

fresh water

World Englishes: Mexicanized Uses of English

ARMENTA-DELGADO, Ileri

hello "teacher"!

she's a strawberry

she falls me fat

I'm until the mother

what's up "compadre"?

what happens to



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World Englishes: Mexicanized Uses of English

Variaciones del inglés en el mundo: Usos mexicanizados del inglés

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World Englishes: Mexicanized Uses of English

The Book will offer selected contributions of researchers that contribute to the scientific dissemination activity of the Universidad de Guanajuato for its research area in the function of the University facing the challenges of the Knowledge Society. In addition to having a total evaluation, in the hands of the directors of the Universidad de Guanajuato, quality and punctuality are collaborated in their chapters, each individual contribution was arbitrated to international standards (RESEARCH GATE, MENDELEY, GOOGLE SCHOLAR and REDIB), the Book thus proposes to the academic community, the recent reports on the new developments in the most interesting and promising areas of research in the function of the University before the challenges of the Knowledge Society.

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Objectives and Methodology

The objective of this investigation is to explore, in the social context of Mexico, the nativized uses which have come about with the adoption of English, as well as to explore the perceptions of teaching professionals concerning this phenomenon. This qualitative case study makes use of interviews and diaries as a means of gathering information, this in order to broach the study. In the primary stage, through the use of informal interviews with English teachers, local uses of the foreign language were explored. These local uses were obtained through direct contact with students, from what had been observed in the classroom. This first stage allowed for the collection of a list of concepts and expressions created by Mexican students, “in English” or in “Mexican English”, as it were. A second phase of formal interviews with the participants followed, exploring their vision of the said phenomenon. The use of a research diary, in which events observed by the investigator were recorded, was another instrument utilized in the course of the investigation. In the same way, the diary functioned as a place for the recording of reflections which were the result of an ongoing analysis of emerging information. The use of these research tools allowed the obtention of diverse sorts of information, which through the various phases of the investigation allowed the researcher to make a profound analysis of the case.

Contribution

The English language is considered to be a *lingua franca*, or a language for international communication. The language facilitates communication and interaction between persons of different languages, cultures and ethnicities. Nonetheless, in the teaching of the language, phrases such as “in English we say it this way” or “we don’t say that in English” are common but questionable discourses, because they present the cultural and linguistic transfers of the students as a problem. Additionally, this posture assumes that all users of English should speak and act the same when using the foreign language. Nevertheless, from the perspective of World Englishes (or variations of English in the world) theory, cultural and linguistic transfer by users and learners of English is not only acceptable, but should be conceived of as desirable. In this scenario, the present investigation proposes a change of paradigm in which, beyond the question of “standard English” (seen as a model for speech and behavior), cultural diversity and different manners of viewing the world will unquestionably be reflected in diverse forms of acting, varying concepts, different language structures and accents, all of which may be recognized as valid. To the measure in which individuals sensitize themselves to cultural diversity, so will they be better prepared for the mediation between cultures taking place in the English language, the language of international communication.

Linguistic/cultural transfer, English variations, Standard English

List of Abbreviations

ELT	English Language Teaching
L1/C1	First Language/First Culture
L2/C2	Second Language/Second Culture
ENL	English as a Native Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
LFE	Lingua Franca English
WE	World Englishes
NS	Native Speaker
NNS	Non-Native Speaker
WSSE	World Spoken Standard English
RP	Received Pronunciation
GA	General American
SE	Standard English

Chapter 1 Introduction

*“There is a single English language but many varieties”
(Smith, 1983)*

1.1 The Focus of the Investigation

English in Mexico is taught as a foreign language (EFL) or an international language for communication (EIL). As in many countries where English shares the same status, the way in which it is used in these different parts of the world has given rise to variations in its use. This occurs as a result of transfer from first languages and cultures, thus affecting the way the foreign language is used. This phenomenon has led to a discussion of World Englishes (WE), a paradigm that studies the way in which features of local languages have transferred into English, whether the transfer takes place at a lexical, grammatical, phonological or at a discourse level (Jenkins, 2006a, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Saraceni, 2015).

However, contrasting views on this phenomenon exist. On the one hand, the discussion offered by WEs recognizes the plurality of English, a language that is used by linguistically and culturally diverse speakers. As such, it is acknowledged that these factors can have an impact on the way people use language. But, on the other hand, there is a view concerned with the preservation of a standard form of English, especially if this language is to fulfill its purpose as a functioning *lingua franca*, that is to say a common language for communication. Such contrasting discussions between localism versus globalism have led to many other arguments, in that some scholars oppose to the notion that English users should acquire a so-called “native like competency” (Jenkins, 2006a, 2012, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2006). Others view this as the homogenizing of language/cultures, or linguistic and cultural imperialism (Phillipson, 2008; Pennycook, 1994; Canagarajah, 1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2008). So then, there are many different and intersecting arguments on the topic of WEs. Not only do these arguments concern the identification and analysis of new forms of English, but also ideological positions surrounding this phenomenon.

Thus, this investigation proposes to explore what is going on with English in the environment of Mexico. The investigation studies the local uses of English, and the perceptions of ELT practitioners of such localized uses of English.

1.2 Mexican English? First Encounter

The first time I came across a Mexican cultural concept was in my own English class a few years ago when a student asked me “Teacher, how do you say ‘*agua fresca*’?” to which I simply answered, “fresh water”. My own experience replicated the experiences of other English teachers, the following examples illustrate this.

Student: Teacher, ¿como se dice ‘soda en bolsa’?//Teacher: In English you don’t say that.

*Teacher: What do you like to drink with your meals?//Student: ‘Fresh water’//Teacher: That doesn’t exist in America, you’ll have to order black tea or soda.
(Research notes)*

The first dialogue is from an event which the researcher witnessed when doing a class observation, and the second one came from an English teacher who shared his own experience when doing a conversation activity with his students. The responses offered to students in the statements such as: “fresh water”, “in English you don’t say that” or “that doesn’t exist in America” made me question several things. The immediate response was based on a simple translation with no consideration to whether this expression could be understood in other social contexts, whereas the other responses seem to come from the perspective of teaching English so that a student can function in the US. In any case, these responses are problematic for several reasons, one being that they ignore the international status of language. Is it to be assumed that students should order black tea with their meals if they are visiting Germany or Portugal? The native culture of students is disqualified at the outset as something that does not exist within the context of US discourse. The statement “in English” portrays the language as a fixed system, with fixed concepts or expressions, a view which denies the fluid characteristic of any language, given the varied characteristic and needs of its users.

These examples illustrate the complexities of dealing with language and culture. As shown in these dialogues, students are seen to express their culture *in* and *through* language, and ELT practitioners have to respond to their students. Are these expressions to be considered wrong or “*un-English*”? What are the challenges facing English users in the global arena? With these thoughts in mind, this investigator set out to explore what is going on with English in this environment.

1.3 The Importance

The adoption of English in the world has inevitably led to changes in its use, and Mexico is not an exception. Thus, this investigation proposes to explore a topic that has not received sufficient attention in a social context. Indeed, there is vast literature on the study of *World Englishes*, literature which has been written predominantly in the territories of ex British colonies where English is spoken as a second language. This includes countries such as Singapore, India and Nigeria. However, very little research has been undertaken in countries where English is taught or used as a foreign language. The exception to this is Asia, where in the past decade there has been an increase in research and documenting of local uses of English. The present investigation also proposes to inform the debate on the issues of standard English and Anglo-Saxon cultural models. Are these to be taught and imitated? The adoption of English as a world language has led to discussions that address the political, economic, social and ideological implications of English instruction in the world. In these spheres the debate continues, and Mexico is no exception. Many questions pose themselves. Is English to be owned by its speakers? Does English continue to have a hint of linguistic and/or cultural imperialism? Is there one English that should be considered *the* model to follow? Thus, it is important to understand the perceptions of ELT practitioners on this issue. I believe that by researching how these issues are perceived by the main providers of English, new insight into the future of English in Mexico can be gained.

1.4 Participants in the Investigation

The participants in the investigation included a group of thirteen ELT practitioners, eight English language teachers and five teachers from a BA in TESOL program. The sample was selected to include the views of both local and foreign teachers: seven participants are Mexican nationals and six are from other countries, including Bulgaria, Canada, England, France, Hungary and the United States. Except for the British and American participants, the rest of the participants speak English as a foreign language. Most of them have extensive experience being in contact with the language, not only because of their profession, but also because they have lived in an English-speaking country either for the purposes of study or work. Overall, all the participants have extensive experience in international exchange from traveling, living or working abroad in such places such as Brazil, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Ireland, the USA and the UK, among many others. Their experiences were very valuable as they provided first-hand accounts of what it is like to deal with cross-cultural encounters when speaking a foreign language and experiencing different varieties of English. In fact, much of what is happening with English in the social environment of Mexico was revealed through the experiences of this group of ELT professionals, through what they have seen and experienced.

1.5 Overall Methodology

This is a *qualitative* investigation that makes use of *case study* methodology as a research approach. The purpose of the investigation was to explore what is going on with English in Mexico. This question has relevance in that students and ELT professionals are synthesizing in negotiating meanings on a constant basis, and have a need to keep up with changes in use and usage.

The interview was the instrument adopted for the purpose of data collection. At the first stage of the investigation, English teachers were approached in order to collect any possible forms of local uses of English similar to the ones the researcher had experienced. This included not only concepts but also expressions which they may have observed and experienced in their classrooms. In the next step of the investigation the researcher set out to explore ELT practitioners’ perceptions of such local uses of English. This was done through face-to-face interviews. Participants were presented with the examples collected during the first stage of the investigation in order to explore their perceptions as they analyzed and commented on the examples presented to them. At this point in the interview process, they were also presented with some *critical incidents* or *short stories*.

The discussion of the stories allowed the investigator to move from a *mere* discussion about the concepts or expressions presented to them, to a deeper level of reflexivity. In the discussion of these stories the participants were seen to make connections between their own experiences and those of others portrayed in the critical incidents. Their discussion led to different levels of exploration which oscillated from personal to professional experiences. Very valuable to this investigation was the use of a *research diary* that contained many stories from events which the researcher witnessed or that were shared by colleagues whose cultural experiences added to the discussions offered by the participants.

The story of this case is the composite of the many stories told by the participants, their views, ideas, feelings about the phenomenon.

1.6 The Structure of the Volume

This book is structured into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the topic of investigation and discusses its positioning. Chapter Two provides a discussion of those major issues within the literature which help to inform the analysis of the data in later chapters. It discusses the theory related to the World Englishes paradigm and the implications of the standard English and native speaker ideologies. Theories of *lingua franca* English are discussed with special focus, as these theories are closely associated with a more pragmatic view of English in the world. Chapter Three introduces the conceptual framework and provides an overview of the research methodology used in this investigation. Chapter Four presents a discussion of the findings which were extrapolated from the analysis of the data. It presents a discussion of localized uses of English through looking at and critiquing traditional approaches to analysis. This follows a discussion of ELT practitioners' perceptions about Mexicanized uses of English, and a discussion of how they deal with these uses from their professional viewpoint. The personal experiences of the participants are also discussed, as they reveal real experiences in dealing with cultural diversity and varieties in language use. This chapter concludes with an exploration of ELT practitioners' views on the future of English. Finally, Chapter Five discusses the implications of this investigation in the field of ELT, and more specifically the implications for periphery countries such as Mexico.

Chapter 2 World Englishes: Considerations

2.1 Introduction

The World Englishes paradigm can be tracked back to the work of Halliday (1960), who argued that the varieties of English spoken in the British ex-colonies, including those spoken in countries such as Singapore or India, should be recognized. In the 1980s, his work led the scholars Kachru and Smith into continuing the discussion, which in turn gave rise to the World Englishes paradigm. Although the argument had originally been focused on the recognition of such varieties, the internationality of English in the world led to changes in its use, including in the countries where English is spoken as a foreign language. As will be discussed in this chapter, the use of local varieties of English is a phenomenon that is spreading throughout these countries. As such, the standard English and native speaker notions are reviewed in light of a change in paradigm where *lingua franca* theory is gaining currency.

2.2 General Overview

New Englishes, or World Englishes, is a phenomenon which was first discussed with reference to the developments of the language in the ex-colonies of the British Empire. A similar phenomenon may be observed in Mexico, a former colony of the Spanish Empire; with the arrival of the Spanish conquerors came their language. The language was introduced gradually in the new colony, and it was only natural that features of the native languages influenced the original Spanish brought from the Iberian Peninsula. Jenkins (2006a, p. 23) describes a similar phenomenon occurring with the arrival of English to foreign places. The colonizers set up schools to teach English to locals, and with the increase of the number of students, the colonizers had to recruit non-native speakers. This issue inevitably marked the first changes in the language, as the language spoken by the local teachers was different from that of native English speakers. In addition, Jenkins highlights that given the increase in the number of functions performed in the language led to yet more changes. With time, these new Englishes became their own varieties.

Such varieties and uses of English can be analysed by looking at the status of English, according to what linguist Kachru (1992, p. 356) denominates as the three concentric circles. Recent discussions acknowledge the permeability of these circles since Kachru first introduced them (see McArthur, 1999, "Circle of World English"; Gorlach 1988, "Circle Model of English"; Modiano, 1999 "The Centripetal Circles of International English" source Jenkins, 2006a, 2014); nevertheless, his discussion present a useful distinction that is still relevant because it allows to get the picture of who speaks English and its status in the places where it is spoken.

The Inner-Circle refers to the traditional bases of English where it is the primary language of the country or English as a Native Language (ENL). This includes the USA, the UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The Outer Circle refers to settings where the language plays an important "second language" role in a multilingual setting. Examples of this include the ex-colonial countries such as Singapore, India, Malawi and over fifty other countries (Crystal, 2008). English has an official status, as it is used as a medium of communication in such domains as government, courts of law, administration, the media and the educational systems of these countries.

In these countries, the status of English is that of a Second Language (ESL). The Expanding-Circle is composed of those nations that recognize the importance of English; it is widely studied as a foreign language. This includes countries such as Japan, Greece, Italy or Mexico. In the Expanding Circle the status of English is English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as an international language for communication. In Mexico, for example, English does not have legal recognition in government or courts of law, as is the case of countries in the Outer Circle.

Although under current circumstances the spread of English in the world today may be different, the historical overview provided by Jenkins (2006a) presents many similarities, as new variants of the language continue to spread all over the world. The global status of English is unquestionable, and as Crystal (2008) puts it, it may be "difficult to dislodge" (p. 22).

Crystal (2008) observes that even though other languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Spanish are fast-growing; it is unlikely that another language is going to replace English in its global role. Indeed, the value of the language is recognized and widely accepted in the world, whether for education, tourism, business at intra- and inter-national levels and industry, among many other areas. In China, for example, 200 to 350 million people are learning English (Kirkpatrick, 2006). In Mexico, a country considered the fifth largest educational system in the world, with 35 million students, English has been established by the Ministry of Education (SEP, in its Spanish acronym) as the foreign language of instruction at all educational levels. So then, people continue learning English in increasing numbers all over the world for different purposes. According to Crystal (*ibid.* pp. 22–23) 60 per cent of the global population speaks English; however, there are more non-native speakers of English than native speakers; 3 out of 4 speakers of English in the world are non-native.

The English spoken in England represents a minority dialect of world Englishes amounting only to 4 per cent of the general English-speaking population, whereas American English represents only 15 per cent. Crystal wrote “in India alone there are more English speakers than in both these countries” (*ibid.*). The demand for English in the world is huge. Indeed, it is unrealistic to assume that the Inner-Circle countries could provide enough teachers with a “native” status to impart the language (Modiano, 2006). In 2006, it was observed that 80 per cent of the ELT workforce were non-native speakers (Rajagopalan, 2006). There is no doubt that the way in which the language is used in non-native countries will continue to have an impact on new transformations of the language, giving rise to more variants. As Crystal (2008) states, “when a language spreads, it changes” (p. 25). With the spread of English in countries of the Expanding Circle such as Mexico, the way in which English is used will carry with it features of the local language Spanish. Spanish language and Mexican culture will influence the variety in terms of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, lexis and pragmatics. Crystal (2008) wrote:

A language that has come to be spoken by so many people has ceased to be owned by any of its constituent communities [...]. Language is an immensely democratizing institution. To have learned a language is immediately to have rights in it. You may add to it, modify it, play with it, create in it, ignore bits of it, as you will. And is just as likely that the future course of English is going to be influenced by those who speak it as a second or foreign language as by those who speak it as a mother tongue (pp. 22–23)

This author argues that it is wrong to think that the future of World English is going to be “a more widely used version of British or American English” (*ibid.* p. 30). He asserts that these varieties undoubtedly will stay but they will be supplemented by other varieties. The term World Englishes reflects the current social reality of the English language.

Related to the discussion at hand is the phenomenon of Spanglish which Stavans (2003) recognizes as another variety of English spoken in the US by Hispanics (a term that gained currency during the Nixon Administration) or Latinos (p. 12). The author offers his definition of Spanglish as: **Spanglish, n.** The verbal encounter between Anglo and Hispano civilizations (*ibid.* p. 5). This term is also referred to as: casteyanqui, inglañol, argot sajón, español bastardo, papiamento gringo, and caló pachuco.

In a country with a population of approximately 250 million, Hispanics are the largest minority group with a population of 58 million. Of this group, 36 million are of Mexican origin. Others include: Puerto Ricans (nominally US citizens), Salvadorans, Cubans, Dominicans, Guatemalans and Colombians (www.pewresearch.org). Stavans recognizes that there are many varieties of English spoken in New York alone. He argues that these varieties vary according to individual’s age, ethnicity, and educational background. In his description of the big metropolis in the mid-eighties, he wrote,

a vast number of dispossessed nuyorkinos spoke a myriad of tongues, a sum of parts impossible to define the metropolis seemed [...] a veritable Tower of Babel. And among Hispanics—the rubric Latino was only then emerging—this hullabaloo, this mishmash was all the more intense (p. 4).

For Stavans the word *mishmash*, a term of Yiddish origin meaning “fusion”, represents what Spanglish is—“a collage, part Spanish, part English” (*ibid.*). Expressions he came across and which were documented in his book *Spanglish: The Making of a New American Language*, forming a body of over 6,000 lexical items. The book is full of manifestations of Spanglish, not only in the descriptions of the many phrases he had come across with, such as: “Hoy mas que nunca, tiempo is money” or “Apartments are selling like pan caliente and apartments de verdad” (p. 3); but also in the text of the book. A fragment from his book reads thus:

As I watched TV and listened to radio stations en español, [...] there was something, un yo no se que, that was simply exquisite. Of course it took me no time to recognize that standard English was the lingua franca of the middle and upper classes, but its [Spanglish] domain was in question in the lower strata of the population (p. 4).

That Spanglish is spoken by Hispanics from different cultural backgrounds prompted the author to state that “there is really not one Spanglish but many” (*ibid.* p. 13). In an experiment where he put together a group of five non-student speakers from different geographical parts of the country, including a Cuban-American from Miami, a Mexican-American from San Antonio, a Nuyorrican from the Bronx, a Dominican-American from Washington, D.C. and an Ecuadorian-American from Chicago, the author discovered that to be understood among themselves, a number of terms had to be defined. He gives the example of the Cuban-American who repeatedly referred to “la Sagüesera”, the southwestern section of Miami.

The group did not understand until the participant physically described the region. In another example, the author describes that the Chicano from San Antonio talked about “the washateria” his mother owned and where he worked in the summer months. It was only when another participant in the experiment asked if “washateria” was a laundry store did the rest know what the speaker was talking about. The author observed that the participants borrowed “a handful of terms, palabras prestadas, to somehow fit a Spanglish mode of communication” (*ibid.*). He also observed that “code switching or el cambio de código” (*ibid.*) was used by the participants, as the author himself seems to be doing. Stavans recognized that there are converse views about Spanglish, some who see it as “mainly spoken by common people, la prole, people without education, gente iletrada”, but others who view it as “a positive manifestation of the Hispanic spirit, that to speak a “broken” language was, in the academic lingo, a construction” (*ibid.* pp. 16–17).

This short review seeks to acknowledge several matters: that there are different varieties of Englishes within the US (General American, Ebonics, Spanglish), that bipartite perceptions exist about the said varieties, and that there are varied forms of Spanglish, given the culturally diverse backgrounds of its speakers in the Hispanic population.

One point to observe is that Spanglish is spoken within a country where the mainstream language is English and that its users speak English as their second language, whereas Mexican English is used in a country where Spanish is the mainstream language and English is only a foreign language. Thus, localized expressions produced by Spanglish users in the US are not necessarily known to Spanish speakers outside of the US, in the same way that localized expressions by Spanish speakers in Mexico are not necessarily known to Spanglish users in the US. To make the point, when I asked my students (active English teachers) from the BA in TESOL program where I teach, if they knew the expression “se prohíbe hanguear aquí”, not only did they respond that they had never heard it, but also that they could not understand it. However, they deconstructed the phrase by analyzing first the word *hanguear* and by making connections to the expression “hang[ing] out”.

Only then could they make out the meaning of the expression as they identified the hybridity of the word *hang*—*ear*, half English, half Spanish. Additionally, the expression “hang out” [“pasarla” or “pasar el rato”] does not have an exact translation into Spanish. Thus, one can understand the confusion of the phrase “se prohíbe hanguear aquí”. By the same token, the Mexican English greeting “what fart” may not be understood by Spanglish users in the US, unless they knew the linguistic/cultural context, thus these phrases would seem to be, in large part, culture-specific to Mexico. As will be seen in Section 4.3, English users have developed many strategies for interpreting and understanding these types of culture-specific phrases.

