an EFL situation the model is almost always the English used by the educated native speaker, and non-native English-speaking teachers tend to be underestimated no matter how proficient they are. In some situations, the academic level of schools is rated by the number of native English teachers on the staff.

The language model in an ESL situation may be educated native speakers, but quite often it is educated speakers of the local English variety. This is because ESL situations have two social aspects: one is that most of the people in an ESL situation don't have to have contact with foreigners worldwide in English, just like the people in an EFL situation, and the other is that they, at the same time, have to communicate in English with the in-country people from other ethnic groups.

In an intranational situation, an educated native speaker or an educated speaker of the local English variety can be used. This is because intranational situations also present two scenarios: one is that immigrants and/or resident aliens in a native English country would make an educated native speaker their language model, and the other is that the nationals in a non-native English country would make an educated speaker of the local English variety their language model.

However, what is usually recognized here is that in these situations, and in an EFL situation in particular, English is taught from the native-English-dominated perspective, especially from the conventional Anglo-American-English-dominated perspective in which British or American English is considered to be the only acceptable norm. However, it is important to note that English has many acceptable varieties and that there are many valid varieties of English.

Then, what are acceptable or valid varieties of English? Strevens[17], referring to the existence of 'standard' and non-standard forms of English, defines 'Standard English' as one dialect which: (i) is spoken with almost any accent and has no obligatory 'paired' accent of its own; (ii) is encountered with only trivial variation throughout the English-using world (he is referring here to grammar and lexis, it should be recalled, and not to pronunciation); (iii) is almost universally accepted by native speakers of English as a suitable model of English for teaching their own young and for teaching foreign learners. Besides, he adds as follows:

> "Note that 'standard' here does *not* imply 'imposed', nor yet 'of the majority'. One interesting aspect of Standard English is that in every English-using community those who habitually use *only* Standard English are in a minority: that is to say, over the global population of English-users monodialectal Standard English-users are in a very small minority... I surmise that Standard English, like 'standard' forms in other languages, is one product of fundamental psycho-social mechanisms, by means of which both the cohesion and the hierarchies of society are roughly paralleled within language."

However, although Strevens defines Standard English as referring to native users of English only, McArthur[18] takes it in a more global sense calling it 'World Standard English,' and classifies it into eight variety circles including not only native Standard English varieties, but also Caribbean Standard English variety, as well as Indian and Pakistani ones called 'Standard(izing) English' and Hong Kong, Singaporean, and even Japanese ones (it seems to refer to *The Japan Times*) called 'Standardizing English'.

Here we notice that what the above two Standard English assertions have in common is the fact that there is an 'internationally high-valued form' across the English using world as was referred to in 2-2. as a universal standard of English usage, that is to say, a fairly consistent standard that is displayed in the writing of most academic, professional and diplomatic writing. This form that can be called an *educated variety* of English may be spoken with an identifiable local accent and with a small admixture of local expressions and vocabulary because any speaker of language uses a dialect of more or less local type with local accents according to his or her region, social stratum, job, etc.. Therefore, the only norm for the choice of the pattern of English to be taught in a particular community should be an educated variety of English and intelligible across these many varieties (as for 'educated' here, Smith and Rafiqzad[19] note that it

refers to formal education, usually up to and including the tertiary level).

What is needed, then, is to move from linguistic authoritarianism of the 'native-speaker says' variety to a speech fellowship-specific realism, as Kachru[20] states. Any variety of English, including the varieties of English-speaking nations, should be accepted as far as it is received by and intelligible to educated people. These varieties of English may be labeled as "educated EIL varieties." If there are persons worried about the degradation of the quality of English, they may be encouraged to take the first opportunity to use educated native speakers in their classes, schools, or communities as Smith[5] suggests.

Hopefully it is clear by now that students should be exposed to educated EIL varieties both written and spoken by multinationalists all over the world. We should note here that in multinational settings the language model can be any educated variety of English, either native or non-native, if it complies with the students' needs and interests.

