Teaching Academic Writing Skills using Intercultural Rhetoric Approach

The Criticisms and Intercultural Communication

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Abstract

This paper seeks to point out that intercultural rhetoric pedagogical recommendations for teaching academic writing skills promote second language socialization and intercultural communication and do not merit the criticisms raised against them. It outlines the pedagogical recommendations of intercultural rhetoric researchers, presents the arguments that have been raised against the recommendations and points out that the recommendations support second language socialization and intercultural communication competence. The paper argues that the use of native speaker norm as the rhetorical style for teaching English as a Second Language learners is in line with pedagogical models advocated by practitioners engaged in teaching English to learners of other languages. The paper concludes that the pedagogical recommendations encourage second language socialization and intercultural communication competence.

Keywords: *language socialization, native speaker norms, pedagogical recommendations, intercultural communication, intercultural rhetoric*

Introduction

Intercultural rhetoric is a field of research that compares texts from two different language backgrounds to discover the similarities and differences in their rhetorical structures. Intercultural rhetoric started as a field of study because it was observed that students from oversea countries who were studying in the United States of America were writing in ways that were different from the expectations of their supervisors. To find out why the overseas students' writing was different, Kaplan (1966) compared the compositions of overseas students with that of Native American compositions. He concluded that the overseas students developed their paragraphs in ways that reflected their first language (L1) cultural thought patterns. Based on this conclusion by Robert Kaplan, he coined the term *Contrastive Rhetoric* to refer to the comparison of texts constructed from different cultural backgrounds and this became an area of study in English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) writing pedagogy.

The term *Intercultural Rhetoric* (IR) which is widely accepted was later proposed by Connor (2008) to replace *Contrastive Rhetoric* with the explanation that what exists among rhetorical styles across cultures are similarities and differences and "no rhetorical tradition is pure but that everything exists between cultures" (p. 26). So, the field of IR started as a result of the writing needs of students studying in the United States of America; the need for them to acquire the discourse conventions of English academic writing; their need to write term papers, concept papers, dissertations and thesis that conform to the academic requirements of American universities. Most studies in IR research compared ESL/EFL writings with native English pieces of writing to find out how ESL/EFL writings differ from native English writing. The aim of the comparison is to understand the differences and to explain why the

differences arise in order to devise pedagogical strategies to help learners to acquire English rhetorical norms.

Intercultural rhetoric as a field of research and an approach to the teaching of second language (L2) writing has been described as a relatively newcomer to the field of teaching second language writing (Badger & White, 2000). Though relatively new, IR studies have had great impact on teaching L2 writing; specifically teaching English for Academic Purposes. Bruce (2008) points out that the difference between IR studies as applied to the teaching of L2 writing and the other approaches to the teaching of writing (such as process approach) is that IR approach recognizes writing as a social activity. This perspective of viewing writing as an activity which takes place within a social and cultural context enables researchers in the field to appreciate how the socio-cultural background of ESL/EFL writers influence their writing. This might have contributed to the impact that IR studies have made on the teaching of L2 writing.

The recognition of writing as a socio-cultural activity by IR researchers makes them expose ESL/EFL learners to the discourse conventions of the second language because these conventions have been shaped by the socio-cultural background of the L2. Hyland (2003) points out that the exposure of L2 writers to the discourse conventions of the L2 will enable them function effectively in the L2 social context. Rafiee, Dastjerdi and Tavakoli (2013) indicate that there is the need for Iranian EFL learners to receive specific instruction on English writing discourse conventions because the writing conventions of Iran tend to differ from that of English.

Although IR is said to be a new approach to text analysis and an approach to the teaching of ESL/EFL writing, Rafiee et al (2013; 95) observe that IR has produced the "vast majority of research in the field of text analysis". The main focus of the majority of studies conducted within the field of IR have been studies that compare texts written in native English to those written in ESL/EFL contexts. The focus of these studies has been to find out the differences in the rhetorical patterns of native English texts and ESL/EFL texts. Some studies that have investigated rhetorical pattern transfer from the L1 of ESL/EFL learners by comparing their texts to native English texts include (Kobayashi 1984, Ostler 1987; Maurahen 1993; Kubota 1998; Hirose 2003). The differences found reflect how rhetorical patterns are transferred from L1 to English. Some of the studies that have investigated the transfer of rhetorical patterns have even explored the effect of raising ESL students' awareness about how their L1 rhetorical patterns differ from English rhetorical patterns. Examples of such studies are (Jun 2008: Liebman 1992; Petric 2005).

As a result of the focus of IR research on teaching L2 writing, IR researchers suggest activities and tasks for the teaching of L2 writing; especially at the college level in academic contexts. These pedagogical recommendations of IR have been generally accepted by researchers in ESL/EFL writing and especially practitioners in the field of English for Academic Purposes. Despite the success of IR as a field of research and an approach to the teaching of L2 writing, the field is not without criticisms. The field of IR has come under various criticisms. The pedagogical recommendations of IR research have also come under criticism.