Thus, Spanglish can be said to be a localized variety—itsself with many internal varieties—in the US, as Stavans accents in the title of his book, *Spanglish: The Making of a New American Language*. Although the term is also used by people in Mexico to refer to a mix of Spanish and English, the essence of Spanglish lies in its American character. Spanglish, with its many variants (again, given the great diversity of Hispanics in the US), may be said to be a variety used in the US, not necessarily applicable to Mexico or other Spanish-speaking countries. This is not to say, as World Englishes scholars remark, that different varieties of World Englishes share much in common. Commonality is yet more the case when speakers share the same linguistic background, Spanish. Indeed, as described by a teacher participant in the investigation, Mexican students, much like Spanglish users, are constantly creating hybrid words such as *facebookear*, *twittear* and *linkear*, words which reflect their new cultural reality.

2.3 World Englishes

World Englishes (WE) paradigm studies the way in which characteristics of local languages have “transferred” into English, and the ways in which these languages manifest themselves in phonological, lexical, grammatical, syntactic and discourse patterns [pragmatics] (Saraceni, 2015, p. 2). Kirkpatrick (2007) refers to WE as “those indigenous, nativised varieties that have developed around the world and that reflect the cultural and pragmatic norms of their speakers” (p. 3). By a nativized variety this scholar means “a variety that has been influenced by the local cultures and languages of the people who have developed the particular variety” (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p. 7). This paradigm recognizes that: English has several different varieties; these varieties differ linguistically and socio-culturally and these varieties reflect the cultures of their speakers.

However, the recognition of any new form of English does not happen overnight. As discussed by Kachru (1992, in Galloway and Rose, 2015, pp. 32–33) the process of institutionalization of variants of English is indeed a *process*. Kachru discussed three phases that non-native institutionalized varieties of English pass through; they are not mutually exclusive:

In the initial phase, there is ‘non-recognition’ of the local variety and conscious identification with native speakers. They are prejudiced against the local variety, seeing the native version as superior. After this, the local variety then exists side by side with the imported one, beginning to be used in a wide range of situations for varied purposes. However, it is still viewed as ‘inferior’. In the third phase, the local variety becomes recognised as the norm, and becomes socially accepted and used as a model in education. ‘New’ Englishes are a prime example of contact-based language change. As colonial settlements increased, and when these nations subsequently became independent, these varieties became even more distinct.

Seidlhofer (2006, p. 43) has pointed out that it is the work on the Outer Circle varieties that has led the way to English foreign language research in the Expanding Circle. Annex I Variations of World Englishes taken from Jennifer (2006a) illustrates examples of variations that can be found in World Englishes in terms of phonological, grammatical, lexical, idiomatic and discourse differences. In international contexts, it is clear that as individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, languages and ethnicities use English, their use will carry some influence from their first language/culture. In territories of the Expanding Circle local usages are emerging and achieving standard status within those countries (Jenkins, 2006a, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2006). McKay and Brown (2016) observe that those scholars who subscribe to the World Englishes framework not only try to document the varieties of English in the local context where they are developed but also,

They contend that rather than a monocentric basis of standardization based on Inner-Circle native speakers, there should be a recognition of the pluricentric nature of current English use with standards based on the language used and accepted in the local context. There is then an emphasis in discussions of World Englishes on the cultural embeddedness and uniqueness of each variety of English. Nevertheless, many of these varieties share common features (p. 6).

The following example from McKay and Brown (2016, p. 74) serves to appreciate the cultural adaptation of the language in Singapore English.

Figure 1 Standard American English and Standard Singapore English

Standard American English	Standard Singapore English
'upkeep' as a noun e.g. "He paid for the upkeep of his mother's house"	'upkeep' as verb e.g. "An old car is expensive to upkeep?"
'since' as a conjunction followed by a clause e.g. "since I was young".	'since young' is a common phrase e.g. "I tend to prefer mandarin <i>since young</i> ".
'coffee money', money to buy coffee.	'coffee money' means 'a bribe' e.g. He gave the policeman coffee money.
'black face', a face with a black skin color.	'black face' means an individual is in a grumpy, surly, or bad mood.

The different uses and adaptations of standard American English to Singapore English can be analyzed in terms of grammatical variations, for example a transformation from noun to verb in example [1]. Example [2] signals a syntactical variation. Because the discussion portrayed in this book places particular attention to semantics, special attention is drawn to examples [3] and [4]. Semantics may be defined as: "The study of how words literally connect to things, or more generally, the investigation of meaning as encoded in language" (Yule, 2011, p. 134). Thus, the concepts of "coffee money" meaning a "bribe" or "black face" meaning "grumpy" are clear examples of lexical items of language (English) encoding a different meaning. The English linguistic code is manipulated to transfer meanings to the Singaporean context.

Indeed, as argued by many scholars, one of the most interesting discussions in World Englishes relates to the coining of new words, concepts and expressions. Saraceni (2015) describes some traditional approaches to analyzing the influence of such lexical items from other languages. These influences are manifested in loanwords, borrowing, code-switching, imposition, hybridity or translation.

According to Saraceni (2015), local forms that have transferred into English are traditionally known as "loanwords" or "borrowings". For instance, the loanword *kiasu* from Singapore English is commonly used in Singapore by all speakers in all contexts, *kiasu* refers to,

The attitude of people who are obsessed with succeeding in everything they do and are equally obsessively frightened of failure. 'Kiasu parents' [...] would be those who want their children to always be the best at, for example, school, learning to play musical instruments and so on (pp. 110–111).

According to Melchers and Shaw (2013) borrowed forms are often combined with native ones to make hybrids like Indian English *generator-wallah* "man who supplies generators" (p. 25). McKay and Brown (2016) discuss that such lexical innovation can also occur through borrowing words from locally spoken languages, they write "Singapore English has borrowed the Malay word *barang-barang* meaning things, especially personal belongings of any kind of small possessions, roughly equivalent to the English word *stuff*" (p. 9). "Imposition" and "code-switching" are two other approaches to explaining lexical innovation. Saraceni (2015 citing Winford, 2010) distinguishes these terms from borrowing in that imposition "involves language learners who transfer features of their first language into a language that they are in the process of learning" (p. 113); whereas code-switching involves situations where "speakers 'switch' between languages during the same instance of communication". Hybridity can be defined as "the introduction of non-English forms into English" (Jenkins, 2013 cited in Saraceni, 2015, p. 132). These categorizations are not mutually exclusive and should not be seen as definite, as they can overlap one another.

Whether the concepts *kiasu*, “coffee money”, “black face”, generator-*wallah* or *barang-barang* can be analyzed in terms of these traditional approaches, these examples serve to highlight that words, concepts and expressions particular to one language or culture can transfer into another, producing in this way changes and innovations in the “mainstream” language. Indeed, the word *kiasu* can be found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). Gupta (2010, pp. 70–71) sees the inclusion of *kiasu* in the OED as an important step towards the word becoming part of standard English, a stage that will be attained, in her view, when *kiasu* is no longer used exclusively with reference to Singapore or Singaporeans, (in Saraceni, 2015, p. 71).

The vocabulary of English is not an unchanging list of words. New words enter the language every day, words acquire or lose meanings, and words cease to be used. The online Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is updated quarterly with at least 1,000 new and revised entries (Stockwell & Minkova, 2009, in Saraceni, 2015, p. 71).

Indeed, the argument put forward by several scholars (Crystal, 2008; Jenkins, 2006a, 2012, 2014; Saraceni, 2015; Galloway and Rose, 2015; Melchers and Shaw, 2013 among many others) is that many English words come from other languages. A notion that has led to the argument that it is its syntax what holds the identity of the language, although at the same time, the history of the English language shows that this too has changed. Moreover, such “super diversity” of words and concepts has led to the discussion of “truncated repertoires”. Blommaert (2010) refers to this as “everybody only really knows a section of any given language, including the language that they consider ‘native’, and in situations of super-diversity people operate linguistically by resorting to their various truncated repertoires according to the task at hand” (in Saraceni 2015, p. 171).

In terms of pragmatics, the influence that first language (L1) can have in English (L2), seen from the viewpoint of pragmatics, can be appreciated in the following examples:

Figure 2 Pragmatic Examples of World Englishes

Expression	Meaning	Place
I see you've put on weight	You are looking well	Nigeria (Berns, 2009)
Have you eaten?	How are you?	Malaysia (Kirkpatrick, 2007)
Welcome in Egypt	Welcome to Egypt	Egypt (Kirkpatrick, 2007)
Hello “teacher”	Hello [professor]	Mexico (Armenta, 2018)
What's up ‘güey’?	What's up [dude]	Mexico (present study)
What fart?	What's up? How are you?	Mexico (present study)
What's up “cuñado”	What's up [brother in law]?	Mexico (present study)
What's up “compadre”?	What's up [compadre]?	Mexico (present study)

English is not devoid of cultural pragmatic influence. Pragmatic competence involves pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence (Leech, 1983). The former refers to linguistic forms for enacting certain functions in a language such as greeting or complaining, and the latter refers to social knowledge regarding which forms are to be used based on situational and contextual factors, e.g. characteristic of interactants in the exchange including status, age or gender, among other matters. In cross-cultural communication what might be correct in one socio-cultural linguistic system might not be appropriate in another.

Thus, the pragmatic norms of Anglo-Saxon cultures might not be applicable in countries of the Outer or Expanding Circle. Thus, the use of first name to greet and address a professor might in some cultural contexts not be satisfactory, particularly in a culture where social distance between students and teachers demands the use of honorific titles or more elaborate forms of address. This has led several scholars to argue that students should not necessarily adhere to the pragmatic norms of English-speaking countries, unless of course “the major aim of students is to converse with native speakers and to understand whichever native-speaking culture it is that they are interested in” (Kirkpatrick, 2006, p. 73). In any case, McKay and Brown (2016) wrote that “English users should be allowed/encouraged to use English in the ways that support their own sense of identity and cultural affiliation” (p. 75).

This is not to say that pragmatic choices which may be transferred from one culture to another cannot be a cause of confusion or surprise. Expressions such as “Have you eaten?” or “Hello ‘teacher’” are culturally driven formulations reflecting the values, beliefs and behaviours of their speakers. In order for communication to proceed smoothly, speakers will inevitably have to negotiate understanding so that the intention of a message can be achieved. As will be discussed below, this can be attained by making use of inherent skills and strategies to negotiate meaning.

McKay and Brown (2016, p. 74) suggest that examples of such variants of English as those discussed above, can be used by teachers to make students aware of the innovations that are occurring in the use of English. These examples can also be used to provide a context for students to investigate similar innovations in their own language. Echoing this view, Tomlinson (2006) wrote “make use of language awareness (semiotics), pragmatic awareness, cultural awareness and critical awareness activities to help the learners discover for themselves some of the characteristic features of English as an international language” (p. 143). Several scholars offer a wide range of strategies which can be considered for this purpose. Some strategies are discussed in Section 2.8. Developing such abilities can be challenging; however, it is important to point out, that in order to accomplish this task, learners do not need to be “proficient in every variety under the sun” (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 233). Rather, as Canagarajah (2006) points out, we need to shift our focus both in pedagogy and assessment to developing negotiating skills.

Such realizations suggest the need for an important shift in assessment practices. From focusing overly on proficiency in grammar or in abstract linguistic features, we have to focus more on proficiency in pragmatics. Sociolinguistic skills of dialect differentiation, code switching, style shifting, interpersonal communication, conversation management, and discourse strategies are important for shuttling between English varieties (McKay, 2005, p. 233).

Ultimately, we need to shift our emphasis “from language as a system to language as social practice, from grammar to pragmatics, from competence to performance” (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 234). Indeed, World English destabilizes the concept of language as a fixed boundary, instead it conceives language as flexible and dynamic where its content depends on the participants, how they negotiate it, in each individual act of communication (Saraceni, 2015). From this perspective, language is seen as a social practice, not in terms of what language *is*, but what people *do* with it. About this, Saraceni wrote “language is dynamically defined by speakers as they engage in various social activities” (2015, p. 118). “Defined by speakers” is a key point, as such language is regarded as socially constructed thus in constant change and transformation. Scholars Galloway and Rose wrote that in *lingua Franca* English,

communication is seen as a more fluid and changing phenomenon, used in ‘communities of practice’ as opposed to in fixed geographical settings, involving a process of ongoing linguistic accommodation where language is appropriated by speakers in response to situational demands (2015, xii)

The notion of the fluidity of *Lingua Franca* English led Canagarajah (2007) to state,

LFE is intersubjectively constructed in each specific context of interaction. The form of this English is negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes. The speakers are able to monitor each other’s language proficiency to determine mutually the appropriate grammar, phonology, lexical range, and pragmatic conventions that would ensure intelligibility. Therefore, it is difficult to describe this language a priori (p. 925)

This notion draws attention to the active role of speakers as well as the skills and strategies which will have to be activated in the process of communicating across borders.

2.4 *Lingua Franca* English and World Englishes

In her discussion about *lingua franca*, Jenkins (2012, pp. 1–2) describes that this concept was first used to refer to a hybrid form of language which was considered to be a second language of its speakers. The author explains that original *lingua franca* was a variety of Franco-Provençal which was spoken along the South Eastern coast of the Mediterranean between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries as a contact language.

According to Jenkins, this variety included elements from seven different languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Turkish, Greek and Persian. The hybrid nature of this *lingua franca* is what makes it different from the English language, in that it did not have native speakers. What this implies is that in order for English to be labelled as a *lingua franca*, native speakers of English as a native language would have to be excluded from the definition. Two important points can be made from this discussion: Interactions in *lingua franca* English include speakers of both groups, native speakers (NSs, hereafter) and non-native speakers (NNSs, hereafter); it is not to be considered a language for interacting solely or exclusively with NSs, as such, English users may or may not “share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture” (Jenkins 2012, p. 2 citing Firth). Thus, *lingua franca* English is not synonymous with standard English, and is neither fixed nor static (Galloway and Rose, 2015, pp. 142–143; Kirkpatrick, 2006, p. 80).

Several scholars argue that individuals’ social knowledge (Kim, 2005; Shaules, 2007; Scollon *et al.* 2012) or “cultural schemas” (Nishida, 2005) guide the social behavior of individuals. Kirkpatrick (2006) sees the influence of culture in *lingua franca* English not only inevitable but desirable. From his viewpoint speakers will transfer pragmatic forms from L1 to *lingua franca* English. These might be reflected in address forms, for example, where a speaker feels the need to provide some form of honorific when speaking to someone who, in their culture, would require such an honorific. Indeed, in her book about the complexities of constructing culture, Armenta (2018) discusses the impact that Mexican students’ social convention of formal and informal address has on the way they greet their foreign teachers, which often occurs with the phrase “hello teacher”. This greeting is a convention unfamiliar to foreign teachers and one which they find “peculiar” or “strange”. Kirkpatrick (2006) adds that the notion of “pragmatic dissonance” can be overcome in *lingua franca* English. *Lingua franca* English will allow individuals to behave in a culturally appropriate way by using an honorific, or not, according to the cultural context e.g. whether in the UK, Japan or Mexico. Kirkpatrick (2006) wrote “by the same token, *lingua franca* English can free speakers from what they might feel to be the cultural straitjackets of their L1s. So Korean speakers can happily drop honorifics and respect conventions when conversing in *lingua franca* English, if they so desire” (p. 80).

This author wrote, “when communication becomes the primary focus, users of *lingua franca* English become free from standard monolithic norms. And, as communication is the goal, the danger of mutually unintelligible *lingua franca* Englishes developing disappears” (p. 80). Kirkpatrick citing Bamgbose (2001) writes “communication across world Englishes has to be seen in terms of accommodation between codes and in a multilingual context” (p. 359). Based on this premise, Kirkpatrick asserts that “native-speaker or nativized models are not internationally applicable in a world increasingly characterized by migration, racial mixing and diversity” (*ibid.*).

From this perspective, *lingua franca* English is seen as a linguistic code, not to be exclusively attached to native speakers, or to Anglo-Saxon pragmatic norms. Norms can be negotiated according to situational and contextual factors. Because of the fluidity and myriad of scenarios in which the language will be used, Canagarajah (2007) argues that *lingua franca* cannot be defined or codified because it is so vast and changeable. *Lingua franca* is what individuals make it to be at a specific time and place. And like NNSs, NSs will have to adapt and maneuver their way in communication with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Galloway and Rose (2015, p. 148) offer a distinction between EFL and ELF.

Figure 3 Conceptual Differences Between EFL and ELF

	Foreign language (EFL)	Lingua franca (ELF)
Lingua-cultural norms	Pre-existing, re-affirmed	<i>Ad hoc</i> , negotiated
Objectives	Integration, membership in native-speaking community	Intelligibility, communication in a non-native speaker or mixed non-native speaker/native speaker interaction
Processes	Imitation, adoption	Accommodation, adaptation

Jenkins (2012, p. 11) offers a number of advantages that *lingua franca* has over other terms, they are: a) ELF emphasises the role of English in communication between speakers from different L1s (the primary reason for learning English today), b) ELF suggests the idea of community as opposed to alienness, c) ELF emphasizes that people have something in common rather than emphasizing their differences, d) ELF implies that the “mixing languages” is acceptable (which was what the original *lingua franca* did) and thus there is nothing inherently wrong in retaining certain characteristics of the L1, such as accent, e) the Italian name symbolically removes the ownership of English from the Anglos, both to no one and, in effect, to everyone.

Galloway and Rose (2015, pp. 142–143) offer other advantages of using English *lingua franca* placing additional emphasis in the fluidity of the language as a result of its expansion in the culturally diverse global sphere. They wrote: a) it embraces a speaker’s first language and ‘culture’; b) it is the use of English among speakers of different first languages, who adapt and change according to the communicative needs of their interlocutors in various communities of practice; c) it is used in contexts that are changeable, dynamic, and fluid, as opposed to fixed geographical settings; d) it is growing as both a phenomenon and a research paradigm; e) it focuses on the pluricentric nature of English; f) it is not a fixed variety of English, nor a reduced and simplified version of the language; g) it includes native English speakers as well as non-native English speakers, but does not use the former as a yardstick of competence; h) it has implications for ELT.

The characteristics of *lingua franca* English as discussed by these scholars above, offer a different view of English, one that recognizes it as a *mere* functional tool disassociated from NSs and which acknowledges the diverse characteristics of its users and what they bring to the language from their first language and culture.

2.5 Implications of World Englishes Paradigm

Whether English is spoken as a native, second or foreign language, English is being used by people from different cultural background for different needs and purposes. This discussion has many implications in English Language Teaching (ELT), indeed there is a great body of scholars who argue for the recognition and respect of individuals’ cultural identity or distinctiveness (Jenkins, 2006a, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2007). Many scholars question that individuals should acquire the native competency or that the English variants should be considered “deviations”, “errors” or “un-English” (Kachru, 1992; Saraceni, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2006; Mauranen, 2018; Modiano, 2006). Individuals should be allowed to express their culture and identity *in* and *through* language (Modiano, 2006). It should not be intended for individuals to act and sound like native speakers (Kramersch, 1998); this particular point argued by Widdowson (2003) in his discussion on “spread” and “distribution”.

From his viewpoint, English should not be treated as a franchise, KFC or McDonalds, in that wherever one goes the fried chicken or hamburgers taste the same. English is an international language owned by all who use it, and in this connection the terminology issue is one of great import. Many scholars emphasize that it is not possible to label someone as a “foreigner” or a “non-native” and believe that its users have equal right to the language. As Jenkins (2012, p. 11 citing Alexander) notes, “such terms now simply block understanding rather than allowing English teachers wherever they may originate and wherever they may work to acknowledge that English as an International Language (EIL) is here to stay”. Kramersch argues that “the notion of a generic native speaker has become so diversified that it has lost its meaning” (1998, p. 49). It ignores the fact that English is often one of several languages available in the repertoires of multilingual populations.

The term perpetuates the idea that monolingualism is the norm when, in fact, precisely the opposite is true for the world at large. As Jenkins (2012, pp. 8–9 citing Rampton) points out, “it implies the ethnic Anglo speaker as a reference point against which all other Englishes should be measured, which cannot be acceptable or appropriate for a language that has passed into world ownership”. Indeed, WE recognizes the different “flavors” of English (Saraceni, 2015). It acknowledges the local manifestations of English in their own right, not based on, or departing from idealized notions of native models of English or standard English.

2.6 Native Speaker Ideology

At present, ELF seems in many ways to be a utopia, although it may be said to occur in areas such as business, academia, international relations and science. Galloway and Rose (2015) comment at length on the advantages of English as a *lingua franca* (pp. 54–56), while also noting risks and disadvantages such as linguistic imperialism, reduction in the learning of foreign languages among English speakers and the over-homogenization of local cultures. Side by side with the advance of ELF, the continued existence of a native speaker ideology must be recognized. Galloway and Rose argue that “standard language ideology often exists because ownership of English is placed on ENL countries” (*ibid.* p. 46). As these authors assert, “theories about language learning typically posited the native English speaker as the goal and it has been used as a yardstick of competence for a long time all over the globe” (*ibid.* p. 197). Students themselves often think of native speakers as ideal models of competence in language instruction; as Armenta (2010) wrote, “the native speaker construct has found its way into shaping [Mexican] students’ beliefs that only a native speaker can teach English” (pp. 316–317).