## 2-7. Performance target

By performance target we mean the ultimate ability to produce English we expect students to acquire when they go through their educational system. The performance target in an EFL situation, so far, has been to achieve the performance level of an educated native speaker. This has always been the goal in EFL situations, yet it has almost never been attained. This is largely because people in an EFL situation can live in their nations even if they cannot use English, except specialists such as translators, scholars or businesspersons working worldwide, etc. In fact, very few teachers expect their students to achieve this level of mastery, but it has been the target nevertheless.

This is also often the case in ESL situations, but sometimes institutions and teachers aim for the performance level of an educated speaker of the local English variety from the same reason as that of the case of the language model in ESL situations.

In an intranational situation, the performance level of the educated speaker of the local English variety is always its performance target. The performance level of an educated native speaker would be inappropriate when English is used as an intranational language, unless of course the local English variety is a native English variety. From what Strevens[22] and Kirkpatrick[23] suggest, we surmise that this is because in an intranational situation where the interactors are only between non-native speakers of English from different ethnic groups in the same country, there occurs a lectal range or a style range such as

acrolect or cultivated style, mesolect or general style, and basilect or broad style among non-native local varieties of English in their nativization processes, and the acrolect or the cultivated style which the educated speakers of the local varieties tend to use is institutionalized and becomes the performance target, not a native variety.

The majority of Japanese, as well as others in EFL and ESL situations, have been making efforts to acquire near-native English, especially Anglo-American English because they have taken it for granted that native British and American Englishes are "the" standard forms of English and the norm. They, therefore, tend to think of the non-native speaker English used by other peoples as "non-educated English", or "sub-standard English", or sometimes "second-class English". But, in international communication, the performance target need not, and even should not be educated British English or American English. We should realize that Japanese, as mentioned above, cannot acquire the same competence in English as native speakers, chiefly because they only begin learning English well past puberty in a situation where native English input cannot and need not be gotten on an everyday basis. We should reconfirm that Japanese need not master those minute peculiarities of British or American English, especially when they play a relatively small role in international communication. We should remember that Japanese need not imitate British English or American English too closely, since there is a danger of familiarizing themselves with only one variety of English, thus losing international dimension.

However, this does not mean "anything goes". Users of "educated EIL varieties", either native or non-native, must continue to be concerned with what is intelligible, acceptable, identifiable and appropriate.

The most basic concern is with "phonological intelligibility". If a person doesn't speak clearly enough to be understood, his or her message is lost. So, what is expected of English class in Japan for international communication, that is to say, EIL class in Japan, would be to teach at least the distinction between English phonemes or suprasegmental phonemes such as stress, pitch, and juncture. However, it seems that the minute distinction, for example, between intonations the native speakers sometimes use for their nuance expression or allophone-related items such as free variant would be not so much difficult for non-natives to learn as unnecessary to teach.

The second concern is with "grammatical acceptability". If a person uses ungrammatical sentences too often, there may arise ambiguity in his

or her message. As was referred to in 2-2. and 2-6., there is a universal standard of English usage that is displayed in the writing of most academic, professional and diplomatic writing that may be spoken with an identifiable local accent and with a small admixture of local expressions and vocabulary. The grammatical use for the students to be taught and attain in EIL class in Japan should not fall below this standard.

The third concern is with "semantic identification". If a Japanese says, "He is sleeping *like a pig*" in a literal translation from the corresponding Japanese usage, no one other than a Japanese person will identify it as "He is sleeping *like a log*," although "He is sleeping *soundly*" is more identifiable in international communication than "He is sleeping *like a log*," as is commonly used by Americans and British native speakers. This concern shows that in order to make semantic identification unmistakable, intercultural knowledge or understanding worldwide is indispensable in EIL class.

The last concern is with "sociolinguistic appropriateness." If a person negotiating with a foreigner doesn't have enough sociocultural knowledge about the interlocutor's country, the negotiation will frequently fail because of inappropriate use of the language, for example, and he or she will not be able to proceed smoothly. Here again, we can recognize that, in order to eradicate this concern, instruction for increasing intercultural knowledge or global understanding is needed.