This paper discusses the arguments against the pedagogical recommendations of IR studies. The paper presents the pedagogical recommendations of IR researchers and the criticisms of the recommendations. The criticisms are discussed with reference to pedagogical practices before the emergence of IR research, the pedagogical models advocated for ESL/EFL instruction and with reference to language socialization research.

Pedagogical recommendations of IR Research

The intention of IR research is to discover the rhetorical conventions of other languages and cultures in order to propose strategies for teaching speakers of other languages the rhetorical structures of English. In his seminal paper, Kaplan (1966: 13) indicates that "the thought patterns which speakers and readers of English appear to expect as an integral part of their communication is a sentence that is dominantly linear in its development." He further states that the pattern of paragraph in other languages need to be "discovered or uncovered and compared with the patterns of English in order to arrive at a practical

means for the teaching of such structures to non-native users of the language" (p.21). For the practical means of teaching English rhetorical patterns, Kaplan points out that "certain practical pedagogical devices have been developed to expedite the teaching of rhetorical structures to non-native speakers of English" (p. 22).

The practical means for teaching English rhetoric to ESL/EFL learners proposed by Kaplan (1966, 1967, 972) are mainly instructional techniques aimed at helping learners acquire the skills of writing paragraphs with English rhetorical patterns. These techniques include working on scrambled paragraphs, filling out the details of a topic sentence and working on outlines. Kaplan proposes that an elementary device of teaching rhetorical structure of English is by supplying the students a scrambled paragraph. This is a device by which a normal paragraph may be arbitrarily scrambled and the students asked to rearrange the sentences in a normal order. Then later, the students are presented with the original version of the paragraph. A second device is to give the students carefully written topic sentences and ask students to fill out the subdivisions of the topic sentence. In addition, students could be given model paragraphs to imitate and do controlled exercises by composing a paragraph following an outline. Later, Grabe and Kaplan (1989) added identifying topic sentences in authentic paragraphs to the teaching techniques aimed at making learners competent in writing paragraphs that satisfy the expectations of the native speaker of English.

In addition to the techniques that help learners to develop the skills of writing paragraphs, IR researchers later added techniques of raising learners' awareness about the difference between the rhetorical structures of English and that of their first language. Kaplan (1988) suggests that as part of teaching ESL/EFL learners writing, the students should be made aware of cultural differences in composing conventions and culturally specific assumptions about audience. Learners should also be made aware of the differences between world knowledge and technical knowledge acquired through academic work. Learners should be made aware that writing is a social activity that goes beyond how to use words effectively. Reid (1996) emphasizes that learners should be made aware of the native-speaking readers' expectation of the second sentence following a topic sentence. Learners should be aware of the functions of the second sentence and the problems associated with inappropriate second sentences. Connor (1998) reiterates that it is proper to teach students to write to the expectations of the native speaker/audience.

As part of teaching writing, IR researchers suggest that learners should be made aware of the formats of different genres with a focus on academic genres such as essays, term papers, concept papers, empirical research papers and thesis and dissertations. Reid (1984, 1989) recommends that learners should be asked to examine formats for various academic assignments. Learners should be asked to pay attention to lexical and morphological structures of edited texts. They should also discuss rhetorical differences between English academic prose and students' first language prose and chronological and logical sequence of developing ideas should also be explained to students.

Criticisms of IR pedagogical recommendations

The pedagogical recommendations of IR researchers have been criticized by Kubota and Lehner (2004). The teaching of English rhetorical structures to ESL/EFL learners has been criticized. Kubota and Lehner (2004) argue that this pedagogical practice has "reinforced an image of the superiority of English rhetoric" (p. 9). They maintain that the "tendency to define the expectations of native speaker or reader as the rhetorical norm reflects a prescriptive orientation that overlooks plurality within language groups" (p.10). They argue that there should be plurality of norms in teaching ESL/EFL learners writing. From their point of view, English rhetorical norms should not be the pedagogical model for ESL/EFL writing instruction.

Another criticism of IR pedagogical recommendations is that explicit teaching of the rhetorical structures of English is similar to back-to-basics movement or traditional pedagogy. According to Kubota and Lehner (2004), "this approach views literacy as consisting of merely basic writing and decoding skills that can be taught in a hierarchical manner form simple to complex" (p. 13).

The pedagogical recommendations of IR have been criticized as perpetuating acculturation and assimilation of English rhetorical norms. The raising of awareness of cultural differences in rhetorical structures according to Kubota and Lehner (2004), promotes "acculturating students through language exercises with concrete models that meet audience expectations" (p.13). They indicate that IR pedagogical approach has a transmission and assimilationist orientation. This assimilationist stance aims at acculturating students into the discourse conventions of English so that the students will become faithful members of the English community which has a set of linguistic and rhetorical conventions.