The belief is widespread, as Kirkpatrick (2007) observes: “in the context of World Englishes, the real problem is caused by many people believing that native speakers are necessarily better at speaking English than non-native speakers, and that native speakers are necessarily better at teaching English than non-native speakers” (p. 8). Thus, despite the problematization of the terms “native” and “non-native” by such authors as Galloway and Rose (2015), Jenkins (2006b), Kirkpatrick (2007), Llorca, (2006), and Saraceni (2015), the distinction persists, along with a student preference for native speakers. As early as 1992 Phillipson had commented on the native speaker ideology in the context of “cultural imperialism”. The author posed the still unsolved question of native models vs. standardized local varieties: “should periphery-English speakers, in particular those ensconced in education systems aim at an idealized exo-normative model (derived from standard British or American English), or an institutionalized endo-normative model (based on an educated indigenous variant)?” (p. 197). Modiano (2007) recognizes that native speakerism is still the “dominant paradigm in European ELT”, while also noting forward-looking trends: “English is emerging in Europe, not only as a universal language, but also as a potential norm-generating variety” (p. 60). Seidlhofer (2006) is another European voice which resonates with that of Modiano. Working in the Viennese empirical tradition, she has collected and documented patterns of international English usage with a project named VOICE, the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English.

One example involving the role and status of grammar in English *lingua franca* refers to some grammatical features that are “deviant” from native models: a. Simple present 3rd person -s omitted, e.g. he look very sad. b. Omission of article e.g. our countries have signed agreement. c. Treating *who* and *which* as interchangeable. d. Substituting bare infinite for -ing e.g. I look forward to see you. d. Using *isn't it?* As a universal tag (*ibid.* p. 55). Similar examples can be found in the Mexican context with Spanish speakers, some of which had been documented by the coordination of the English program (see Annex II Patterns of English of Mexican Students).

However, as early as 1989 Kachru argued that local attitudes toward such variations differ significantly. For some, such innovations are an indication of how speakers of English have made English their own by incorporating their culture and concerns into the language, whereas for others such innovations equal “bad English” and need to be eradicated (in Saraceni 2015). A similar discussion is offered by Jenkins (2006b), who argues that, “whereas language change by NSs is regarded as ‘creativity and innovation’, the opposite is true of NNSs-led changes, which often receive the label ‘errors’, even though certain degree of intelligibility is achieved among speakers of the variation” (2006b, p. 33). As the author points out, “teas” or “coffees” are perfectly acceptable in Inner-Circle countries, but this is not the case with “advices” or “furnitures” in the Expanding Circle (*ibid.* p. 32).

Seidlhofer posits that “it can be demonstrated that Expanded Circle speakers are using English successfully but in their own way, which sometimes may and sometimes may not conform to Inner-Circle English” (2006, p. 42). In any case, such “non-core” realizations whether in terms of pronunciation or grammar, “should not be considered ‘errors’ but manifestations of regional variation, which allow speakers’ identity to ‘shine through’ while still ensuring mutual intelligibility” (*ibid.*, p. 43). These examples open the door to discuss the issue of standard English.

2.7 Standard English

Melchers and Shaw (2013) observe that although the Standard language ideology is not widely represented in the literature it is “extremely common in real life” (p. 213). These scholars write:

It envisages languages as having a correct or best form, typically spoken by educated upper class of native speakers in the home of the language: the French of Paris, the German of Hanover, the Italian of Florence [...] so that the ‘best’ [English] is spoken by educated natives at Harvard or Oxford or perhaps Los Angeles (ibid.).

As argued by these scholars, the standard English notion has led to a misleading representation which portrays non-standard native varieties, as well as non-native varieties, as inferior because “they deviate from the best” (*ibid.*). The same scholars (*ibid.*, pp. 214–215) provide a review of some of the critiques that this ideology has undergone in the history of ELT. In opposition to the standard ideology, Halliday *et al.* (1960) argued that outer varieties of English should be given recognition. This gave rise to the World Englishes paradigm supported by Kachru and Smith (1980). The “Real English” movement in the 1960s argued that non-standard varieties such as Ebonics, should be respected and recognized in schools. Real English focuses on the actual spoken usage of Inner-Circle native speakers of all varieties. In 1970s, Second Language Acquisition theories (Selinker, 1972) focused on the study of how individuals acquire competence comparable to that of native speakers. This notion took the native-speaker competence in the standard language to be the goal of the learning process. The 1990s gave rise to the discussion of Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), a platform which argued against the inequalities among languages and individuals which the spread of English had brought with it. In 2000s the *lingua franca* discourse (Jenkins, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2001) led to the argument that instruction of the language *per se* was not the problem, but the “native-speakerism” ideology which associated the language with Inner-Circle power. The argument put forward was that Inner-Circle users should adapt to *lingua franca*, not the other way around.

This overview highlights the contributions that different disciplines of study such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, politics and education have made to ELT at different times in history. The standard English ideology is indeed a complex concept.

Galloway and Rose (2015) note the difficulties that arise in defining the concept of “standard English”. In the view of these authors, there can be no fixed standard, as the English language is in a constant state of change. The authors state that “a view that English is a monolithic entity that is impervious to variation is an incorrect assumption” (p. 47). Jenkins (2006a) echoes Galloway and Rose, arguing that unlike French and Italian, Standard English is not supported by a national academy, and that this fact makes it difficult to define, “not only in terms of its world-wide use, [...] but also in its Inner-Circle contexts” (p. 30).

These authors agree that “Standard English” may be reduced to a core of grammar and vocabulary usage determined by educated speakers, and that this standard usage is not necessarily tied to a particular spoken form. As Galloway and Rose put it, spoken forms remain “regionally and socially contained” (*ibid.*, p. 45), while grammar in written English is the determining factor in “Standard English”. Melchers and Shaw (2013) remark that “standard English, as defined by Trudgill and Hannah, allows any pronunciation, and prescriptions on pronunciation are not widely enforced nowadays” (p. 35). The toleration for a wide range of accents in “standard English” would seem to be limited to its use in the Inner-Circle, however.

Galloway and Rose (2015) observe the existence of a “Standard English” ideology in the Expanding Circle. These authors state of East Asia and South America that “the educational policy of countries in these regions continues to promote a ‘standard’ English ideology by providing a limited range of models of English that usually adhere to General American or British RP norms” (p. 46). The same authors comment on the problematic nature of the adoption of these models in the Expanding Circle; for Galloway and Rose, the best strategies come about “where ownership is removed from native English speakers, who do not provide a linguistic reference point, and instead an expert user of ELF is preferred” (*ibid.* p. 47) (see Section 2.4).

2.8 Use of Strategies: “Shuttling Between English Varieties”

The discussion put forward by world Englishes acknowledges that English is spoken by individuals from different cultural backgrounds. That both language and culture will inevitably transfer in the way individuals use English. As such English should not be seen from the perspective of a homogenizing and unifying e.g. what to say and how to say things “in English”, but in the recognition of the diversity of its speakers thus varieties in uses. In line with the theory, in their discussion of English as an international language, McKay and Brown (2016) sustain that “students should be free to express their own pragmatic norms but to recognize that to the extent these differ from the norms expected by their listener, there may be cross-cultural misunderstandings” (p. 78). Mauranen (2012) sees mutual intelligibility as the *sine qua non* of English language standardization.

For this author, the future of Standard English lies in the generation of “natural norms that arise in groups and communities primarily in face-to-face interaction to regulate interaction in the interests of mutual intelligibility and smooth communicative progress” (p. 6). Mauranen (2018) draws a distinction between L2 learners and L2 users. She argues that when people use ELF they are L2 users, not learners. And thus, in real scenarios individuals draw on their human capacity, social skills and strategies, to succeed in communication. Mauranen wrote “ELF speech is much like any speech” (p. 111). Thus, she puts great emphasis on the cognitive, social characteristics of individuals which are naturally and spontaneously taken to LFE. Indeed, *lingua franca* English users will use a variety of strategies to achieve mutual understanding. Saraceni (2015) states of this process “ELF speakers draw from multiple semiotic resources in achieving mutual understanding” (p. 131).

Jenkins (2012) found that the most common cause of misunderstanding in *lingua-franca* situations was the use of words (concepts and expressions) which the interlocutor did not understand. This made her suggest that vocabulary over grammar should be prioritized. In such case, the author argues that speakers should be selective in the lexis they use and have strategies at the ready to explain and elaborate on their meaning. To this argument Crystal (2008) believes that people’s cooperation and attitude will lead them to switch and accommodate other speakers. He observes that even NSs reduce, or omit all together, the use of idiomatic expressions; and in terms of spoken interaction, they reduce their speed. In effect, Seidlhofer’s (2006) study of NNSs interactions at the University of Vienna proves that interactants make use of cooperative intercultural strategies. Indeed, Melchers and Shaw (2013, p. 201) discuss that in ELF situations individuals make use of a wide range of pragmatic strategies to ensure effective communication. These scholars draw attention to a study conducted by Meierkord (1998) who found that in casual conversations topic abandonment was a common response to difficulties. On the other hand, Bjorkman (2010) found some common pragmatic strategies for solving problems including: comment on discourse structure, comment on discourse content, signalling of importance, comment on intent, comment on common ground, back-channelling. No instances of correcting others’ grammar or pronunciation were noted. From this study, Melchers and Shaw make the point that “interaction in the *lingua-franca* environment is skilled and well adapted to its purposes” (*ibid.*).

McKay and Brown (2016, p. 78 citing McKay, 2003) observe that given the importance of strategic and pragmatic competence all English as an International Language curricula should give attention to the following components of language use: 1. Explicit attention should be given to introducing and practicing repair strategies such as asking for clarification and repetition, rephrasing and allowing wait time; 2. A variety of conversational gambits or routines should be introduced and practiced, including such items as expressing agreement and disagreement, managing turn taking, and taking leave. 3. The curricula should seek to promote students’ understanding of how pragmatic norms can differ cross-culturally.

In fact, Crystal (2009) believes that if English becomes increasingly different, the consequences for world English would not necessarily be fatal. A likely scenario is that the ability to use more than one dialect would extend to meet the demands of the international situation. Crystal (*ibid.*) argues that most people are already “multidialectal” to a greater or lesser extent, he wrote,

They use one spoken dialect at home, when they are with their family or talking to other members of their local community: this tends to be an informal variety, full of casual pronunciation, colloquial grammar, and local turns of phrase. They use another spoken dialect when they are away from home, travelling to different parts of their country or interacting with others at their place of work: this tends to be a formal variety, full of careful pronunciation, conventional grammar, and standard vocabulary. Those who are literate have learned a third variety, that of written Standard English which currently unites the English-speaking world (p. 185).

In Crystal’s view, likewise, little would change in the future of national Englishes. People would still have their dialects for use within their own country, but when they need to communicate with people from other countries they would slip into a new form of English, what he refers to as World Spoken Standard English (WSSE).

2.9 Cosmopolitanism and World Englishes

The role which a cosmopolitan outlook might play in and through the spread of World Englishes is a matter that is waiting to be researched. If the tenet that the local identity of those learning English in the Expanded Circle should be respected, the type of cultural negotiation associated with cosmopolitan orientation may find application in English teaching. According to Delanty (2009) cosmopolitan outlook is built around the human capacities of individuals: a) To negotiate culture; b) To engage with the Other; c) To position themselves in the global sphere as givers and receivers; d) To make use of abilities of mediation in intercultural exchange. Armenta (2018) writes that “one of the major shifts in the approach to cultural awareness in ELT has been the move towards promoting reflexivity as an ongoing process of negotiation for the experiencing of Otherness” (p. 49). In the process of constructing culture, Armenta (2018) found that individuals are able to adapt and cope to the new and different. This is achieved due to individuals’ intellectual and moral capacity to mediate between the Self and the Other. Indeed, Byram (2008, p. 69) discusses the different competences and sub-competences in the mediation of language and communication. These include attitudes (*savoir être*), critical dispositions and orientations (*savoir s’engager*), knowledge of social groups (*savoirs*), and skills of interpreting, learning and doing (*savoir comprendre, apprendre, faire*). Thus, intercultural competence is a holistic, integral set of skills and attitudes.

Respect for the identity of the Other necessarily involves the loosening of local varieties of English from Inner-Circle cultural norms. Kumaravadivelu (2008) writes that,

the emergence of World Englishes, with their amazing functionality and spread along with the rich body of creative literature in varieties such as Indian English and Nigerian English, proves, if any proof is needed, that culture and language are not irrevocably linked (p. 22).

The cosmopolitan sense of respect for the culture of the Other is often highlighted in the writings of authors associated with English Foreign Language and English as an International Language. For example, Seidlhofer and Jenkins (2003), writing about the Outer Circle state that:

In most Outer Circle contexts, of course, the long and vigorous struggle for the acknowledgement of their very own socio-political identities has been largely successful. [...] The naïve notion of a monolithic, uniform, unadaptable linguistic medium owned by its original speakers and forever linked to their rule(s) has been recognized as simply contrary to the facts [...] Outer Circle linguistic independence has, on the whole, been given the linguistic seal of approval (p. 65)

I conclude this section with the words of Crystal (2008)

We need to promote a greater concern for all accents and dialects within a language. Here we are talking about a readiness to accept the variety of forms a language takes as it varies from one part of a country to another. We do not have to personally like all these forms, any more than we have to like all kinds of music or literature. But we should not go round, as many have done, condemning some (usually urban) dialects as ugly, rough or slovenly, or their speakers as unintelligent or criminal. 'Eternal vigilance' was once the slogan of a purist and prescriptively minded linguistic age, which was steadily losing its appeal in the closing years of the twentieth century. The linguistic slogan of the new century should be 'eternal tolerance' (pp. 128–129)

Summary of this Section

The review of the literature offered in this chapter shows the complexities surrounding the adoption of English in the world. It is clear that as a language spoken by linguistically and culturally diverse users, English has been transformed and will continue changing. World Englishes views such changes as “creative adaptation”, “innovations”, and “features” rather than “errors”. The notion of English as a *lingua franca* was discussed, as this conception is supported by theoretical principles which suggest a shift in paradigms. Views and conceptions of the language are changing. The new paradigm suggests that English is becoming disassociated from Inner-Circle countries, and that it belongs to those who use it. Further, that English is becoming separated from its so-called “culture”, and accepts instead the culture of its users. Finally, English is suffering a divorce from the “standard English” norm—instead it is turning into a tool, a set of linguistic features to be manipulated to construct meaning according to the circumstances and the interactants involved in the exchange.

Chapter 3 The Investigation

3.1 Introduction

The phenomenon under investigation concerned the use of English in the local environment of Mexico. The complexity of the phenomenon was both challenging and broad enough that it provided rich opportunities for research. This investigation conforms to a qualitative paradigm with a theoretical base in constructivism, using the case study method as a research approach.

3.2 The Research Method

The case study method proved to be the most appropriate approach for the present investigation. The particularities of this case center on a global phenomenon concerning the varieties of English which are emerging in the world as a result of the global status of the language. Thus, this study investigates the particular impact that the adoption of this international language has had on the local environment. The general theme guiding the investigation was: *What is going on with English in Mexico?* Framed in this way, this general topic offered ample opportunities to discover the dimensions of the adoption of English in Mexico, as well as an opportunity to discover perceptions of local use of English from the perspective of the actors involved.

This is a case with an instrumental focus, as it seeks to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon that is gathering force in the world, the phenomenon which is clearly implicit in the name “World Englishes”. The particular issues of this case are contextualized according to the social and physical setting of Mexico, where English has acquired great importance in the educational system, an issue which is also linked to economic and political circumstances. It is important, then, to understand what is meant by the phrase “the case’s own issues” in the local environment (Stake, 2005, p. 450). As was discussed at the outset of this investigation, the spread of English in Mexico is a phenomenon which shares similar complexities with other social environments. Indeed, qualitative case studies not only call for an examination of these complexities, but also provide opportunities for revealing them. Stake (2005, citing Lincoln and Guba, 2000) wrote that “qualitative research is based on a view that social phenomena, human dilemmas, and the nature of cases are situational, revealing experiential happenings of many kinds” (p. 449).

The method allowed a study of the case at hand through a representative sampling, which in turn provided opportunities for the investigation of the phenomenon in depth. As Stake (2005) put it, to research a topic is to “place your intellect into the *thick* of what is going on” (p. 449) [emphasis added]. Wolcott (2008) adds that in a day when large sample sizes remain the vogue, the critical aspect of focusing on depth rather than breadth has become contentious. But from his viewpoint, “devoting attention to one case with a manageably small sample size allows the opportunity to report in depth” (p. 93). Indeed, this study does not purport to be representative of a larger population, but rather seeks to examine the in-depth quality of the data gathered. This permitted the researcher to dig deep into the meanings of the utterances of a small group of ELT practitioners.

Interaction with the participants was a key point in constructing meaning together. As will be seen throughout the discussion chapter, the researcher took an active role in the investigation, conversing—more than merely interviewing the participants—but also sharing opinions, questioning issues and reflecting together with the participants. At the same time, this researcher was aware that a certain distance had to be maintained in order to allow sufficient space for the participants to express their points of view. As described in the introduction, the researcher’s own experiences, that which was observed and heard, was the motivation for exploring this topic. This could be both an advantage and/or a constraint. Indeed, this investigator was highly aware of the subjectivity which could enter into the ongoing research, influencing the participants and the topic of investigation. However, certain ideas and opinions informed the researcher’s constructions. It was through being aware of these factors that the investigator was able to suspend certain views, and allow the data to emerge in its own right. The application of reflexivity was a principle enacted in the course of the investigation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Similarly, in terms of the subjectivity that the participants brought to the investigation, there was an awareness on the part of the researcher that the participants’ ideas are a construct of their individual realities, and that these are changeable.

Even through the course of the interviews, one could appreciate their continuous state of reflexion. As such, this led to the questioning and reframing their ideas. At times they were contradictory, but also they reflected on the complexities of the topic, and their discourse displayed a high degree of reflexivity. Individuals are continuously constructing meaning, and our views are constantly being shaped and re-shaped. For all these reasons, this investigation does not purport to be an absolute truth, but rather proposes to catch glimpses of reality (Holliday, 2007).

3.3 The Research Techniques

The investigation considered interviewing two different groups of ELT professionals, English language teachers and English teacher trainers. The data collection was carried out with the use of formal and informal interviews (Fetterman, 2010). Their use varied in terms of the different stages of the investigation. In the first stage, the researcher set out to collect examples of any form of localized expressions; this was done through informal interviews with English teachers. During the second stage, face-to-face interviews were conducted with both groups of participants, English teachers and English teacher instructors in order to explore their views and perceptions of localized expressions.

Informal interviews were used as a strategy for establishing first contact with the participants. In this initial phase, the objective was to explain the purpose of the investigation as well as to explore any forms of local use of language that had been observed or experienced by English teachers in their classroom. This allowed the researcher to create a list of concepts and expressions commonly used by students (see Annex III List of English Mexican Expressions). These examples were used in the formal interviews with each participant for the purpose of illustrating some of the nativized uses identified by one teacher or another. This process provided an opportunity for the teacher participants to report whether they had heard local expressions and also provided a platform to probe their ideas and opinions about local uses of English. Fetterman (2010) highlights the value of interviews in that they give a voice to the participants in the course of an investigation. The interviews conducted in this case proved to be an excellent opportunity to engage the participants; they were an opportunity not only for the participants to express their opinions, but also to narrate their personal stories—how they saw themselves in relation to the phenomenon under investigation.

Their narratives were full of personal information which was used to reflect and support their viewpoints. This data—generated in the form of verbatim quotations—was useful for presenting a rigorous report of what was expressed by the participants, thus achieving what Holliday (2007) describes as “thick description”. By juxtaposing what was said or experienced at one time and place by one participant with what another participant saw or experienced, it was possible to form an impression of whether the phenomenon found echo in other school environments. The principle of “thick description” was also achieved by juxtaposing the professional experiences of the participants with their personal trajectories. This provided another angle of analysis to better understand how these experiences affect their professional trajectories. “Thick description” was achieved by permitting these different angles to come into play in the analysis of the participants’ discourse. It was advantageous to have the multiple perspectives from the participants, whose wide-ranging characteristics—whether of foreign and local origin, whether male or female, whether older or younger, whether experienced or novices, from varying cultural backgrounds—made for a rich and complex data set. Thus, their different stories, experiences and trajectories were an asset to the study of the phenomenon, as they added rich and varied perspectives (see characteristics of participants below).

Furthermore, the interview *per se* reflected a dual process of constructing meaning through interaction. In narrating their experiences, professional or personal, participants were deeply engaged in constructing meaning, a process which took place as we, interviewer and interviewees, became actively involved in the process. Indeed, as Silverman (2010) wrote, “one of the postulates of constructivist tradition is that any data collected in interviews is not ‘factual reality’, but a construction of individuals accounts about their experiences as co-constructed in the interaction of the interview” (p. 130). Although Holliday (2007) appreciates the value of such data, he also cautions that verbatim data should be inspected for subjective elements, just as other forms of data. This is because in fact “verbatim data is as much mediated by the presence of the researcher” (p. 61), that is to say from the questions the researcher chooses to ask, the way the researcher asks them and how the researcher leads the conversation.

Thus, it became of primary importance to apply the principle of reflexivity at several points during the investigation, in the process of collecting data and afterwards, both at the moment of analyzing data and at the time of the writing of the final product. Hammersley and Atkinson (2009) describe this process as “double reflexivity”, the process of engaging once more with the data. Enacting this principle of reflexivity allow for maintenance of the necessary rigor in the research process.