So far as the four concerns above are taken into consideration, any educated EIL variety ought to be accepted without prejudice by native or non-native speakers. British and American Englishes are not *the* only norms. Any "educated variety of English" including Japanese English will do. It is time for us to realize that English no longer belongs exclusively to its native speakers, and that we should take pride in our own English: "There is no room for linguistic chauvinism" as Smith[24] strongly insists.

## 3. EIL and English Linguistic Imperialism

When we reconsider Smith's ideology of English as an international language, we cannot help touching upon the issue of 'English Linguistic Imperialism', because many concerns and criticisms against the global spread of English have emerged since Smith's assertion of EIL. For example, Phillipson[25] presents a working definition of linguistic imperialism such that "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of

structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages," and he further asserts that "English linguistic imperialism is seen as a sub-type of linguicism" which means linguistic discrimination.

However, it seems that the global spread of English has caused two opposite assertions. One is, as Phillipson argues, that the global spread of English can be seen as linked to linguistic imperialism, and it may marginalize other languages, advantaging the Americans and British, since English can be a gatekeeper to science, education, employment, business opportunities and popular culture. As Cristal[26] suggests:

> ... it is possible for example, that scientists who do not have English as a mother tongue will take longer to assimilate reports in English compared with their mother-tongue colleagues, and will as a consequence have less time to carry out their own creative work. It is possible that people who write up their research in languages other than English will have their work ignored by the international community. It is possible that senior managers who do not have English as a mother tongue, and who find themselves working for English-language companies in such parts of the world as Europe or Africa, could find themselves at a disadvantage compared with their mother-tongue colleagues, especially when meetings involve the use of informal speech. There is already anecdotal evidence to suggest that these things happen.

It goes without saying that an ideal international language should be equidistant, fair, and neutral.

The other, opposing assertion is that the global spread of English has produced many dialectal varieties of English which promote the changing nature of English in different contexts, and has changed English from a homogenizing factor to the language of empowerment for non-natives, so English can no longer be thought of as 'owned' by any single nation, and actually it is even appropriated by non-native cultures. For example, Strevens[27] gives examples of English becoming the vehicle for five uses among L2 English-using communities as follows: public education, public administration, science and technology; the mass media; international entertainment and publicity; and literature. As for literature, in particular, as we referred to in 2-3., Strevens introduces an appropriated case such as Nigeria and also India where there has arisen an important literacy profession working entirely in English yet created by and for a readership who are

not English L1 speakers.

It stands to reason that Smith's ideology belongs to the latter assertion. His stance is that the spread of English is not a homogenizing factor which causes cultural differences to disappear, but rather that the use of English offers a medium to express and explain these differences. For example, Smith[28] states:

> Krishnaswamy and Aziz (1978) have pointed out, "The government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen believes that English is necessary for contacts with other countries; the people realize that English is essential for trade, scientific studies, etc." According to Krishnaswamy and Aziz, "materials from the English-speaking world that are in use are meant to propagate the middle-class style of life and western ideologies". The feeling that these materials carry a chauvinistic attitude was not seen as grounds to reject the language but as grounds to change the content of the materials to "make English the vehicle of Yemen culture". One would hope that the rejection of foreign chauvinism will not be replaced by an indigenous variety.

Here, he asserts that English should be owned by both natives and non-natives rejecting chauvinism, but at the same time, points out the importance of non-natives getting rid of their own chauvinism as well. This is a rather different attitude from that in the world of ESOL.

However, Tsuda[29] criticizes the ideology of EIL for being 'a trap' made up by Americans to retain English as a world language, since American English and British English have arguably lost their dominance position around the world.

We have no justifiable response to the criticism that the ideology of EIL is a trap, but we surely know of many instances where native speakers of English are greatly advantaged and non-native speakers of English are disadvantaged, and at the same time, we also recognize the linguistic reality that we cannot help using English in the international context even when we assert that the ideology of EIL is a trap.