It has been argued that the interview reflected the process of constructing meaning through the event of interaction. Thus, although this post various questions, like my participants, the researcher took an active role in the inquiry. This was done primarily through the sharing of life experiences or *critical incidents* which were made into “stories” in order to present them for the purpose of prompting responses or reactions (Armenta and Holliday, 2015) (see Annex IV Critical Incident). Woolsey (1986) wrote of the critical incident approach in qualitative research that, “the critical incident technique allows researchers to access the perspectives of many research participants through one of the most accessible human discourse avenues, the narrative” (p. 111). The use of critical incidents motivated teachers to recall their personal and professional experiences, some good, some not so good, and the sharing of such experiences turned into fresh critical incidents which were used with other participants in the study. These personal and professional experiences helped in the understanding of the ways in which the participants treat and have dealt with the issue of cross-cultural communication. The use of critical incidents threw light on what the participants thought when engaging with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, with different worldviews, accents and unfamiliar cultural concepts. As Fetterman (2010) wrote, “the manner in which individuals shape the past highlights their values and reveals the configuration of their worldviews” (p. 42). This approach was very illustrative in understanding the mindset that guides teachers’ actions in the ELT classroom and in understanding their views regarding the use of English in the world. So then, this process served to elicit, explore and reconstruct the interviewees’ realities, which made it possible to understand how and why they position themselves as they do when faced with the use of nativized or localized uses of English.

The critical incident format allowed for relevant topics to be developed. The rhythm of the conversations maintained a natural flow before arriving at the three structured questions which were posed towards the end of the interview. The structured questions were: 1. How would you describe this phenomenon and what are your perceptions? 2. Will it have an impact on the future development of English? 3. Do you think the concern expressed by some linguists about the "transformations" or "mutations" of the English language as a result of the transfer from first language/culture (L1/C1) to second language/culture (L2/C2) is justified?

The *research diary* was another important instrument throughout the course of the investigation. It was maintained to keep a record of everything that was observed or heard, as well as to keep record of personal stories, what was experienced in the personal and professional trajectories (Fetterman, 2010; Wolcott, 2008; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The stories, as will be seen in Section 4.4, played an important role in the construction of participant identity, both professional and personal. One great advantage of a research diary is that it is accessible all the time to register things as they came to mind. In it, the researcher wrote down thoughts and ideas from the initial phase as inquiry into the phenomenon of native influences advanced. The diary was maintained in the subsequent phases as the investigation went forward. The research diary was an excellent instrument for putting down thoughts, thoughts which in many cases led to further inquiries into unanswered questions. These thoughts also guided the investigation, as it was possible go back to the research diary to look for answers within the data, to look for things which might not have been considered before, but which began to acquire importance. Such a constant process of reflexivity was a means for narrowing down the focus of the research, and also helped guide the discussion of the case. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) refer to this process as the “funnel strategy”. In summary, the diary allowed one to keep a record of things—the diary told the story of the research process itself, how thoughts ideas were developed throughout the process, and how reflexivity was applied as the researcher became immersed in the investigation.

The interpretive practice in the interviews, through the questions and the use of critical incidents, aided in gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) remark, the above-mentioned processes add “rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry” (p. 5). Interviewing English teachers and English teacher trainers, assembling their voices, listening to their stories, allowed for an in-depth construction of their realities.

3.4 Analyzing Data

A thematic analysis was chosen as a mean to organizing the data. Themes were determined by examining the stories told by the participants. Their stories oscillated between the personal and the professional, the personal including experiences of being confronted with different cultural practices, accents and expressions, while the professional featured experiences which revealed the challenges of mediating between the formalities of language teaching and the social realities of its use in the outside world. Arriving at a general overview of what might proceed from the data at hand was by no means an easy process.

Stake (2005) highlights that the work of making sense of data is “reflective” (p. 450). Regarding this principle, he wrote that: “The brainwork ostensibly is observational, but more critically, is *reflective*. In being ever reflective, the researcher is committed to pondering the impressions, deliberating on recollections and records—but not necessarily following the conceptualizations of theorists, actors or audiences” (pp. 449—450). The insights and stories obtained from the participants resulted in 53,000 words of rough data. Indeed, their narratives furnished a great deal of evidence which allowed for an in-depth exploration of the question of local uses of English; however, this was work that necessitated continuous reflection on and interpretation of their experiences. Connections between their stories and putting these side-by-side with the stories of others, was a requisite in establishing what Stake describes as “criss-crossed reflection” (*ibid.*).

The analysis process was not a linear one, but one which implied a cyclic process of reading and re-reading, organizing and re-organizing material, resulting in a constant process of interpretation. This was very conducive to achieve “thick description”, in other words, an account that is rich in detail, and which embraces different perspectives (Holliday, 2011). So then, in the process of building the story of the case, linkages and a story line were developed to create a coherent piece of work.

3.5 The Participants

The investigation included two different groups of ELT practitioners, a group of active English teachers and a group of English teacher trainers. Given that the purpose of the investigation was to explore localized uses of English, the investigation considered teachers from four different institutions in four different cities in the state of Guanajuato. Keeping in mind that this was intended as a small-scale project, the sample had to be kept to a manageable size. This implied establishing a small but representative cross section which considered such criteria as age, experience, gender, travels, first language, and cultural background. The participants consisted of thirteen ELT professionals, seven Mexican nationals and six foreign nationals, these coming from Hungary, France, Bulgaria, Canada, the US and England. Out of this group, eight are active English teachers, whereas the other five work in a teacher training program. Of this latter group, except for one of them who teaches English on-line, none of these participants are active English language teachers. All participants, active or not, have extensive experience in the field. All participants have studies in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) or related careers. Three have a bachelor's degree, six a master's degree (two of which have doctoral studies in process) and four have doctorates.

The participants were selected for this investigation because of their professional experience in English Language Teaching (ELT) and their experience as users of the English language, whether as native or non-native speakers. All had been active in international exchanges and international communication; their personal and professional experience included travel to several countries in Europe, America and Asia, either for tourism, studies or work. Likewise, at the intranational level, the English language is used in communication with speakers of other foreign languages living in Mexico. Thus, all the participants had vast experience in international interaction with different and varied uses of the English language. The varying realities of the participants provided me access to broad range of experiences, insights and perceptions. As Stake (2005) puts it, “qualitative research is interested in diversity of perceptions, even the multiple realities within which people live” (p. 456).

Gaining access to site and participants was not an issue as full support from the institution to carry out this investigation was provided. Likewise, support from fellow colleagues, most of whom were known to the researcher for many years, was a given. They entrusted this present researcher with their ideas, opinions, and their experiences.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Research subjects have the right to be informed about the nature of the study. Christians (2005) discusses two conditions: Subjects must agree voluntarily to participate and their agreement must be based on full and open information (p. 144). The interview request through e-mail as well as the initial explanation of the purpose of the interview at the beginning of the interview event, were considered to provide “informed consent” (*ibid.*). The understanding of the purpose of the investigation, the content of the interview, and that their participation was entirely voluntary, were matters which were understood by the participants. Interviews were recorded with the previous authorization of participants, and they were assured that the recordings were to be accessed only by the researcher. Code of ethics also considers privacy and confidentiality; thus, participants were guaranteed protection of identities by assuring them the adoption of pseudonyms in the presentation of findings (*ibid.*).

Chapter 4 Local use of English in Mexico

The purpose of this investigation was to explore what is going on with English in the social context of Mexico. Variations in language use, as discussed from the viewpoint of the world Englishes paradigm, are wide and extensive, and Mexico is a case in point. The current investigation focuses on the discussion of expressions and concepts commonly used by Mexican students when interacting with each other. The presentation of findings is approached by first providing a description of such common expressions and concepts as identified by English language teachers, followed by a discussion regarding ELT practitioners' perceptions of this phenomenon.

4.1 Traditional Classifications of Linguistic Transfer

The first section of this chapter includes a description of the common phrases, concepts and expressions identified by the English language teacher participants in the investigation (see Annex III English Mexican Expressions). This data was obtained through informal interviews at the first stage of the investigation. As the process evolved, by means of cross-referencing what was found from one person to another, the expressions were shared among the teacher participants. This process allowed for the identification of some of the most common expressions observed in the discourse of the students and allowed the pinpointing of phrases which resonated across geographical locations.

As discussed in Section 2.3, there are some traditional approaches to analyzing the phenomena at hand. These expressions including: “borrowing”, “code-switching” and “imposition”. Borrowing refers to a ‘bit’ of one language that is replicated in another. Code-switching refers to the act where speakers ‘switch’ between one language and another during the same instance of communication. Imposition refers to a process when “the speaker.... transfers features of the L1 into the L2 in which the speaker is less proficient” (Winford, 2010, p. 171).

What's up “cuñado” or “compadre”	Que ondas cuñado o compadre	Colloquial expression used for greeting
fresh water	agua fresca	A drink of Mexican origin made with puréed fruit, water, and sugar

So then, “*compadre*” would be an example of “borrowing” because it is a concept replicated in English, and “fresh water” an example of “imposition”, because it could be considered to be a transference from the local language into English. In Mexico many people refer to a “good friend” as “*cuñado*”, [brother in law] or “*compadre*” [godfather] because this is the common way to do so in the shared linguistic repertoire. “*Cuñado*” or “*compadre*” are standard, while saying “brother in law” or “godfather” would sound awkward and foreign. The process of translation can also be used to explain this L1/L2 transfer: in terms of literal translation “*agua fresca*” becomes “fresh water”. Nevertheless, in terms of semantics the issue remains, as the actual meaning of the concept is not the same in English. Another example could be the expression, “*she's a strawberry*” which does not mean anything in English—a *person* being a fruit? However, these expressions *are* in English, are they not? The syntax of the English language **subject + verb + object** is clear. If it were Spanish, it would have to read: “*Es fresa*” [is strawberry], as the subject is implicit in the conjugation of the verb, “[ella] **es** fresa”.

she is a strawberry (S + V + O)	es fresa (V + O)	An expression to describe a person who is snobbish
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The syntactic construction of these Mexican phrases was discussed by a participant in his analysis of the expression “Don't stain”, “*No manches*” as he observed the correct use of the auxiliary verb “do”, a linguistic feature which **DOES NOT** exist in Spanish, and the use of the verb in its natural form “stain” whereas in Spanish the inflection of the verb would be in the suffix: from infinitive “*manchar*” to “no manches” [no stain]. So then, the expression “Don't stain” is English, not Spanish; it is Mexican English.

don't stain, don't suck	no manches, no mames	Expressions used to describe disbelief or disagreement with another's words or actions
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Indeed, in their analysis and discussion of these Mexican expressions, most of the participants discussed the linguistic abilities of students to manipulate the language. The following narrative shows a detailed analysis by one of the participants.

In the examples “don’t stain”, “what a fart”, the grammatical structure is correct, I mean, he is observing that “stain” is precisely a verb, and he’s using the correct auxiliary, a negative. I mean, the whole structure is grammatically correct, there’s no problem. A person could understand the grammatical structure “don’t stain” in English, for example, “don’t drink your glass of wine on the couch, don’t stain it”... in these terms, but not with the intentionality in the cultural context of what you wanted to say because “no manches” means so many different things. In the same sense, that’s what happens with the expression “what a fart”. We can see a syntactical correct structure because in it, he is using a noun and because it starts with a consonant, he adds the indefinite article ‘a’ which he puts with “fart”, and he also uses “what”. [...] in English someone can interpret it as strange, something that smells funny, but not here, because of the cultural baggage of what the expression means to us.

Mario

Another issue that can be analyzed is in relation to those words for which there is an equivalent in English. As in the examples “*compadre*”, “godfather” and “*cuñado*”, “brother in law”. If these concepts exist in English, why do individuals still prefer to use them in Spanish? Because they carry and are meant to be used with a different meaning—a cultural meaning. Both these words are used not to mean “godfather” or “brother in law”, but to simply represent (close) friendship, not necessarily to mean family relationships. As such, this might not be understood using the English words “godfather” or “brother in law”.

Interestingly, the concepts of “*compadre*” and “*agua fresca*” have made it into an important English dictionary, the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, published in 2016.

com•pa•dre. (kəm'pɑ dre) n. Chiefly Southwestern U.S. a friend, companion, or close associate.

a•gua fres•ca (ä'gwə frēs'kə) n. a drink of Mexican origin made with puréed fruit, water, and sugar.

a•mi•go (ə'mi goo, a'mi-) n., pl. -gos. a male friend. A person whom one knows well, likes, and trusts: brother, chum, confidant, confidante, familiar, friend, intimate, mate, pal. Informal: bud, buddy. Slang: sidekick.

These concepts therefore can be considered borrowing words. They can be said to be “something that is recognizable in English but has certain flavour of locals” as Saraceni (2015, p. 117) would put it. From this discussion we can observe the many different processes affecting new forms of English, such processes can include: transfer, translation, shift, lexical borrowing, hybridization and reduplication (Trakulkasemsuk, 2012, in Saraceni, 2015, p. 117).

Other forms in which linguistic transfer from Spanish into English was discussed by the participants, such as the use of prepositions and pronunciation.

Estoy enfermo de	I am sick with , NOT <i>I am sick of</i>
Estoy fastidiado	<i>I am sick of</i>

As this participant observes, the meaning of an expression can change according to the preposition, as he described

*In terms of prepositions, it is a difficult task with students because prepositions in English and in Spanish don’t correspond. They have to be studied as such, and even though students may say that ‘I know what they mean’, yes, they know what they mean, but they’re not applied in the same way. In Spanish you say “estoy enfermo **de**” [I am sick **OF**] while in English you say I am sick **with**. And they inquire ‘So, I can’t say “I’m sick of”? And of course they can, but it would have a different meaning, such as “estoy fastidiado”. **Martin***

Not using the “correct” preposition as pointed out by this participant can indeed be a cause of confusion and misunderstanding. However, one point that it is not observed is that according to contextual and situational circumstances it could be said that interactants should be able to understand how the preposition “sick **of**” had been used. For Mexican students using “Mexican English”, an English that reflects their linguistic features, might be understood. As such, it might become institutionalized and become the norm in the local community. In fact, another participant talks about this issue.

Perceptions **about** or perceptions **of**, **NOT** Perceptions **towards**
(Spanish Speakers in Latin America)

*I think in academic English, I've been reading a lot of articles written by non-native speakers, and depending on their linguistic background, their L1, there are recurring what we would consider, some sort of standard academic point of view, “incorrect”, they have errors, lots of errors. But if they keep publishing this is going to justify the English that they're using, so the more there is, once again it's a natural process, and as much as we, and I keep for example there are certain pet hates I have, hum, in academic writing that, are incorrect but they keep perpetuating themselves, so eventually, so they will just be accepted, and there are the ones that, if you look on Google, for example “perceptions towards” only appear in Latin American academic papers. But if they keep accepting it, it's going to be perpetuated and accepted, and as much as you try to tell them that it's “perception about” or “perceptions of”, les vale! So, of course it has an effect on...the simple mass of people who speak English and when non-native English speakers bring their own cultural linguistic influence into English will have an effect on English, it has over the centuries. French had a major influence in English the ex-colonies had a major influence in English so I don't see why this new, kind of development of global Englishes wouldn't have, it's an exchange no? so you get English and then the English you get back of course it's going to be different. **Luisa***

This participant identifies a common “error” associated to Latin America, or Spanish speakers. The influence that Spanish speakers might have in changing what is considered as “correct English”, given the number of English users of Spanish background, is highlighted by this participant. Indeed, Spanish speakers of English outnumber by far the population of native speakers of English. This issue could have an impact on the institutionalization of varied uses and new formulations such as the one discussed here. Whether this might be journals that accept such varieties as “the norm” within the context of Spanish speakers from Latin America, this could lead to important changes or the emergence of a variant of English at a global level. It could be said that the use of “perceptions towards” might be recognized as a “feature” associated with Spanish speakers, not necessarily an “error”. Any reader confronted with a text with this new form, much like this participant, might recognize it as such, in other words, as a text written by a Spanish speaker. **Luisa** however seems to struggle between two paradigms, one perpetuated by her school, where she learned what is considered to be “correct” which in turn is linked to her professionalism in maintaining such rules—her “pet hates”, as the participant expressed it, or as it might be put in “standard” English, “pet peeves”—and another paradigm, the recognition of what culturally diverse users of a language bring to the linguistic system. This is a phenomenon which she acknowledges as a result of social changes in history.

As the dialogue continued, **Luisa** talked about the challenges facing individuals in identifying what might be considered as an accepted variant of English in one context, but which might be unknown in another context.

Researcher: *This made think of this Journal of Lingua Franca English, they accept papers that do not necessarily conform to native norms, but they do push for intelligibility//**Luisa:** This is interesting because I reviewed a paper that was written by a Nigerian and obviously the question is like, quite probably, the way he writes, or she writes, it's going to be acceptable in Nigerian. But I don't know because I don't know Nigerian English, so what I am to do? Might be errors... that I think are errors, or, yeah.*

So then, how does one deal with linguistic variants which might be considered as correct in one context, Nigeria, but that might not be considered as such by other users of English, those who might be applying what they learned as a “correct” English structure? This seems to be a challenge facing individuals, as put forward by this participant: “So what [are we] to do?” This is a point that was discussed by other participants, who highlighted the importance of maintaining a “basic form” or “standard English” (see Section 4.5). One important point that needs to be made is that when participants speak of the importance of teaching or using the correct form, they put strong emphasis on written, academic language, whereas they seem to be more flexible with spoken language.

Indeed, **Luisa’s** own experience with Spanish language—more than ten years, allowed her to identify and explain a particular “feature”, the choice of prepositions in English such as “perceptions to”. It was interesting to note the concern shown by this participant regarding her own limitations in classifying other forms either as correct or incorrect based on *her* linguistic knowledge of “standard” English. Any English user confronted with the expression “Welcome IN Egypt” might experience the same feeling. This raises the questions: Do individuals have to “know” the variants of English? Do individuals “know” all forms of English, even in their native language, whatever language this might be?

Literal Translation
Natation [natacion], or swimming

The following narrative adds yet another dimension to the discussion.

*I’ve seen words that I don’t know in students’ compositions, perhaps because they’re not very common in English. I remember a composition that had the word “natation” to express from Spanish “natacion”. I mean, we usually don’t say “natation”, we say “swimming”. But then I thought, what if the word exists? And I checked in the dictionary, and guess what? It does exist! It’s an English word... “natation”. The fact that I didn’t know it, it doesn’t mean that it’s wrong or that it doesn’t exist. It only means that I don’t use it, or perhaps that it’s not commonly used, but the word does exist! **Martin***

What is interesting about this narrative is the degree to which this English teacher maintained some degree of flexibility, but more importantly, the value of being humble in recognizing and considering that he might not know all English words. He kept the door open to the possibility that the word might exist in English, and that it might be correct, instead of discarding it as non-existent and disqualifying it as such. With this response, **Martin** shows an open attitude that recognizes the existence of limitations or “truncated repertoires”. Individuals do not necessarily “know” or have to know all words, concepts and expressions in English, much less, in all variants of all *Englishes*. But, in the negotiation of these new forms, as this participant shows, one can investigate, inquire, ask, be curious, in order to work things out. By extension, this same attitude could be applied when dealing with the myriad of concepts and expressions which arise as a result of the diversity of English usages in the world.

Another example which serves to illustrate this issue is taken from my research diary. Last year we had a Fulbright scholar, arranged through the American Embassy in Mexico, to visit our Department. For the purpose of providing our visitor a general overview of our school, a meeting was organized with faculty. The group which met consisted of five professors, three American nationals and two Mexican nationals, the present researcher included. For the purpose of the presentation we described our programs, the students and the work carried out by the professors in the Department, among other things. At some point in the discussion, the visitor made a pause for one moment to express her new discovery in the local culture: “I’ve noticed that here they use ‘teachers’ to refer to ‘professors!’” (Research notes). Very likely, the two Mexican teachers present at this meeting may have used “teacher” transferred from our Spanish native language—“maestro(s)”. The surprising response of one American colleague was to roll up her eyes, nodding, as to thank the visitor for illustrating this point to us, the locals. This exchange illustrates two opposing responses to varieties of English use. On the one hand, the attitude showed by the visitor was that of an individual actively engaged in the local environment. She “discovered” something, a feature characteristic of locals, who use the word “teacher” for “professor”, showing a difference from standard “English *English*” usage. And on the opposite side, there was the reaction of the local American teacher, who after living in Mexico for over forty years, appeared to show a less open attitude to the usage of this expression. In any case, it may be said that as a result of the active role of the visitor, her observational skills and abilities in negotiation, that she was able to work things out.

The following extract narrated by **Liliana** serves to highlight individuals' social skills and abilities to communicate, as the participant expressed it—"When there is a will, there is a *means*", or as it might be put in "standard" English, "where there is a will, there is a way".

A dialogue among two students from level 2
St 1: You go Australia?
St 2: Oh, yes. I go hamburger eat.
St 1: Oh yes? Good?
St 2: Yes, good.

This dialogue between two beginner students was described by a participant from a conversation class. With this example, the participant makes the point that communication goes beyond well-structured use of language. When engaging in interaction and succeeding at it, there are other factors that contribute to convey meaning including: willingness of interactors, paralinguistic features, knowledge of the world, among other factors. The students who took part in this dialogue are level 2 students, who with the few linguistic resources available to them are seen to convey meaning, to engage in communication and to understand each other. This is not to suggest that language and its structure are unimportant, but to make the point that in social interaction individuals will make use of all kinds of semiotic recourses to achieve communication. As they advance in their studies it can be expected that they will acquire a higher level or proficiency. So then, in the same way that these level 2 students are seen to be constructing meaning, in an international exchange, there will be other challenges that speakers will be facing as a result of the transfer of native language/culture in their use of English. They will speak with an accent, behave in different ways, use concepts or expressions unfamiliar to the Other—concepts and expressions which might mean nothing or not make any sense to the Other—but as seen in this example, these students showed their innate capacities to negotiate meaning and to make use of cosmopolitan skills and strategies to achieve communication.

Summary of this Section

ELT practitioners have identified that characteristics of the local language/culture are often manifested in the English spoken in those regions (Kirkpatrick, 2007; Saraceni, 2015; Jenkins 2006a, and others). Mexican concepts, expressions, lexico-grammatical features or pragmatic uses such as: "agua fresca", "she's a strawberry", "perceptions towards" or "hello teacher" are examples of this phenomenon. The analysis and discussion offered by the participants in the preceding section show how different attitudes really are towards such adaptations. On the one hand, localized uses were seen as a creative manipulation of language, i.e. "don't stain", a construction which conforms to normal English language structure. On the other hand, variations such as "perceptions towards" or "hello teacher" seemed to be more difficult to accept because they do not conform to specific semantic equivalents in English. The active role of individuals, as well as the use of strategies to construct meaning, were issues that were commented on in the discussions of participants.

The different approaches in the study of nativized uses of English indicate that this is a very complex phenomenon. Explanations based exclusively on one or another, e.g. translation or borrowing, may not be enough to capture and explain such complexities. In a recent exchange with two of the foreign participants in this investigation, the challenges of disassociating one's cultural background or cultural identity from one's discourse became evident. For example, one participant said: "I have a student who calls me by my name when she talks to me in English, but when she talks to me in Spanish, I am '*maestra*' ('teacher'). She [the student] said it's inconceivable for her to call me by my name when we speak in Spanish", to which another colleague responded: "I myself use '*vous*' (the formal address in French) with my professors" (Research notes). Both these examples show the impact, or pragmatic dissonance, that an individual's cultural schemas, in this case in terms of social distance, can have in the way they behave and by extension how this transfer in the way individuals use a foreign language.

In this respect, two opposing views emerged in the discussion offered by the participants in the investigation. On the one hand, L1/C1 transfer into L2/C2 was perceived as a natural thing, but at another times, it was perceived as a problem.

4.2 Cultural Transfer: Positive and Negative Views

Several participants question that the learning of English should mean the acquiring of a “new culture”. On the contrary, they view the transfer of first culture as something normal and even desirable.

***Researcher:** You were saying that for you to speak a language comes with the desire to reflect your Self, your cultural identity ...// **Luna:** Of course, I did not study English to become a “Gringa” ...an American or Briton, which appears to be what English teachers try to do, or the textbooks... this idea that “let’s behave in English” [...] what is that!? Like if we were the Queen of England!// **Researcher:** And that’s the question, which way is that?// **Luna:** Yes, that’s the other problem. The ideological imposition totally constraint to universal stereotypes that don’t even correspond to reality.*

As a non-native speaker of English, this participant clearly opposes the idea that learning a foreign language means the adoption of the foreign culture. She also questions the notion that cultures can be defined as something real and that they can be taught. From her viewpoint, this can lead to the teaching of “stereotyped” images of Others.

*I believe that when you speak a foreign language it’s loaded with all those cultural implications from your own language and your own context. I think that this is important, you [the individual] speak from your experience, from your lived experience, from your worldviews, and I think that this is important to acknowledge... precisely to avoid those rigid ideas of language [...]. At the end of the day, this is a contribution from individuals... when language is brought to another context, otherwise, how are new words created? New elements that were not part of that language? These words have to be there, they become part of the new context of that culture. **Mario***

This participant welcomes the idea that an individual’s cultural identity should reflect in the way they use the foreign language. **Mario** sees this as a process of sharing and learning new worldviews. Moreover, this is seen as a normal process of the transformation of languages and cultures, as well as the transcendence of individuals, that is to say, what they contribute to the creation of new forms. Like the participant above, it could be said that he rejects the notion that languages or cultures should be considered as fixed entities. A similar view was shared by the following participant, who believes that languages can be reconfigured and absorb new concepts.

*I see this as a desire to belong to a new linguistic community that is not ours, but that I’m creating to design a world where I use my concepts which I wish to manifest in another language, because I need those concepts in my life. So, why the English language is not going to include my concepts if my identity is constructed with those concepts? So, I see myself speaking English but not leaving aside my “tacos” or my “pozole” because I need to mention them. **Lola.***

From the viewpoint of **Lola**, one’s own culture travels with the language being used; culture is expressed *in* and *through* language. She views this as a process of construction, a process of negotiation between the old and the new, a reconfiguration of one’s first language/culture into the new language/culture, a process which she acknowledges as positive and normal. Echoing this view, another participant referred to the transfer of Mexican expressions into the foreign language as a phenomenon which he qualifies as a “positive thing”.

*This Mexican English is a form of “adapting” the language to their necessities and to what they want to say. I think this is positive because we complain that students “don’t speak English!”, or that “they don’t perceive it as a necessity for communication!”. This proves that students are adapting the language to their needs and they’re willing to speak and use it since they want to express their own ideas. This becomes authentic use of the language in their contexts. I’ve heard students say “What happens to you” to express in Spanish “Que te pasa”. I think these expressions are nice because it shows how a student wants to express their ideas in English. **Marcos***

It is interesting how this participant refers to L1/C1 transfer as “authentic” use of English supported by the idea that it is being used to fit certain purposes, to express linguistic and culturally driven formulations “in English” as the participant put it. Thus, “Que te pasa” becomes “What happens to you”. This phenomenon is also considered “creative” and even “amusing” by other participants:

*I don't see any problem, it helps to motivate discussion and motivate openness about other varieties of English, not only theirs. **Mario***

*I think the use of nativized forms is something that comes naturally while speaking a foreign language. **Laura***

*For me, it's not wrong. **Martin***

*When I see this, "no manches", "don't stain", it makes me laugh, students are so creative, because of course they're going to use stuff like that! It makes total sense, you know. **Leslie***

*I see this phenomenon as a process of adaptation and transition because we are so connected to English. **Lucia***

From these perspectives the phenomenon regarding the transfer of Spanish or Mexican culture into the foreign language can be summarized in a word: a natural process.

However, the positive view was contradictory at times. Although the teacher participants support the idea that individuals will be able to negotiate meaning, they seem to go back to the discourse regarding the use of standard English (SE) and native speaker models, as the preferred form.

*Of course, there're expressions that annoy me. [...] For example, in Irapuato, Mexico, we use an expression at the end of the phrases similar to a tag question, "No hiciste la tarea, **di**". I've heard students say "Today we have exam, **you say**". When I heard this, I got annoyed because there is a concrete grammar item to express this! **Marcos***

That this teacher expresses having experienced feelings of annoyance can be said to be linked to issues of professionalism, the desire to have students make use of what he calls "a concrete grammar item to express" the same thing in English. As mentioned above, this same teacher had expressed a positive view when he referred to this phenomenon as "authentic" use of English. Such opposing views are somewhat controversial.

*I clarify things for them. A student used the expression "He falls me fat" [me cae gordo] I said to her that we understand, but the way this same thing is expressed in English would be "I don't like him". So, it is important to make them aware of the limitations of using these [Mexican expressions], you need to make them aware of these issues but you also need to explain to them how to do things, in this case, how to say that. **Liliana***

On the one hand, the use of the Mexican expression "*Me cae gordo*" is understood and accepted as natural. However, the teacher goes back to her sense of professionalism, the "teaching" of the correct form, as she put it "how to say that", one may add, "in English". Once again, some degree of acceptance regarding such localized expressions is evident, but then again, the notion of professionalism, the responsibility of teachers to teach "what is correct in English" seems to prevail. Although she talks about making students aware of the limitations of these Mexicanized phrases, it is not clear how this is achieved except by telling them how the same thing is expressed in the foreign language.

*I think that [this phenomenon] is normal because students haven't had the opportunity to live or to travel to the US. [...] in order for them to really learn the use, they need to interact with native speakers of the language. **Lucia***

In this extract, although **Lucia** perceives L1/C1 transfer into L2/C2 as normal, this is explained in terms of the lack of exposure to "real use of language" in "real contexts" or "real exposure to native speakers". This view shows a strong sense that English belongs to native speakers, and that, *that* is the "correct" form of language, and that native speakers are the models of the language. Hence, this notion does not seem to consider the use of language as something valid, new, or fresh; in other words, as a language to be adapted to fit a local use of English with reference to local needs, and not in reference to native speakers' use of English, which she seems to portray as the correct form.

Summary of this Section

In summary, although participants view the localized use of language as something normal, they often return to discourses which override this acceptance, a view which leads them to insist on the “correct” use of English. This notion is widely discussed in the literature regarding the standard English ideology; the belief is that there is a “correct” or “best” form of English (Melchers and Shaw, 2013; Galloway and Rose, 2015). In fact, several scholars argue that standard English, imitating native models, is the preferred form for teaching in periphery countries (Jenkins, 2006a; Seidlhofer, 2005). Thus, standard English models guide the design of ELT material and pedagogy, and indeed become the sources which determine ELT practice. Thus, there seems to be a standard English agenda influencing the way these teachers construct, and approach instruction. This would seem to be related to their professionalism, that is to say, their strong sense of the need to fulfill an established schema set up by the ELT institution—this would seem to be related also to a strong necessity to accomplish what is expected of them. Such notions appear to contradict what appears to be a more pragmatic view regarding such local use of English. Indeed, the standard English ideology seems to be so institutionalized that ELT practitioners seem to be left with no other choice but to follow the “rules”.

4.3 Dealing with Nativized Expressions

The discussion offered thus far suggests that L1/C1 transfer into L2/C2 is perceived as a natural thing. Indeed, participants’ discussions demonstrate awareness of this phenomenon given current social changes and the diversity of English users in the world, in this case what Mexican students bring to English. This section looks at ELT practitioners’ discussions regarding the many processes they identify in the construction of language and their role in developing critical intercultural awareness. However, from their viewpoint there exist several factors which prevent teachers from adopting a new worldview in English language instruction. This includes the design of programs which are predominately focused on the linguistic system, philosophy of learning, pace of program and textbooks, among other matters. Overall, it appears that traditional approaches to English language instruction prevail.

The discussion began with the researcher describing her own experience when one of my colleagues shared one of the common Mexican expressions used by her students, one which the present researcher had never heard before, that is: “crazy water” or “*agua loca*”, a drink made of Kool-Aid and alcohol. The expression was unfamiliar “in English” because the investigator had never heard it used “in Spanish”. This reaction to the “crazy water” concept gave occasion to ask a colleague: “*What happens when students don’t know, or don’t recognize these phrases?*”

Liliana: It happens, but they explain [to] each other. A student used the expression—don’t suck!—with another student, and he said,—What?—the student explained in Spanish—Que no mames... “don’t suck”—the other student went—Ah! OK—//Researcher: So, students create their repertoire// Liliana: Yes, they do.

In this extract, as reported by the participant, we can see two students chatting, listening, asking, explaining, and engaging in interaction. More importantly, they are seen to be constructing language and meaning. A similar experience, represented in the following dialogue, was narrated by **Lucia**,

Jorge: Hey teacher! How do you say “Hola” in a friend’s party?//Lucia: A friend’s party? What do you mean?//Jorge: Yes, in a party given by friends. I know that when you meet someone for the first time you say, “Hello, my name is Jorge”, but what about with people you already know?//Carlos: Hey man, you just say “what fart!” is the same when you drink a lot, you say “I’m fart”//Lucia: No, ‘Carlos’!! You don’t say that! You can offend people//Carlos: Why? “pedo” is fart in English//Lucia: Yes, but you do not always do a literal translation. Let me explain to you... (teacher explains how some words may not be translated literally to L2. If this is done it might produce a misunderstanding or people may feel offended).

This is another example where students are seen to construct their linguistic repertoire in order to transliterate two common phrases from their native language/culture into English: “*que pedo*” meaning “What’s up” and “*estoy pedo*” meaning “I’m drunk”. As seen in this example, the language learned for greetings/introduction is taken to another level, one where the student is seen to be making connections between L1 and L2. He is manipulating the linguistic code to construct a new meaning, to express a common phrase used in his culture. Moreover, the inquiry by this student evidences his active engagement and use of common sense to identify that the formality of such a form for greeting is limited to a function in a specific environment, an informal one where the formula “Hello my name is Jorge” is unsatisfactory. It is interesting to observe the immediate intervention of the teacher, who takes the opportunity to discuss the limitations of making “literal translations” from L1/C1 into L2/C2. As discussed by **Lucia**, the English teacher, the use of such expressions can cause confusion in intercultural exchange.

Echoing this view, **Lola** makes the point that variations in language use can indeed differ not only across different languages, e.g. English-Spanish, but even between cultures that might share the same language.

I think it would be like assuming that everybody is going to understand that I’m translating from my language, a piece of language that is indeed colloquial. The person should observe the context, if they’re in a place with people who are not from Mexico... even if they were from Spain and speak Spanish, they don’t say “what fart”, they don’t know what this means, for them “fart” is a different thing. [...] But in the case that the phrase slipped out, you repair your mistake... this will come naturally by observing the reaction on the other [...] and you explain, not impose, perhaps with your friends it makes sense, it’s funny, but if it doesn’t work in the same way with others, you stop using it.

Lola

Lola acknowledges issues arising from translating from a first language, pointing out that social context should be observed. By comparing the differences between two cultures such as Spain and Mexico, cultures which share the same linguistic system, this participant highlights the different semantic meaning that one same word can have in different cultural contexts. Something which can lead to confusion. She believes that individuals should remain aware of such issues. In fact, **Lola** finds that using one’s own expressions might simply “slipped out” however she observes that individuals are capable of interpreting the Other’s reaction and act to repair any misunderstanding, for instance, by means of explaining. She is wary about imposing on others.

Luna shared a similar story as she talked about the differences in meaning between Spanish from Spain and Mexico in the use of the verb “coger” (see Section 4.4).

Indeed, all participants in the investigation talked about their responsibility to “create awareness” about these issues, their main concern being that students “could be misunderstood” or in the worst scenario, “misinterpreted”.

[...] If they use these Mexican English phrases, there is a possibility that other speakers [...] won’t understand what they’re [say]ing. **Marcos**

[Students] are going to understand these expressions [...] but outside of this context they’re not going to be understood or they might even be misinterpreted [...] as teachers we must raise awareness about this. **Liliana**

Their narratives themselves demonstrate ELT practitioners’ awareness on these issues, and their sensibility, responsibility and professionalism in helping students become aware that problems can arise, and, in such cases, take action to repair misunderstandings.

Indeed, as the conversation went on, I asked my participants: “*What do you see these people doing if there is confusion because of linguistic or cultural transfer?*”:

*The person might try to continue trying to communicate, or might give up. It will depend on their need to communicate, if the need is not strong, he might say—Oh well, he didn't understand me—and that's it. But if the need to communicate is strong, he's going to find another way to achieve understanding, he's going to find other strategies! **Martin***

Constructing meaning, negotiation, mediating between different linguistic and cultural systems are processes that seem to be what this participant feels is happening. This experience resonates with the researcher's own experience while conducting the present investigation, upon hearing the expression "crazy water" as described above. A similar experience was hearing the expression "Coger la vuelta" from Castilian Spanish, which the researcher had heard for the first time in the context of Mexican Spanish (see Section 4.4). Not knowing what these expressions meant led to further inquiry and engagement in order to explore the theme.

Another participant describes the strategies taking place in the process of communicating:

*In a different culture, [...] they will not make comments, they will not respond to this—Don't stain—[no manches] they will be like [gestures ignorance]. [...] It's not the end of the world, because once [students] get out of here, when they talk, or when they listen to TV they will not hear it, it's just a local thing. **Leslie***

This participant describes many occurrences which can take place in cross-cultural interaction. On the one hand, she draws attention to the abilities which will inevitably be activated in constructing meaning, such as, observing, listening, analyzing or making connections to what others do with language, e.g. "they didn't understand me", "they don't say this", or "this means something different". Although not explicitly, this participant acknowledges that in intercultural exchange students may not only become aware of the Other—how *they* use language, but also the Self—how *I* use language. A process that can be leading to the negotiation of one's own language and culture. Such detailed description is a highpoint of the process supporting the development of critical cultural awareness. Similarly, **Leda** makes reference to processes of becoming aware of the Other,

*That's what I've been telling my students for a long time, when you go the United States half the people you'll come across are not going to be speaking, they're not going to be native speakers either, you'll have to open up your mind to be able to communicate, and all kinds of different varieties, and be receptive to all kinds of different varieties, because that's the way the world is. **Leda***

Using the US as an example **Leda** discusses the reality of a multicultural country that offers ample opportunities to meet people from different cultural/language backgrounds. This leads **Leda** to raise awareness about the different forms of behaviour in the way the Other speaks, sounds, or the language used by the Other. It can be said that by raising awareness about these issues, teachers would be providing students with opportunities to develop their values of respect, openness and tolerance towards cultural diversity.

Overall, participants recognize that in the act of social interaction speakers will make use of skills and strategies to succeed in communication and generate meaning. Participants recognize individual capacities in mediating between cultures in intercultural exchange.

So then, how does one actually approach these issues in the ELT classroom? How do they "create awareness"? In the discussion about the "agua fresca" expression, the participants' discussion saw these occurrences as opportunities for discussion about cultural differences. Nevertheless, one thing which resonated among participants was the issue of tight programs and little time to engage in long cultural discussions.

*I would jump on the occasion to teach a cultural issue to relate to this for example, by asking students: "Why do you think they say that?" and make them think about both, "Why do they say that in English, or in Spanish?" "How does it work?" ... and go on... talk about it... because in English they don't have "agua fresca", it's not common, it's a cultural [Mexican] thing, that's why people just say "water". But it depends on what you're doing... it depends also on how much time you have. **Leslie***

Leslie sees great potential for the motivation of critical cultural awareness. She provides a detailed account of how to lead a discussion for this purpose. However, her statement “it depends also on how much time you have” suggests that time may be an issue of consideration. The same observation was made by another participant.

***Lola:** I don't want to judge negatively this teacher [referring to the critical incident] because lots of time there is no time to explain, so it is easier to close the discussion by saying—we don't do this, we don't say this—than to get lost in discussion like—let's get in a circle and reflect and analyze this—No, I have a program to fulfill, and if I'm going to respond to each question or doubt, —how do you say 'bolsa en soda' or how do you say 'agua en bolsa'—there will be many questions that I'm not going to be able to control things//**Researcher:** Another participant mentioned something similar, he talked about his program... “this week you have to cover this topic”, “next week it's present perfect”... and he's so focused on the linguistic aspect that the cultural aspect is left behind because there's no time...//**Lola:** I think the mistake here is the separation of culture from the grammatical part [language]//*

The World Englishes paradigm acknowledges the great diversity that individuals bring to the way they use English. The variety discussed by **Lola** possibly puts teachers in a position where time to discuss and engage students in critical cultural activities is lacking. From this participant's viewpoint, teachers have to fulfill the objectives of the program, which implies the organizing and planning of well-structured classes to achieve their goals. As a consequence, discussions outside these schemes may not be possible. This argument caused **Lola** to state that “it is easier to close the discussion by saying—we don't do this, we don't say this”. Her observation that the problem lies in the separation of culture from language was also discussed by other participants. This suggests that the linguistic code predominates instruction in many English language programs.

Another situation discussed by two other participants relates to the qualifications of English teachers who may opt to follow the “canon of the book”.

*This is evidence of what English teachers always respond to their students “This is not said in the US” [...] It worries me that the teachers tell the student that you have to order “black tea or soda”. Is that so? I think that his answer obeys to what the textbooks say, the canon of the textbook...what if I don't want that or if I don't like it, or if I don't drink soda? [...] there are many schools in basic education, primary schools, that have teachers who are not well-trained, some are not proficient in English or have serious deficiencies in the language. As a result, the easiest thing is to follow the textbook, and when you do that, you find that they are so rigid. Things are this or that and that's what they teach students. And the cultural aspect... there's no approach to language from a cultural viewpoint. Instead, they have to learn all of these formulas that allow [the student] to answer the exercise presented in the textbook. We all know that individuals speak a language, that through this language they express things such as “no manches” [Don't stain] or indignation as in the expression “que pedo” [what fart] ...the point is then, how do I do to express what I want? **Mario***

According to **Mario**, the lack of proper training of English teachers in terms of their level of proficiency in the foreign language, is the main reason for which teachers may opt to stick to the textbook. This may mean teaching the language system and the “cultural” knowledge contained in the textbook, with little consideration of such content. As a result, teaching is reduced to what the textbook says, and the completion of the exercises presented in textbooks. From this participant's viewpoint, the foreign language is taught merely from the perspective of a system of linguistic symbols disassociated from its culture. “How to express what I want”, as put by this participant, is not considered and remains unresolved.

The last word in this section goes to **Luna** who in a detailed account describes the challenges and restrictions facing ELT practitioners when dealing with students' native language and culture and the teaching of the foreign language. These may be: the agenda set up by the institution, the purpose of language instruction, learning philosophy, the objectives of the program, administrative rules concerning teaching methodology or textbook to be used, among other matters. All of these have to be mediated by the ELT practitioner.