In order to cope with this dilemma, we propose to take the position that 'EIL ideology' is a realistic view and 'English linguistic imperialism ideology' is an idealistic one and that the two should be reconciled with each other and coexist compatibly, as Kubota[30] recommends. That is to say, we should admit the strong currency of English use around the globe, and use English to express and explain both native and non-native's cultures and positions without playing up to native-English authoritarianism, paying our greatest respect to the interlocutor's mother tongue and culture in order to conduct smooth international and intercultural communication that is as equidistant and fair as possible.

If someone says, "It is not enough or even possible to settle all aspects of linguistic discrimination and realize completely fair communication," we would prefer to say, "Please give us time, and allow us to present an alternative method of communication." Crystal[31] states the following:

> A rather more plausible scenario is that an alternative method of communication could emerge which would eliminate the need for a global language. The chief candidate here is automatic translation ('machine translation'). If progress in this domain continues to be as rapid as it has been in the past decade, there is a distinct possibility that, within a generation or two, it will be routine for people to communicate with each other directly, using their first languages, with a computer 'taking away the strain' between them.

## 4.  Conclusion

Smith systematized the present condition of English usage around the globe and elaborated it as a linguistic ideology of EIL for international communication which ought to be as fair and neutral as possible, partially applying it to EIL education as well. We highly appreciate his EIL ideology in that it resulted from his teaching students from Asian and Pacific countries and researching language and culture in the East West Center, Hawaii. No doubt he discussed it deeply with his colleagues and deliberated long over the status quo of English in the world, taking into consideration the equality of international communication within the framework of English-using. However, we are not saying that British English education and American English education should be abandoned or neglected. It goes without saying that British English education and American English education, which are typically seen in EFL situation, are necessary and have their own value, especially in understanding British and American culture, history, politics, literature, and above all lifestyle, in order to promote smoother exchange with the UK and USA. However, in our opinion, British English education and American English education should be conducted at the tertiary level of education, for example, as a British or American studies major in university and

technical or vocational school, etc.

When we think of the general English course in elementary and secondary schools, judging from the status quo of English use in the world and the equality of international communication, it is now appropriate to change the content and teaching methodology into those of EIL.

If EIL education were to be introduced into English language education in Japan, the following goals would ideally be realized: It would enable Japanese students to develop the ability to communicate their ideas and culture to non-Japanese people in spoken and written forms. It would help them learn about different cultures and participate in activities outside their own. It would encourage them to become more tolerant of varieties of English used by the people of different linguistic backgrounds. And finally, it would help Japanese people shed their linguistic as well as other inferiority complexes, thus allowing them to make greater contributions to the welfare of their fellow human beings.

In order to attain such EIL education in Japan, Japanese teachers must be aware of the following: first, the language to be taught is 'EIL varieties' with the ultimate goal of international communication; second, international communication takes place in the written as well as in the spoken form; third, both native and non-native speakers of English have a great deal to gain through effective interaction in international communication; fourth, 'EIL varieties' are to be recommended between nationals of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds; fifth, the emphasis should be placed on the cultures of counties chosen by the students, or it could be placed on ways to learn about different cultures and developing a greater tolerance for differences in culture; sixth, the variety of English to be chosen can be any "educated English" so long as it complies with the students' needs and interests; seventh, the performance target is "phonologically intelligible English", "grammatically acceptable English", "semantically identifiable English", and "sociolinguistically appropriate English". In short, there must be a shift from a native-speaker-dominated to any-speaker-oriented perspective — "the perspective of EIL".

However, these are only outlines; further and more detailed consideration will be needed for the realization of EIL education in Japan. There are many more hurdles to overcome: How can those outlines be better reflected in the classroom teaching materials?; How should information about different cultures be processed and students be made more tolerant of other cultures?; How must teachers be trained to ensure the best outcomes?; Should methodology remain the same in classroom routines and techniques? It will certainly take time and hard work to work toward these goals, but what is necessary now is to take the first step towards teaching English from the perspective of EIL here in Japan. Resolve to do it.

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