*A teacher who may be concerned with teaching content begins by establishing the objective to be covered, the timing to cover the topic—I've got 50 minutes, the topic is "present simple", then he makes decisions—I'm going to approach it like this because that's what the textbook suggests. On the other hand, we have the teacher from the twenty-first century, a teacher who is focused on the integral development of the student which is focused on "learning". So, if the topic is "present simple", the former will put lots of emphasis on the use of /s/ for third person, the auxiliary Does in its affirmative and negative form, the focus will be on an impeccable structure. The latter, is not going to ignore the correct use of language, but will consider the reasons for which we use present simple, which are to describe our routines of everyday activities [...] So, he would question—How can they put that into use? That would be considering giving student the opportunity to talk about their routines, express their ideas [...] which have nothing to do with the book! Nothing to do with those ideas from the book that sometimes teachers force on the students! And that is the difference! [...] Teachers these days suffer a lot because it's complicated. They don't know what the student is going to come up with. If the student tells you that—Yo diario me levanto y tomo un jugo en bolsa— [...] As a teacher, you at least should try to paraphrase that. But it can certainly paralyze the teacher, that's precisely what leads to comments such as—What?! That doesn't exist!—So what do they do? They click on "PAUSE"—Let's go back to the routines: "What do you drink? Coffee or juice". And so, the student no longer eats "chilaquiles con huevo y ni toma jugo en bolsa, ni come tacos al vapor". Imagine that!!!//**Researcher:** Another participant also mentioned the issue of time...//**Luna:** Right, and that's why the easiest thing to say is: "It doesn't exist!" [...] or simply to stick to the book! **Luna***

Luna highlights the differences between teaching English as a tool for communicating one's own cultural reality and another type of teaching in which students are required to conform to native English speaker models. From her viewpoint, there is value in recognizing the role English can play in expressing native cultural realities. **Luna** feels this can be achieved through negotiating the meaning of concepts. From her perspective, "non-existent" concepts that individuals may bring from their first culture can be put into English. Language is conceived as a social practice which is to be constructed by its speakers. In this case, the challenge is to describe and elaborate on such "new" concepts as "chilaquiles con huevo" or "jugo en bolsa". **Luna** questions the validity of textbooks which are disassociated from the cultural realities of English learners—textbooks which are often written in such a way as to only prepare students for speaking and interacting with native English speakers in an Anglo-Saxon environment. As pointed out by **Luna** and above by **Lola** and **Mario**, handling culture-specific issues can be challenging for the English teacher. Adding to the complexities, matters such as training (pedagogy), language proficiency or tight schedules may not facilitate approaching language instruction in a way that allows students to use the language to fit their purposes, that is, to express their cultural reality and/or to function in a global environment.

Summary of this Section

This section looks at the ways in which ELT professionals view the use of localized expressions in English. According to the participants their students are seen to adapt and appropriate the language to fit their purposes, building their own linguistic repertoire, and making use of strategies to construct meaning (McKay and Brown, 2016; Jenkins, 2006; Widdowson, 2003). The participants also discuss the importance of creating awareness of the limitations of using such Mexican expressions in an intercultural exchange. In fact, they discussed the limitations of allowing these types of expression into their teaching practice. As the participants point out, ELT programs focus heavily on the language system and are held to strict calendars. As a consequence, traditionalist approaches to language instruction end up being favored. Moreover, the evidence shows that language instruction is often disassociated from real uses of language. So, it would seem that the philosophy of "English in the world", a philosophy which considers the cultural diversity of its speakers, including the students' own culture, seems to be ignored. Nevertheless, the general discussion demonstrates an awareness of the use of English in the world, its varied sounds and uses, as well as a consciousness of individuals' abilities to deal with the negotiation of meaning. One strategy for incorporating this valuable knowledge into the English curriculum might be through the inclusion of culture *in* the ELT programs, as **Lola** points out.

The following section looks at teachers' personal experiences when dealing with "foreign" or new cultural practices. It considers their experiences while traveling and living abroad as teachers, but also their experiences as learners or speakers of a foreign language.

4.4 ELT Practitioners' Personal Experiences in Global Interaction

This section discusses the participants' personal experiences when confronted with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Their experiences varied from traveling or teaching English abroad to their experiences learning foreign languages. The narratives describe their experiences in dealing with different accents, expressions and behaviors, some which led to misunderstandings or to experiencing feelings of confusion, frustration and even embarrassment. It is important to explore these stories because they can have an impact on the way the participants see themselves in their role as English teachers, or trainers of teachers, when imparting English.

Discussing the experience of traveling to Jamaica, **Mario** talks about a variant of English unfamiliar to him.

The accent of Jamaican English, when they speak to a tourist they use standard English, but they use the expression “ja mon” [also yeh/yeah man, yeah mahn] which means “of course”, “mon” whether you are a woman or a man. But when they speak among themselves, they use another language, Patois, which is like English but that [...] doesn't have the same syntactic construction. For instance, pronouns such as I, you, we, they, are also used as object pronouns...and they have many other specific elements like this... and when you listen to them, you don't understand them! It's part of their history, they have their own variety and it doesn't matter if you're there... ellos se “switchean” a su lengua.
Mario

Mario's narrative describes how Jamaicans use their own variety of English at a local level in order to maintain their cultural identity and a more standard form when in the presence of outsiders. This phenomenon evidences the ability of individuals to switch between dialects. **Mario's** narrative is one of amusement as he describes local features characteristic of Patois English. He acknowledges this as somewhat confusing, but at the same time interesting. It is interesting to see his use of the word “switchean” from the English word “switch” with a Spanish conjugation in the suffix “—ean”. This is an example of the impact that this participant's first language, Spanish, has in giving form to a hybrid word, even while describing his experience with Jamaican English.

As a speaker of Spanish as a foreign language, another participant draws on her experience having learned “standard Spanish” in Spain and the discrepancies she discovered when using this form in Mexico.

I got here [Mexico] speaking Castilian Spanish. Getting out of the airport I asked my friends, — ¿Donde cogemos el camion?—I learned that in Mexican Spanish, not Spanish from Spain, is not the same to say “coger el camion”, [f]...the bus] than “tomar el camion” [take the bus]! //Researcher: Oh no!// Luna: Oh yes! So I thought, —OK... so that was funny, but now please explain to me what is so funny?—//Researcher: I guess these embarrassing moments are part of the process of learning a foreign language ...// Luna: Of course! And it is precisely these absurd situations that make you aware, and cautious, about what you say and how you say things [...] Nobody can teach you these things! It's not about telling people! So, in Spain, if you study Spanish they teach you Standard Spanish...Spanish is Castilian language. And so, in Castilian language you say “coges el autobús, coges el taxi, coges el metro, coges la vuelta, coges tu pan...”//Researcher: “coges la vuelta”? What's that?// Luna: Dar la vuelta...//Researcher: Ah!//Both: [laughs]// Luna: That is Castilian Spanish, that's what you learn to obtain a C2 Certification. This is done through the Spanish Real Academy by University of Salamanca. But when you get to Latin America with these expressions, ah, yeah...Live and learn!//Researcher: That reminds me of a friend from Colombia who told me that they call the bus, the “gua gua”//Luna: And these are precisely the situations that make you reflect about the use of language, because a language is a tool to express the “significance”, something that has a particular meaning, which can be culturally driven or particular to the individual, something that you want to put out there... to express.

As narrated by **Luna**, what she learned as “the correct” way of expressing something was not correct in another cultural context, as “coger” has a specifically sexual connotation in Mexican Spanish. Although her experience was an embarrassing one, she also looks at the positive side as she observes how such “absurd” situations can “make you aware and cautious about what you say and how you say things”.

This experience led **Luna** to reflect, from the viewpoint of a teacher, on the many things that cannot be taught in the classroom. On the contrary, many things have to be experienced. As an individual who speaks four different languages, **Luna** appreciates these events as opportunities for learning. Her experience learning foreign languages seems to be conducive to the adoption of a more open view when dealing with a foreign language. By means of analogy, this example serves to question the notion of a “standard” which portrays languages as fixed entities. The use of language not only varies across cultures, but from person to person, according to the situation at hand and what individuals are trying to express.

Luna’s story resonated with a story shared by **Leslie**, whose native language is French.

*This is something that happened to me when I learned English [...] So I was watching movies, I don't know, I heard the word tits, I thought it was the same as breast you know, so one time I was watching the Academy Awards with my ex-husband, his sister, her partner, his parents, their children, everybody was in the room. Then, Jodie Foster comes on, and she had a very low cut tuxedo, [...] and there was a man beside her, they were reading the thing, you know, [...] and I don't know if he was looking at the paper... or her shirt... and I said—Oh my God, he is looking down at her tits!—and the whole room became silent! They looked at me, and then I realized—Oh my God I said something very wrong! —You don't say the word tits like this, you say breasts [...] I learned this by experience... this was not the correct word to say [...]. **Leslie***

As a speaker of English as a foreign language, **Leslie’s** experience shows the challenges facing individuals who are learning a foreign language. What is important to highlight is how this occurrence was an experience to learn from. The skills and abilities that were activated from observing the reactions of those around her, led **Leslie** to reflect on this issue. Her personal experience seems to have an impact on the way she sees language learning, and the responsibility of teachers to create awareness. This is something which she emphasized when discussing students’ use of Mexican expression abroad (see Section 4.3). And just as she seemed to be doing in her own story, she talked about the strategies that will inevitably be activated in the process of making meaning.

From her experience traveling to Thailand, a British national reflects about cultural concepts that travel beyond national borders.

*There's one word that interests me in that way because I just came back from Asia, and I don't really know which is the original word, if it comes from English originally, “foreign”. You know, if you are in Asia, you're a “forein” [the participant's imitation of local pronunciation] if you are in India or Thailand, or if you are in Jamaica, they'll say “Ah, he lives in ‘forein’”, that means “He lives in the States—or England” or somewhere outside of Jamaica, “forein”. So, it's funny how that word has gone all right through the world basically! [...] But that's how English came from in the first place [...] I think it's fascinating [referring to the use of Mexican expression]. I think it's colorful, reflective, I mean, I think a lot of these things will stick, a lot from a fashion... and will come on and out into a fashion and disappear, but some things will stick. **Leda***

This discussion serves to acknowledge how foreign words, concepts, expression can travel from culture to culture having an impact on the transformation of languages. The concept in question “foreign”, a word from old French “*forain*”, to Middle English “*foren*”, *forein*” until its current spelling “foreign”. Concepts become “borrowed” in other languages, a process which **Leda** sees as “fascinating” and qualifies as “colorful”. This experience leads **Leda** to recognize that some of the Mexican expressions used by students in this context might actually stick in English, while others won't. Such is the case of the Spanish concepts of “*compadre*” and “*agua fresca*” which have made it into English (see Section 4.1). Moreover, her own reaction to the word “*forain*” shows the degree to which concepts become rooted in other languages, concepts whose sources individuals do not necessarily recognize. They are simply adopted and become part of one's lexica; thus, they stop being foreign.

As the conversation went on, the participant discussed another element which she observed reflecting the transfer of other cultures into English.

A business letter in English can be very direct but could be considered rude in other cultures//Researcher: in Mexico alone, we write “Estimado x or y, le escribo de la manera mas atenta...”//Leda: In Asia, you know, they write, “I hope that your ancestors are resting in peace”. It’s rude just to write things very directly. So even if a student knows the English form, they still find it hard to write it because it so goes against their sense of politeness.

Leda’s narrative reflects the differences between two linguistic systems in the way the value of politeness is enacted. What is considered to be polite in the local culture might not be so “in English”. In this case Thai cultural schemas are transferred in the formulation of written texts. This experience confirms the indissoluble link between culture and language. As such, linguistic knowledge, in this case, the written conventions or “standard form” for writing a letter in English can be limiting, causing a sense of discomfort in the individual—the feeling that the person might be rude. As the participant narrated her discovery, I could appreciate the amusement caused by this common practice in Thai culture. Her own experience seems to have an impact on her conceptualization of English and its role in students’ lives, as she expressed in the previous extract.

Whereas the previous example evidences how cultural schemas were transferred into English, in the following extract the opposite seems to be the issue. The cultural schemas of Vietnamese students seem to be more difficult to enact in the foreign language. This seems to be the case as the English linguistic system does not offer features which convey different forms of address according to social variables such as age or status. In the next fragment, **Lorena** describes her experience working in Vietnam.

I noticed that the young students didn’t dare to ask questions. I think they were troubled because in their language and culture there is a specific way to address people based on age and status. They have to address them with more respect. For instance, in Vietnamese, one of the first questions that takes place in a normal situation when two persons meet for the first time is to inquire about the age, so in that instant they know how to address each other. So, for the young adult students in my class, it was difficult to determine how to address the foreign English teachers, which like me, were a little older than them... they didn’t know how old I was and they didn’t know how to address me. So, they avoided asking questions, and at some point it was even uncomfortable to teach classes because there was no participation, no dialogue. There was no interaction for the simple reason that they were very limited because of the way they felt they had to behave in the classroom, with a teacher, the authority, and yet, they couldn’t. With children it was easier because obviously I was older, so there was no conflict. Lorena

Lorena’s experience in a Vietnamese classroom is another example where students are seen to bring their culture into the ELT classroom. Furthermore, as described in her narrative, the fact that the English language does not offer linguistic resources for expressing degrees of respect turned into a conflict for the teacher. Indeed, not knowing how to address the teacher, more specifically, not having specific linguistic formulae for addressing a young teacher “in English” was a barrier preventing dialogue in the classroom. Unfortunately, the students were unable to cross the cultural/linguistic boundaries between their local language/culture and that of the foreign language/culture. As described by **Lorena**, this led to the experiencing of feelings of frustration, although at the same time, she was able to understand the dichotomy experienced by her students. Her attitude can be said to show respect and tolerance towards her students’ cultural identity. Indeed, **Lorena** was a novice teacher who was dealing with huge issues. Her experience describes the challenges facing ELT practitioners as mediators between the language of their students, their culture and the foreign language they are there to teach, as well as the ideology of teachers regarding their own language/culture.

Lorena’s narrative shows her skills at reflexivity in the analysis of what was going on with her students. This enabled her to understand the issue at hand. By no means did she disqualify her students’ cultural identity. Observational skills and reflexivity seem to be necessary ingredients in building sensitivity towards other cultural practices. Another experience that shows a less open attitude is taken from my research notes in which an English teacher from Haiti describes a similar experience.

A group of children from Haiti visited the city of New York in the US for an exchange program. As part of the program, the local teachers were in charge of arranging the activities for these kids. The role of Haitian teachers was to supervise and provide assistance if the need may arise. At some point during an activity, one of the American teachers approached one of the Haitian teachers to protest that the children would not look at them when they were spoken to. The Haitian teacher explained that the reason to that was that children in Haiti are taught not to make eye contact with their teachers. This is a sign of respect towards the elder, but even more, towards the teacher as the authority figure. The American teacher replied—OK but, can you please tell them to look at us in the eye when we speak to them? — (Research notes)

The response from the American teacher to a foreign cultural practice is shown in her statement, “OK but can you please tell them to look at us in the eye when we speak to them?” Indeed, the response seems to be one of disbelief. It appears that it was beyond her cultural reality to conceive that people from a different culture can act and behave in different ways, even though the reasons behind the behavior of the students were explained to her. Although it can be said that cultural practices that differ from one’s own can be a cause of confusion, the reaction of this teacher was one which ignored the Other altogether by denying the cultural value of the practice. Differently from **Lorena’s** reaction towards her Vietnamese students, the teacher in this example seems to lack the sensitivity and capacity to acknowledge the cultural reality of Haitian students, that is, the notion of respect characteristic of Haitian culture.

This following extract narrates the story of an American teacher who spent a year teaching English in Singapore. **Manuel** describes his experience dealing with a variant of English, Singapore English, or “Singlish”.

*I had really hard time understanding Singlish, it was such a variant of English that was almost unintelligible for me. So, you’d ask them if they spoke English, they would say yes, and then, you would try to have a conversation with them in English, but it was almost impossible to understand it. [...] The people and the government are constantly changing it because in Singapore there are five to six ethnic groups and they are all adding to the language all the time. On the buses for instance you see these big signs on the side of the buses that say: “Speak good English”. [...] but then you get on the bus—and this is a true story—there’s another poster that says: “Makes space, can’t you?” Which is very Singlish kind of grammatical structure... and this is also a cover print poster! So, the government on the one hand is saying speak good English, on the other hand they are making posters that they know people will be able to relate to and to understand for the people speaking Singlish. So, it’s interesting to see the micro cosmos of this problem because you can see right in these signs the tensions that exist in this question, and in the need on the one hand, for some kind of standardization version of the language that allows to communicate globally, and on the other hand, the national tendencies that start to corrupt, modify and change the language for their own communicative needs in the country. **Manuel***

This narrative touches on the many issues which intersect in the social phenomenon of World Englishes. **Manuel’s** use of such discourse features as “on the one hand” or “on the other hand” as he compares and contrasts two opposing views—the local and the global use of language, shows the complexities of adopting definite positions where variations of English is concerned. Perhaps the problem lies in defining or evaluating one against the other instead of accepting the uniqueness, and present reality of Singapore, in its own milieu. “Makes space, can’t you?” sends a message. The form does not interfere in any way with intelligibility.

As described by this participant, the reality of Singapore is one in which the existence of a local variety of English seems to function well for the inhabitants and where the local variety is recognized by the government as well. It could be that the government’s position promotes ELT ideologies of standard English as a synonym for high prestige and education. Indeed, as reported by **Manuel**, it appears that the “global” notion of English is being discussed by the government from the standard English position, leading to government concern that localized varieties are “tendencies that start to corrupt, modify and change the language for their own communicative needs in the country”, as observed by the participant. This resonates with the Standard English ideology that argues that as long as “standard” English is used as a yardstick, other varieties will always be seen as un-English.

This prescriptivist view is cultivated trusting in the belief of the fixity and the purity of the English language, however, this view is challenged by the existence of varieties such as Singaporean. In fact, this presumed purity will be the topic of discussion in the next section. According to this story as reported by the participant, it may be stated that such a construction of language, does not recognize the skills and abilities of individuals to negotiate communication, as well as to adapt and change according to communicative needs—these being global interaction for business, education or tourism, to name only a few. Thus, such concerns about divisions between localism and globalism may be over-stated.

The fact that **Manuel** was unfamiliar to this variant of English clearly led to him experiencing feelings of stress for not being able to understand local speech. What is important to highlight is that it seems to have shaped his advocacy to the teaching of a standard form of English in the ELT classroom (see Section 4.5).

Summary of this Section

All of the participants in the investigation have had many experiences using English to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. As shown in their stories, they have experienced first-hand the social phenomena associated with the different uses and transformations of English in the world. Cultural schemas of individuals do transfer in the way they behave and/or in the way they use the foreign language (Nishida, 2005; Kim, 2005). They have been confronted with different accents, concepts, expressions and behaviour, among others. As shown in their narratives, their responses demonstrate a positive attitude when dealing with cultural diversity. Moreover, their stories support the discussion offered by cosmopolitan scholars who put trust on individuals' capacities to negotiate culture, engage with others, or mediate between cultures (Delanty, 2009). These personal experiences are important because they inform constructions of the world, culture, language and communication, all of which have an impact on their profession, in other words, their role as ELT practitioners.

The following section discusses other leading forces that seem to guide ELT professionals into supporting the notion of teaching the “correct”, “basic” or a “standard” form of English.

4.5 The Issue of Standard English: Contrasting Views

The central argument of this section is to highlight the complexities in defining the issue of standard English. It became evident that there are many associations linked to this concept including education, grammar, regionalisms and social prejudice, among other matters. These associations seem to be the guiding forces which shape individuals' perceptions of what constitutes, or what qualifies, as “good or bad use of English”. This raises the question of the challenges facing individuals in the acceptance and/or recognition of varieties of English.

This first extract is a reconstruction of an event registered in my research notes when attending a research seminar at a university in England. This meeting gave me the opportunity to share some of my findings for this current piece of research.

In my description regarding the discovery of localized uses of English performed by students in the Mexican environment, one of the participants in the seminar inquired about such expressions. I said—Expressions such as “fresh water”, do you know what does it mean? In fact, what does it mean to you?—the conversation developed into a nice discussion about what this expression meant to them including “water from the river” or “icy water”. I described what this concept means in Mexico, a drink made of purée “fresh” fruit. Another participant in the seminar found some similarity in the expression which they use in her country of origin Algeria, something that sounded like “frishka” [if I have my guess right], which means “fresh”. I then shared the example “she’s a strawberry”, they were all attentive to what this phrase could possibly mean, I said “strawberry” is used to mean that a person is “snobbish”. At this point, one of the British participants said: “Well, let’s see. This is some creative use of English, if it means something for the students, I think it shows the “ownership of English” you were talking about [addressing me as it had been something I had described previously] ...and it is correct English. This is where I draw the line, it has to be correct English” (Research notes)

On the one hand, there seems to be some degree of openness and acceptance of what this British national refers to a “creative” use of English in the phrase “she is a strawberry” meaning “snobbish”. Nonetheless, it soon became evident that such “creative use” is conditioned to the “correct” usage of English. This view denies the “variety” of English in that such “varieties” should be conceived *away from* “core” English. In World Englishes paradigm such varieties are their own form, hence the name “variety”. Acceptance of new varieties implies the recognition of variations in lexico-grammatical features. The statement “this is where *I* draw the line, it has to be correct English” advocates the standard English ideology in that the British English model continues being used as the yardstick to judge the Other. This would suggest that the expression “*Today we have exam, you say*” (see Section 4.2) where “*you say*” is its own variation of an “English tag question” as in “*Today we have an exam, don’t we?*” would be considered incorrect or “un-English”. The statement put forward by this British national shows an attitude of rejection if such new forms do not conform “correct” English grammar.

In the following fragment, an American national refers to Standard English in terms of regional accents.

[...] when I lived in China my next-door neighbor was a guy from Scotland, I spent the whole year not understanding a word he says... supposedly our languages are both English, right? So, I kind of shook my head, nod back and forth, pretending to understand him but I did not understand anything. So, in those situations I think you need some kind of [...] standard form. So, I don’t have any problem with standard form being taught in the classes [...] British pronunciation, American or Midwest pronunciation or whatever it is, but I think there has to be some standard, so everybody can participate in the global world, so I think it’s important. Manuel

In this extract, standard English is discussed from the viewpoint of regional accents and it is tied to a particular spoken form, one may add, educated form free or regionalisms. Based on this notion, this participant advocates the teaching of either British RP, General American or Midwest pronunciation. Nonetheless, as discussed in Section 2.7, standard English is based on the concepts of grammar and vocabulary, not pronunciation or regional accents. Scottish *is* a native variety of English as are other Inner-Circle native forms which maintain their own regional accents including Texas, New York, Liverpool, or Birmingham. From the standpoint of this participant, not all “native” forms are considered as correct or prestigious as standard English. This viewpoint supports the notion of English as a monolithic entity that all English users, native or non-native, should conform to. In global interaction native speakers are not excluded from making use of skills and strategies to negotiate meaning and accommodate others. In this extract, neither seem to be at work.

In the next extract, another British national talks about the importance of teaching a “basic” form of English.

It’s like Ebonics, so, there was a time when they were teaching Ebonics in schools in the US and the people who were for it...this is a valid variety of English, and they taught it in school. But others said that if you have your kids using Ebonics you are putting them at a disadvantage in the world in general, if they come out of school using Ebonics, they are not going to get a job in a standard kind of situation, so you have to get, you have, I feel, to get some kind of, give our students tools to be able to use their English in international context, a certain standardization when it comes to professional activities. What you do your with your friends how you speak to your friends that’s something else completely, but for professional life, there needs to be some kind of consensus in some basic sense [...] But, I don’t think it’s anything wrong with teaching some basic standardized English in the classroom...I don’t think we need, I think for a long time we were not teaching very rich version of British English or American English, so I think what we teach gives this basic model, and on that, students will find their way and expand it. Leda

In this extract, like **Manuel** above, **Leda** makes a distinction between formal and informal use of English. Clearly, she associates formal usage with education and professional development. Although **Leda** speaks of a “basic standardized English” she disassociates it from an idealized standard language or a “very rich version of British English or American English” as she put it. At the same time, she is flexible about uses of English outside of a formal context.

As she suggests, students can learn one form of language but use another form (informal) with friends. This view acknowledges the ability of individuals to switch register, to behave according to different contexts, whether at work or with friends. For her, this is a decision that should be left to the individuals; however, the role of the ELT professional should be to provide the “basic standardized English”.

This participant acknowledges a variety of English, Ebonics, within an English-speaking country, the US. She is drawing attention to an issue which relates to social prejudice towards regional varieties and accents. This leads the participant to suggest that the teaching of some “basic model” should prevail, in this way, individuals will have the same opportunities. Ebonics is a native model, but not considered as prestigious as standard English. This statement suggests that indeed regional varieties such as Ebonics is considered an uneducated, substandard form. A such, those who use it are “at a disadvantage”. So then, from this discussion it can be said that standard English is associated as the formal and prestigious use of educated people.

Lorena talks about standard English as an idealization which seem to be constructed around “accents”. As a bilingual speaker of Spanish and English, daughter of a Mexican father and a British mother, she narrates her experience regarding the so idealized “British accent”.

*From my point of view, it's incorrect, I find it hard to accept, or even understand that there is an English that is the correct one. I believe that what is correct is what is functional in a determined context, and how extraordinary is to bring your culture and your accent in the way you communicate, but there is a lot of insistence on it [standard English], to think that there can be a universal model, like—this is the original English, this is the “correct” English, this is what should be taught—to me this is totally absurd! In Mexico for instance, I've experienced that my whole life, people tell me—Oh, but why, why don't you speak British English? It would be super if you spoke “English”, English—That to me reflects a lack of criteria, I mean, why does that have to be the English...the British one! How many British accents are there? I think this is one of those things where we refuse to be open-minded [...] but for me, the more varied and different the more interesting. **Lorena***

Lorena questions the notion that one English might be better than another, and that there might be an “English, English”. On the contrary, she observes the great varieties which exist even within England. For **Lorena**, the notion of standard English is an idealization and a lack of openness to accept the great diversity of Englishes, as a result of its culturally diverse speakers. Something which she appreciates as a quality, not a problem. Her statement that “it easier to put things in boxes under the illusion that this helps in understanding things” speaks of an attitude that can very well describe human nature. It relates to the feelings of uncertainty of being confronted with the new and different.

Similar to this story, another participant of British nationality speaks about her own experience being put on a pedestal because of her being British; thus, speaking “British English”.

***Leda:** I've arrived here almost 30 years now and when I arrived here it was always a matter of teaching American English or British English so there is this, —You come from England you have the REAL English!—and I always felt very embarrassed by that, with the years it turned into a joke or something, I think they were quite serious then, you know, BRITISH ENGLISH! [her emphasis]//**Researcher:** The Queen's English//**Leda:** especially me because I come from the north of England you know, and I haven't exactly got the Queen's English you know [laughs]. So, I used to find rather embarrassing this kind of idea, and I never felt that my own English was kind of standard in that way, I never wanted it to be either, you know [...]. In terms of language I don't feel the need to defend standard British English or anything like that, I feel that Englishes, as you say it, is a global language.*

The attraction to British accent, or RP, is evident in her story as **Leda** describes the reactions and expectations built around her British nationality. Something which she finds embarrassing given that she speaks English with her regional accent. This narrative supports the notion of the idealizations constructed around standard English as a fixed monolithic entity that all native speakers, even more if they are of British nationality, must speak. This idea clearly denies the varieties which exist within any Anglo-Saxon culture, and across these cultures.

Indeed, many other participants spoke out questioning the notion of standard English. Their main argument is the global adoption of the language, which as pointed out by the participants, has inevitably led to changes in the way the language is used. For instance, **Martin** questioned “Which standard? I mean, the farther you are from the center, the bigger the variation it will be. It’s inevitable!” For **Martin**, controlling the use of English under some standard form exported from the Inner Circle countries to the many countries of the world in which it is used, is an unrealistic idea. Similar idea was discussed by **Lucia**.

I absolutely believe that that “standard English” will not prevail. [...] a lot of people that are studying English around the world will never have the opportunity to visit or live in the United States, and even though in the United States the way that English is used is different depending in the region, states, etc. I don’t think that we should use the term. Lucia

For **Lucia**, exposure to standard English by means of spending time in an Inner-Circle country may not be feasible. And even if this were the case, the issue remains as even within these countries there are many English varieties. **Lucia** rejects the notion of standard English. From the perspective of **Martin** and **Lucia**, not only it would be impossible to export one form of English to the whole world, it would be also impossible to bring the whole world to the Inner-Circle countries.

The last comment in this section goes to **Luna** who sees standard English as a notion impossible to speak of.

Luna: English is so commercialized that you can’t change that, and such variations are the direct immediate result of globalization. So then, to speak of a standard English...it’s ridiculous! What is “standard English”? //Researcher: We would have to define that...// Luna: But beyond that, to speak of standard English, I mean, they would have to make a description, an exhausting definition which is impossible. I mean the Real Academia Española is trying to do that with Spanish, and I mean, trying because I doubt that they can do that, now, with English? Who is doing that? Nobody. There’s Oxford, but not even! So, to speak of standard English is absurd! [...] I think the fundamental question here is to ask: Why are textbooks designed to teach this so-called “standard English”? [Her emphasis]

Luna further questions the fixity of English or that there is an official authority that regulates it as would be the case with Spanish. And even though, she questions the feasibility that such authority could maintain full control of the language. Based on this, **Luna** questions why then “are textbooks designed to teach this so-called “standard English”?”

Summary of this Section

The discussion put forward in this section raises the question of the intricacies when defining standard English (Melchers and Shaw, 2013; Galloway and Rose, 2015). On the one hand, there is the implicit suggestion that standard English is something that is fixed and that can be taught, likewise, it is a concept that is attached to native speakers. On the other hand, the opposing view rejects the notion that standard English can be defined which led participants to qualify it as something “absurd” or “ridiculous”. Language was acknowledged as a social tool to be used and manipulated to fit individuals’ needs. This notion finds echo in the discussion offered by Canagarajah (2006, 2007) and Saraceni (2015) who see language as a social practice and thus in constant change and transformation. In the same way that some of the participants’ discussion shows a real sense of awareness on the reality of English in the world, the diversity of its speakers and what they bring to the English language, others seem to be blind to such issues.

The last section explores teachers’ perceptions about the future of English.

4.6 World Englishes: A Natural Process of Language and Cultural Transformation

As participants discussed the present uses and emergence of new varieties of English in the world, they were drawn into looking at the past and into reflecting on the changes the English language has experienced throughout its history. This led to a discussion of what the future of English might be.

[...] all of those non-standard forms of English will also have an impact on the standard language, it's not like standard language is set on stone, it changes also. What has been the standard language for four hundred years in England will probably be impossible for me to understand from today's perspective because that changes over time. Shakespeare, I suppose, was some form of standard English but it was considered, still considered, the higher form of English [...] I'm pretty sure that I wouldn't be able to understand that if I met two people in the street speaking that, it's so many changes. So, the standard is not standard either, everything changes, standard is only one particular group of... I believe people will speak, in a different moment at certain time [...] Manuel

By reflecting on the ancestral form of English in Shakespeare's time, **Manuel** acknowledges the transformation of languages clearly, putting it in the phrase that "standard language" is not "set on stone". English has not kept an identical form from the past without changes. Clearly, old written texts evidence the evolution of languages, and human history as well as the history of languages remain in those old texts. Historical documents allow the study and appreciation of such changes. Thus, Shakespeare's language might be dead, but as suggested by **Manuel**, "it is still considered the higher form of language". Access to old texts allows us to appreciate older forms of English in their own right. However, what was classical written English used in a standard way in those times is no longer a form to be used and taught at present. It would be unintelligible, as this participant suggests. Likewise, what might be considered standard now, may not be in the future, "everything changes". Similar discussions found echo in the words of **Leda**, who expressed the thought "if you look at standard English you can find things that were not the same from Medieval times, so that's the way it is". The idea of language as something static, suspended in time and space is also questioned by this participant.

Martin talks about the transformation of English from its original roots to its contemporary form.

The language is going to change, it's something changeable, it's inevitable...if that weren't the case, English would not exist, or Spanish! What was the first language that was spoken? That would be it! There has been many changes, everyone has contributed from one language to another. English is a composite of other languages, it has elements from Latin, I mean, are they going to remove the Latin from it? What is the original English? Like if English was born by magic [...] No! It has changed, bit by bit, many words were integrated into it by all the people who use it. All of us have contributed to its change, so it's something that has transformed and it's not going to stop [...] Perhaps there will be some books, examples of how was English in the year 2018, but that's it, [...] the change will continue, and those English varieties will continue developing. Martin

From **Martin's** viewpoint, languages change and transform. He questions the notion of a "pure" English, pointing out at the number of varied languages that gave rise to the current form of English. For **Martin**, languages are entities that come into being as they are created by its speakers. This idea confirms the notion of language as something created by social actors, through social practice, in other words, language as a social tool for communicative purposes. In the same way that old books and texts evidence what English was like in Medieval or in Shakespeare's time, **Martin** believes that the written texts of our era will be the evidence in the future of what English was like, becoming by definition an "old form of English".

Lucia adds to this discussion by characterizing such change as a cyclic process.

I think it is part of the life cycle of the language. Languages evolve through time and according to the necessities of the users of these languages. As linguists we should be concerned in not understanding the phenomena more than trying to stop it. It is happening, and we should understand it. For me English is not transforming, it is adapting to countries and people. Lucia

For **Lucia** language evolution is a natural process; she speaks of a cycle of life of languages. For her, not the transformation process, but the lack of understanding or ignoring this phenomenon should be what concerns linguists. She rejects the concept of language as an entity in its own right. On the contrary, she sees it as an instrument to be adapted by its users. Once more, the notion of language as a social tool is highlighted by this participant. **Laura** echoes this view.

*[...] just think in the history of English, or any other language, and how they have been transformed through time according to different aspects such as cultural or governmental necessities, just to mention some. I would say the transformations of English is an example of evolution and growth of human beings to adapt to a new world. **Laura***

For **Laura**, language is also subject to change and such change is subject to social actors and tied to social movements—cultural or governmental. Language is not seen as disassociated from human beings, but as stemming from them. Other social movements were discussed by **Leda** who talked about “politics”, or **Lola**, who talked about “immigration” as well as “social media”. All of these are seen as potential factors leading to change and the transformation of the language. These participants recognize such transformations as a reality.

*I think that historically speaking, they have taken way too long to accept the varieties of English, or any other language. [...] I understand the concern, not that the rules of the language do not exist, but I also think that it comes from people who are disconnected from the reality of languages [...] people need to communicate, in doing so they will integrate their concepts in the foreign language, it comes out of a necessity. So, I think that language transfer is inevitable. Language is active, not passive and it is in constant change because it is a social tool for communication. **Lola***

With the statement that “language is active, not passive”, **Lola** asserts that mutation of language is a phenomenon that has taken “too long” to acknowledge. **Lola** also sees language as a tool for interaction to be used by social actors. As such, individuals will inevitably bring their concepts with them and will inevitably integrate them into the foreign language. The importance of concepts was also discussed by **Leda**.

*A lot of English expressions will come and go in these other languages, they kind of melt, but I don't think we'll ever end up with a global language one global language or anything like that, I just think that it will continue to fragment, come together, fragment, come together, fragment [...] many mixes, many languages, and will continue to mix, not only English, Spanish...you name it, change and evolution...and everything in the world, actually, it kind of reflects what's going on with politics, politics is becoming more like anti political, more personal, more global but at the same time everything is kind of breaking up into these smaller groups of interest and it just kind of reflects the same thing with languages. **Leda***

Leda's narrative describes a picture of what is happening to English today and what will continue happening to it. She clearly describes an ongoing process that is cyclic in nature. The local becomes global, a phenomenon that she uses to describe the transformation and evolution of humanity and of languages. As described above, social factors are altering the world, ways of living, and languages are altered as a result of social change. **Leslie** expressed a similar view about the purity of languages stating that, “it's just not the reality of the world”.

Luna problematizes the notion of the “purity of languages”:

*I think that their concern should be totally opposite because the actual imposition of a standard English leads to a communicative failure [as we discussed in the examples which do not translate] that makes any theory of a standard English to fail. Their concern should be focused on how... the ways in which such transformations occur, how the language mutates, how does the linguistic or intercultural negotiation take place [...] otherwise it would be like if the concern departs from the belief in the purity of the linguistic expression and there is no such thing! **Luna***

For **Luna** the concrete notion of “a standard English” is where the problem in failure to communicate lies. From her viewpoint, standard notions restrict the transfer of the socio-culturally diverse identities of persons using English. A more realistic view would be to acknowledge the transformations of the language emerging from the diversity of speakers, and the examination of the processes taking place both in terms of the negotiation of language and social interaction. As she put it, this is “how intercultural negotiation take[s] place”. It can be said that such approach not only recognizes the cultural identity of speakers, but it also lends a more pluralistic view to English.

The last word in this section goes to **Manuel**, who in response to the question of whether linguists' concern for the preservation of standard English begets a prescriptivist view of language, gave the following response:

***Manuel:** I don't know a single linguist who feels that way, I know a lot of lay people who feel that way, people versus the linguists who feel that there's standard English or that it should be the norm, the standard...but a real linguist, as far as I know, the linguists, the ones I know are very descriptive they're more interested in studying those changes and thinking of the implications of the changes, rather than to maintain a specific code. I would say, it's almost definitely an issue if you're a linguist you can't be a prescriptivist [...] //**Researcher:** Right. Because if you were talking about the changes the language has gone through, that would actually be the question, how can you possibly think that language is never going to change? Any language for this matter will change and continue changing, how can you possible...// **Manuel:** changing even as we speak//**Researcher:** Exactly! New concepts finding their way into the English language, even more when we think about the international status of the language, how can you stop it?...// **Manuel:** I agree completely, so that, you use the word 'linguist' there, but I don't think you can really call yourself a linguist if you're actually so static about your view of the language, being a linguist means that you want to understand the language not that you want to codify it, [...] it's not about establishing a norm to the language that everybody is learned to speak, it's about trying to understand these changes and how it's used in different contexts//**Researcher:** to use it, to communicate your ideas, feelings...// **Manuel:** yeah this is really fascinating stuff, super interesting stuff!*

The discussion offered by **Manuel** points out at two different discourses concerning the issue of standard English. One stems from professionals in the field and an opposite view which comes from "people". Although he does not specify who these people might be, throughout this book the different discourses which seem to support the idea of standard English, may be found or manifested in students' ideologies, teachers' ideologies, administrators, textbooks and ELT curriculums. For **Manuel**, being a linguist means being interested in changes in language use and usage, and in trying to document and codify innovations, as well as to understand them. This view describes what scholars in the field of World Englishes, and similar disciplines such as English as an international language, intercultural communication, or critical cultural cosmopolitanism are attempting to accomplish. Nevertheless, as discussed by all of these scholars, a gap remains. How to adapt processes to the English classroom, how to discover methodologies, representations and use of language in textbooks remains an outstanding task. Nevertheless, **Manuel** refuses the notion of "standard" and instead welcomes the notion of language as fluid, in a state of constant change and transformation.

Summary of this Section

In this section World Englishes, or variants of English, are conceived by the participants as natural phenomena (Kirkpatrick, 2007; Jenkins, 2006a; Seidlhofer, 2005; Saraceni, 2015). English has changed, and it will continue to change and transform itself as a result of social changes in the world. Throughout this section, it was seen that language is perceived as a social practice, a tool for social interaction, to be used and manipulated by its users. Thus, whatever the nature of these innovations, and no matter how English users change the language, dynamic transformation should remain the focus of study.

Chapter 5 Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This investigation began with the researcher posing the question “*What is going on with English in the social environment of Mexico?*” as a point of departure. It became apparent that teachers have identified local uses of English, or Mexican English, as students begin to adapt the language to express their culture: “She is a strawberry” or “She falls me fat” are expressions transferred from Spanish language and Mexican culture into English. This final chapter presents a discussion summarizing key findings, which will then be placed into a broader context. The summary is followed by a set of pedagogical suggestions valid not only for the local context, but in the ELT context in general, particularly for teachers who face the challenge of teaching their students to deal with cultural differences.

5.2 Standard English Ideology

The findings indicate that local uses of English, or Mexican English, are most often discussed against the backdrop of standard English. As the participants note, ELT materials are heavily focused on the linguistic system and contain content intended to prepare students for communicating with native speakers in an Anglo-Saxon environment. Indeed, participants’ discussions show that the standard English and native models are two ideologies that are deeply entrenched in ELT (Jenkins, 2006a; McKay and Brown, 2016; Seidlhofer, 2005). Their professional lives are constructed based on these notions, in fact they inform ELT methodologies, curriculum design, textbooks design and the development of didactic materials to a high degree (Phillipson, 2008; Pennycook, 1994). Although the participants oppose this narrow view, it may be difficult if not impossible to disassociate ELT practice from the standard English paradigm. Professionalism, that is to say “what” and “how” to teach professionally is a construction which is highly conditioned by “standards”. As one ELT professional participating in this investigation put it, “as a non-native speaker of English, I have the tendency of teaching formal or a standard form of English—the way I was taught some years ago”. Another participant referred to her “pet hates” in written papers, insisting on a fixed conception of “standard English” to which a writer must conform. In fact, ELT ideologies were often seen to be at work, as teachers themselves construct their identities through standard English paradigms.

5.3 Language as a Linguistic System or Social Practice

Linked to the notion of standard English is the conceptualization of language as a fixed entity with well-established rules which are to be taught, used and observed. This notion sends a strong message—and perhaps an erroneous one—supporting the idea of the homogenization of people and cultures, an idealized state in which everyone writes, speaks, acts and sounds the same when using English. With this message of standardization comes the implicit suggestion that students should leave aside their lexica, expressions and cultural concepts, all elements which may be said to express the cultural identity of speakers. Such a view perpetuates the idea of language as a fixed system divorced from the lives and culture of its users (Kirkpatrick, 2006; Saraceni, 2015); people are expected to fit the language and not the other way around. However, a number of authors envision English as a tool that may be used and manipulated by its users for the expression of their social realities (Canagarajah, 2006, 2007; Saraceni, 2015; McKay and Brown, 2016). It would seem that essentialist views of language ignore the fluidity and variability of languages. The idealistic notion that there is one acceptable form of English, itself a synonym of standard English, is deeply rooted in the ELT profession (Jenkins, 2012). As a consequence, the recognition of any form of English outside of these standards may be seen as challenging.

5.4 Standard English and its International Status

The data suggests that one of the biggest concerns regarding nativized varieties relates to the international status of English as a functioning *lingua franca*. These concerns lead the participants to prioritize standard English in their classrooms. However, part of recognizing the international character of the language would seem to imply an acceptance of the cultural diversity of its users, acknowledging the varied uses of English, its varied accents, and new expressions, and not attempting to make all users fit one standard (McKay and Brown, 2016).

Indeed, the findings also indicate that ELT professionals and national educational systems alike avow that acquiring standard English ensures success in international business, trade, commerce and the like. However, English for business, commerce, or international trade may be said to be its own variety; those occupied in such fields are capable of dealing with their “communities of practice” and understanding the metalanguage specific to their fields. One might cite, for example, the field of aeronautics, an area which might not be familiar to those outside of it, but whose terminology will be familiar across a wide range of English users in the profession. Similarly, some ELT practitioners cite the use of English as a *lingua franca* to sustain the notion of “standard” English which must be adhered to. However, as discussed in the literature, the theoretical principles of *lingua franca* English seem to support the plurality of the language, its fluidity versus fixity, the mixing of languages, and the changeability of the language, among other matters. The findings of the present research seem to suggest that there is a need to expand the construction of the international implications of English, and the notion of its use as a *lingua franca* (Jenkins, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2017).

5.5 Social Reality of the English Language

The participants’ experiences show the international use of the language in a cosmopolitan, culturally diverse world. The findings show that they have dealt with different varieties of English from Jamaica, Singapore, Ireland, Mexico, Scotland, or Thailand, and have been confronted with expressions “foreign” to them, variations in accents, cultural manifestations in English derived from local beliefs, different values and behavior. Their stories capture the reality of what it is like to learn and use a foreign language in order to communicate with culturally diverse people, to cooperate with and accommodate the Other (Delanty 2009; Crystal, 2005; Jenkins 2012; Seidlhofer, 2006). Seen from the prism of the real experiences of real people (in this case the ELT practitioners) it might well be argued that “realities” such as those shared by the participants are not represented in available ELT materials. In fact, this was a point which was repeatedly made by the English teacher participants, who recognized this as a limitation in the design of their programs and/or textbooks. The voices of the participants reported in this investigation call attention to a gap in the conception of English as a *lingua franca* used for purposes of international communication, with varying standards, and consideration of the more fluid principles sustained by these theories (Jenkins, 2012; McKay and Brown, 2016).

5.6 Implications

This investigation raises fundamental issues for ELT professionals. In a cosmopolitan environment characterized by diversity ELT professionals need to reflect on the complex and often contradictory ideological forces affecting their profession. This investigation indicates that there is a need to revise the construction of the standard English and native speaker models.

5.6.1 ELT Ideologies

ELT practitioners’ approach to teaching English, and to training future English teachers how to teach English, is strongly grounded, perhaps blindly, on literature, methodologies, textbooks or didactic material, all of which are produced by Inner-Circle countries, mainly the US and the UK. It became evident in the course of the research that although ELT practitioners appear to be aware of the limitations of these materials (primarily because they do not capture the social realities of the local students and global realities of English in the world), they still fully base their instruction on them. Whether it is because they have to follow a textbook, or follow the ELT curriculum of the institution, or because of pace of programs, teachers unquestionably base their instruction on the models portrayed in Inner-Circle materials. Many scholars (Jenkins, 2006a; Seidlhofer and Jenkins, 2005; Saraceni, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2007 among many others) have observed that in periphery countries, native models are the preferred norm for teaching purposes, an ideology which is sustained by the propagation of “standard” forms of language. As it were, Mexican students are taught standard forms based on native models, and students are made to follow these forms. Learners are to copy these models, and are to be evaluated according to their success or failure to achieve successful imitations of these forms. In short, standard English is considered to be *the* valid form for teaching and learning in Mexico. As ELT practice has been conducted and constructed upon the pillars of ELT dogma for such a long period, there seems to be a need to challenge these ideologies, to question them and take action. Herein lies the greatest challenge of all, in the recognition of variations in language use and usage in all its forms lexico-grammatical, pronunciation, idiomatic, or pragmatic.

The need exists to critically evaluate the belief that only orthodox American or British words and expressions “exist” and that outliers should be considered “un-English”. Notwithstanding, there are many features common to the Spanish language that seem to be constantly repeated in written texts by Spanish speakers (see Section 4.1). One participant talked about the use of “perceptions towards”, a usage which is becoming common in academic articles written by Spanish speakers. This may become a new variation in English, a form which has seemingly found its way into English and might possibly become “institutionalized”. These types of observations acknowledge the appropriation of language and indicate possible changes in the future of English. Might this be one of the first signs of the institutionalization of a variant of English in the Spanish-speaking environment? Perhaps the first stage in Kachru’s (1992) discussion of institutionalization/transformation? However, at present, it appears that so long as ELT materials continue to be produced in the Inner-Circle, the standard English ideology with its attendant native models will continue to prevail.

In light of the social changes of our era, and in consideration of the specific needs and purposes of English language learning, it is evident that Inner-Circle materials need to be revised and used with greater care. The idealistic notion that there is one form of English, synonymous with standard English, needs to be reconsidered. It is not proposed that the World Englishes approach should be adopted universally, nor is it a matter of “teaching” new varieties of English. As Canagarajah (2006) states learners do not need to be “proficient in every variety under the sun” (p. 233). But ELT practitioners can motivate changes in perceptions—including their own—of the varieties of accents, concepts and expressions which exist, including those specific to Mexico. It is necessary to motivate interest, to promote willingness to learn about these variations, and to disassociate them from structuralist/essentialist views of language, views which incur a risk of social prejudice towards speakers, their accents, their concepts and their expressions. On the contrary, ELT practitioners can motivate acceptance of the rich variety of World Englishes in a broad sense. Adopting a more pragmatic view of language in a *kosmos* which is culturally diverse and where there is no room for linguistic or cultural chauvinism, may be a better approach. Indeed, World Englishes offers a new vision and understanding of L1/C1 transfer phenomenon. This theory has many similarities with the theory of English as an international language, although it takes it to another level in a push for the recognition and acceptance of varieties of English.

There is no question that World Englishes paradigm destabilizes the norm. A change from what ELT practitioners have been made to believe is the “correct” English cannot be easily accepted. Whether native or non-native speakers of English, the questioning of a language acquired and cultivated throughout an entire professional life may lead to a feeling of destabilization. However, as discussed by the participants, the inevitable changes that accompany the adoption of English would seem to be desirable ones in the larger view. Moreover, though they may not realize it, such speakers may be part of another major change in the evolution of the English language, a thought that is both challenging and encouraging at the same time.

5.7 Pedagogical Suggestions

The World Englishes paradigm provides a great deal of opportunities for revising the traditional representations and conceptualizations of English language teaching/learning. The paradigm can be applied by looking at the discussions offered in different areas of study including linguistics, that is to say the study of the changes and transformations which languages go through. One would not wish to neglect the viewpoint of applied psychology—the processes involved in making sense of language, such as the use of L1 to make sense of L2. The status of English as an international language for communication is central—understanding the role of English in the world and in the context of individuals’ lives. Yet another point of view stems from intercultural communication and critical cultural cosmopolitanism—the skills needed in mediation between cultures and to promote cultural diversity are necessary within the classroom and without. All of these fields and disciplines offer varying discussions contributing to the study of language(s) and interaction in a culturally diverse world.

5.7.1 Motivate Critical Reflexivity: Self and Other

The literature of World Englishes offers a vast discussion and provides examples of variant forms of English in the world. The literature may be used not only by ELT practitioners seeking to become aware of such variants, but also as examples in the classroom. Materials for classroom use might include items from the lexico-grammatical, phonological, or pragmatic areas, as well as idiomatic concepts and expressions from Inner-Circle, Outer-Circle, or Expanding-Circle environments. By using World Englishes materials ELT practitioners can create awareness of the varied forms of the language. By reflecting and analyzing, teachers will be activating the intellectual capacities of their students for critical reflexivity. As students reflect on the Others' use of English, they can also contribute expressions and concepts from their local culture, the culture of the Self. Explicit criteria for studying and analyzing language may be developed by these means in order to achieve the competence of *savoir comprendre* (Byram, 2008), or how to understand. Students may be invited to reflect upon what makes people use the language in the way they do.

5.7.2 Cultivate Cosmopolitan Values

Moreover, in the measure that students are provided opportunities to analyze language use, that of the Self and Others, so grow their cosmopolitan skills of respect, tolerance and openness towards the great diversity of people, towards their languages and cultures. By cultivating the enactment of respect and tolerance for Others, students may come to expect respect and tolerance in their own ambience. So then, developing critical dispositions will sensitize students to difference, that is to say they may develop what Byram refers to as *savoir être* (Byram, 2008), in other words—*no que sepan, sino que sean* [not that they should know, but rather they should be].

5.7.3 Use of Strategies

As students become aware of other uses of English, they may be motivated to reflect upon how they would handle situations in which they are confronted with different concepts and expressions. Such discussions can be used to motivate students to select or design their own strategies for engaging in social interaction. Students are social beings and they can draw from the strategies they use “at home” (Holliday, 2013) in the negotiation of culture and cultural practices. In doing so, they can come to the realization that, even within the same culture, individuals encounter new concepts and expressions, and that indeed, individuals *are* able to manage the new and different. Students can design their linguistic repertoire accordingly, learning to ask for clarification, learning how to repair misunderstandings, and how to provide explanations, among other speech repertoire. These strategies will provide students with basic tools which can be expanded in their journey towards mediation in intercultural communication.

5.8 Limitations

Although this investigation included participants from four different institutions located in four different cities in the state of Guanajuato, it would be useful to expand data collection to include other universities in different areas of Mexico. This would allow the identification of the extent to which these phenomena occur in other regions of the country. The findings of this project were in fact presented at three international conferences for English language teachers in Mexico. It was found that some of these phrases and concepts have been experienced/heard by other teachers in the country, while others such as “envelopes” and its equivalent “*¡sobres!*” used in Spanish to mean “OK”, or the expression “two three” meaning “*mas o menos*” or “so, so” were new to the researcher. Thus, a study of the geographic extension of phrases would be a promising area of study.

5.9 Further Research

The investigation considered the experiences of English teachers in the context of the ELT environment—whether in the classroom, in the hallway, or in the patio—during informal conversations. So, this data came directly from what English teachers have heard and observed. As a complement to the present inquiry, it would be interesting to conduct fieldwork in which the researcher intermingled with young adolescents interacting in English with individuals from other nationalities, whether native or non-native speakers. It would be possible to observe and register their interactions first-hand.

Whatever the possibilities for future research, it soon became evident during the course of this investigation that students are without a doubt using English to fit their purposes, to express their culture *in* and *through* language. The expressions they use are indeed “Mexican”, and as one participant put it: “These phrases are not going to be understood even by other Spanish speakers, for example foreigners from Colombia or Argentina”.

It is hoped that the reader will find this discussion of World Englishes in a Mexican context useful and interesting. Likewise, the author hopes that the views, conclusions and suggestions which appear above may be applied in real life, in the challenges which face English users and ELT professionals. I end the discussion put forth in this book with the words of David Crystal (2008):

We need to accept change in language as a normal process. This means we should stop seeing it as decay and deterioration, and complaining about it to the press, the prime minister or whoever we hope will listen. There is probably more time wasted on this issue than on any other in the world of language. Language change is inevitable, continuous, universal and multidirectional. Languages do not get better or worse when they change. They just change (p. 130)

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Annex 1 Variations of World Englishes

Jenkins (2006, pp. 23–28) summarizes some of the phonological, grammatical, lexical, idiomatic and discursual variations than can be found in World Englishes.

Pronunciation

Consonant sounds

Replacement of the fricatives [θ] and [ð] by other sounds, usually [d] and [t] on their own are followed by slight friction. For example, speakers of India and West Indian Englishes will use the sounds [t] and [d] instead of the fricatives [θ] and [ð], so that the words thin and this are pronounced *tin* and *dis*.

Vowels sounds

A tendency to shorten vowel sounds. Singaporean, Indian, and African Englishes are among the World Englishes that minimally distinguish (if at all) between the short and long vowels [ɪ] and [i:] as in the words *sit* and *seat*, which are both pronounced as [ɪ].

Grammar

Nouns

1. A tendency not to mark nouns for plural. E.g. *And they all know all four **dialect*** (Jamaica).
2. A tendency to use a specific/non-specific system for nouns rather than a definite/indefinite system, or to use the two systems side by side. E.g. *Everyone has **car*** (India)
3. A tendency to change the form of quantifiers. E.g. *Don't eat so much **sweets***. (Singapore)
4. A tendency not to make a distinction between the third person pronouns 'he' and 'she'.
5. E.g. *My mother, **he** live in kampong*. (Malaysia; a 'kampong' is a small village).
6. A tendency to change the word order within the noun phrase. E.g. *A **two hour exciting display*** (Nigeria)

Verbs

1. A tendency not to mark the verb for third person singular in its present tense form.
2. E.g. '*she **drink** milk*' (Philippine)
3. A limited marking of verbs for the past tense. E.g. Mandarin, *I **learn** it privately* (Hong Kong).
4. A tendency to use an aspect system (completed or ongoing action) rather than a tense system (past or future) or to use both systems side by side. E.g. *I **still eat***. (I am/was eating in Malaysian English)
5. A tendency to extend the use of be + verb + ing constructions to stative verbs. E.g. *Mohan **is having** two houses* (Indian English).
6. The formation of different phrasal and prepositional verb constructions. E.g. *I'm going to **voice out** my opinion* (West African English).

Vocabulary/Idiom

Coinages most commonly arise in one or two ways: by the addition of a prefix or suffix to an existing (British or indigenous) word, and by compounding.

Coinage words by adding a prefix/suffix

sting <u>ko</u>	Colloquial Singaporean English, "smelly"
spacy	Indian English, 'spacious'
jeep <u>ney</u>	Philippine English, 'a small bus' (army jeeps having been converted to buses)
teacher <u>ess</u>	Indian English, 'female teacher'

Coinage by compounding

dry coffee	East African English, 'coffee without milk'.
high hat	Philippine English, 'a snob'. Mexican English 'a strawberry'
key-bunch	Indian English, 'bunch of keys'
basket-woman	Lankan English, 'coarsely behaved woman'

Idioms

Jenkins (2006) citing Platt *et al* (1984) distinguish between learners' unsuccessful attempts to use the idioms of native speakers of English, and stabilized New English idioms.

British English idiom 'to have your cake and eat it', Singaporean English 'to eat your cake and have it'.

Singaporean English 'to be in hot soup' which has the same meaning as, and is a combination of two British English idioms 'to be in hot water' and 'to be in the soup' meaning to be in trouble.

This highlights the difficulty in distinguishing between New English creativity and incorrectness, and it is important to keep in mind the fact that all innovation begins life as an 'error' in the standard form (Jenkins, 2006, p. 28).

Discoursal

A feature of several New Englishes is that they have a more formal character than the Inner-Circle Englishes. In particular, their vocabulary and grammatical structure are more complex. Indian English favors "lengthy constructions, bookish vocabulary and exaggerated forms which make even a formal style appear "more formal" to a speaker or another variety of English" (Platt *et al.* in Jenkins, 2006, p. 28).

'Could' and 'would' are used in Indian English where British English would use 'can' and 'will' as in 'We hope that you **could** join us' or 'We hope that the Vice Chancellor **would** investigate this matter' (Jenkins 2006, citing Trudgill and Hannah, 2002).

Certain aspects of Indian culture lead to expressions of thanks, deferential vocabulary and the use of blessing which would seem redundant or overdone to a speaker of the Inner-Circle: 'I am bubbling with zeal enthusiasm to serve as a research assistant' or 'I offer myself as a candidate for the post of research assistant. Thanking you' (Jenkins citing Platt *et al.* 1984).

The following examples are expressions for greetings/leaving.

Expressions for greetings

Lankan English	So how? (translation from Sinhala)
Nigerian English	You're enjoying (translation from Yoruba)
Singaporean/Malaysian English	Have you eaten already?
West African English	How? How now?
East African English	Are you all right?

Expressions for leaving

Lankan English	I'll go and come
Singaporean/Malaysian English	Walk slowly ho!

Annex 2 Patterns of English of Mexican Students

Instructions and Objectives: *About 2 years ago, I created a list of the most common Oral Exam errors that I have heard and compiled over the years. It is a very long list and it is generally an entire class or two of me explaining the problems to students. This can be very tedious and I don't think that it is very substantial practice to see everything in one class session. I think it is a better idea to view 4 or 5 of the most common mistakes today. This also serves as writing practice and error identification. Each of the sentences below contains mistakes of expression. Work with partners to make the necessary corrections.*

<p>The top five mistakes:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •problems with <i>-ED, -ING</i> endings with adjectives •<i>SAY</i> vs <i>TELL</i> •using definite article <i>THE</i>, particularly with <i>LIFE</i> and <i>MONEY</i> •countable / non-countable problems, particularly with <i>PEOPLE</i> and <i>ADVICE</i> •<i>TAKE</i> breakfast, lunch, dinner, some coffee, rest, decisions, etc.
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

1. When I don't take breakfast, I lose energy and am very tiring in the afternoon.
2. She say me three good advices.
3. Mary tells that the nutrition is very important for the good health.
4. The teacher's class is so bored, but it gives me the opportunity to take some rest.
5. Tom say me that the love can be complicated and we must take good decisions.
6. I wanted to take some coffee, but there were many peoples in the café.
7. When I heard about the trip to Cancun, I was very exciting.
8. The news about the trip was very excited because I really love the vacations.
9. Jamie is very honest and always says the truth.
10. The Cervantino is an important event for the Mexican culture.
11. I have a serious problem and I desperately need some advices.
12. People is a difficult creature to understand.
13. My father does a lot of work in the community and that is why he is so admiring.
14. Can you say me the time?

Annex 3 English Mexican Expressions

Mexican English	Local Expression	Meaning
fresh water	agua fresca	A drink of Mexican origin made with puréed fruit, water, and sugar
soda in a bag	refresco en bolsa	Soda served in a plastic bag
fresh water in a bag	agua en bolsa	Fresh water drink served in a plastic bag.
crazy water	agua loca	A drink made of Kool-Aid and alcohol
don't stain	no manches	Expression used to describe disbelief or disagreement with another's words or actions
don't suck	no mames	Expression used to describe disbelief or disagreement with another's words or actions
Hello "teacher"	hola 'maestro'	Use of honorific title for addressing a teacher/professor
what fart?	que pedo	Colloquial expression used for greeting
what's up "güey"?	que ondas "güey"	Colloquial expression used for greeting
what's up "cuñado"	que ondas cuñado	Colloquial expression used for greeting
what's up "compadre"	que ondas compadre	Colloquial expression used for greeting
I am until the mother	estoy hasta la madre	An extreme manner to describe one's discontent with a person
Today we have exam, <i>you say</i>	hoy tenemos examen, di.	A form of "tag question" commonly heard in the social context of Irapuato, Guanajuato.
she is a strawberry (S + V + O)	es fresa (V + O)	An expression to describe a person who is snobbish
she falls me fat	me cae gorda	A moderate phrase to express that one does not like another
what happens to you	que te pasa	Colloquial expression used for greeting. What's going on?
two- three	dos que tres	An expression to describe one's well-being as in "so-so".
envelopes	¡Sobres!	An expression to show agreement.

Annex 4 Critical Incident**Conversation Class**

Teacher: What do you like to drink with your meals?

Student: 'Fresh water'

Teacher: That doesn't exist in America. You will have to order black tea or soda.

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General explanation of the subject and explain why it is important.

What is your added value with respect to other techniques?

Clearly focus each of its features

Clearly explain the problem to be solved and the central hypothesis.

Explanation of sections Chapter.

Development of headings and subheadings of the chapter with subsequent numbers

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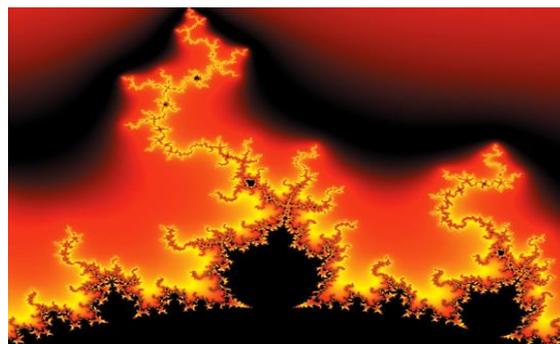
Table 1.1 Title

Variable	Descripción	Valor
P ₁	Partición 1	481.00
P ₂	Partición 2	487.00
P ₃	Partición 3	484.00
P ₄	Partición 4	483.50
P ₅	Partición 5	484.00
P ₆	Partición 6	490.79
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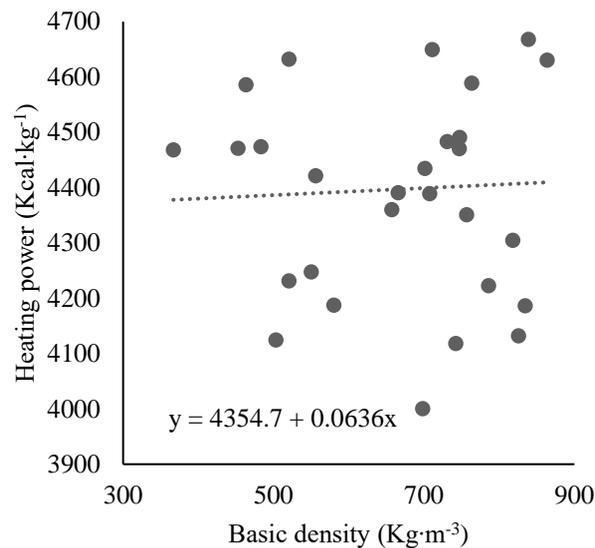
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Each chapter shall present separately in **3 folders**: a) Figures, b) Charts and c) Tables in .JPG format, indicating the number and sequential Bold Title.

For the use of equations, noted as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \alpha + \sum_{h=1}^r \beta_h X_{hij} + u_j + e_{ij} \tag{1}$$

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Develop give the meaning of the variables in linear writing and important is the comparison of the used criteria.

Results

The results shall be by section of the Chapter.

Annexes

Tables and adequate sources thanks to indicate if were funded by any institution, University or company.

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Explain clearly the results and possibilities of improvement.

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Use APA system. Should not be numbered, nor with bullets, however if necessary numbering will be because reference or mention is made somewhere in the Chapter.

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3. Analysis from the regression demand curve

4. Results

5. Thanks

6. Conclusions

7. References

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