Kubota and Lehner (2004) conclude their criticisms by stating that IR pedagogical approach to the teaching of writing does not encourage critical literacy and creativity. They insist that IR pedagogy "legitimates the norm as a given, into which the marginalized are to be acculturated. (p.15). ESL/EFL writers are the marginalized and culturally lacking because their writings violate and deviate from the norm.

Pedagogical practices before IR pedagogy

To begin with, it is clear that English language writing pedagogy before the emergence of IR research in 1966 did not use multiple rhetorical norms. It is obvious that English Language Teaching (ELT) and the teaching of writing before the emergence of IR research was not focused on rhetorical conventions. Richard and Rogers (1999) points out that in the 1950s and the 1960s the oral approach of teaching language was the accepted method of teaching English. This approach was known as Situational Language Teaching. It is IR research that introduced a focus on rhetorical strategies into the teaching of ESL/EFL writing but IR approach to the teaching of writing by teaching native speaker expectations as the rhetorical norm is not contrary to the earlier approaches to the teaching of English as they all adhere to native English norms. It should be noted that the term native English norms is variously referred to as native speaker norms, native user norms, Inner Circle norms, Anglo-American English norms or Standard English (Connor 1998; Davies 2013; Hamid, Zhu & Baldauf Jr 2014). The previous approaches to the teaching of English did not use any other norm but native English norms. Kachru (1991: 180) indicates that since the 1950s there has been the analysis and description of "two main varieties of the English language, American and British." These references prove that the teaching of English over the years has been the teaching of native English norms (Anglo-American English norms). It is also obvious that the other varieties of English have not been established as English norms with stable characteristics for pedagogical purposes. Connor (1998) indicates that the definitions and characteristics of the varieties of English classified by Kachru (1984) are "still forthcoming" (p.110). It is therefore evident that over the years the target language norm for teaching English had always been native speaker norms.

A well-known pedagogical practice in second language writing is corrective feedback or grammar correction. This is the practice of giving ESL/EFL students feedback on the grammatical errors identified in their writings with the aim of helping them improve upon their writing in terms of constructing accurate sentences. The instructors or teachers correct the errors of their students to conform to Anglo-American English grammar norms. The norm that is adhered to in teaching ESL/EFL writing had always been Anglo-American English norms. It is not clear why IR pedagogical recommendations of describing the 'native speaker or reader' as the rhetorical norm should be criticized as being prescriptive and overlooks plurality. The extensive practice of grammar correction in ESL/EFL writing is not known to make room for any other norm.

In 1996, Truscott reviewed literature on the practice of grammar correction in ESL/EFL writing and argued that the practice should be abandoned because it does not help learners improve on their writing. He indicates that it diverts attention from more important aspects of writing, such as helping learners develop the skills of how to organize their essay and develop their arguments in a logical manner. Truscott (1996: 360) recommends that learners can improve their writing "through extensive experience with the target language – experience in reading and writing." These conclusions by Truscott after an extensive review of the literature on grammar correction in teaching ESL/EFL writing confirm the pedagogical recommendations of IR studies as better devices of helping ESL/EFL learners develop effective writing skills.

IR pedagogy and pedagogical models for ESL/EFL

Developments in British oversea territories in the 1950s and the 1960s especially in Africa resulted in the question of local norms of English. In the 1950s and the 1960s, the countries that were British colonies gained independence and adopted the English language as their official language and the language of education and for the mass media. The use of English in African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia together with the use of English in Asia and Europe has resulted in several varieties of English. It is this situation that has led to pedagogical concerns about the English norms that should be used as the target language for instruction. This has led to calls for a shift in pedagogical approach to teaching ESL/EFL learners. In the midst of this pedagogical dilemma in non-native English circles, Kachru (1992: 361) cited in Jenkins (2006: 110) proposes the use of both native speaker norms and local varieties for teaching purposes when he states that:

> *The only solution to the current inappropriateness of English language teaching and testing around the world is for a 'paradigm shift' in which, for example, a clear distinction is made between the use of English in monolingual and multilingual societies, there is mutual exposure to the major native and non-native varieties of English, and while one variety may be the focus of teaching, emphasis is given to the 'awareness and functional validity' of the others.*

Kachru's (1992) proposition above, is a type of pedagogical approach that is in line with IR researchers' pedagogical recommendation of raising students' awareness of cultural differences in rhetorical conventions. The reason for this pedagogical approach is that for the purpose of teaching and testing English all over the world, there should be the creation of awareness between the differences between the local varieties of English and the native speaker norms of English for the learners to be aware of the norms that are appropriate for the right settings. This is the kind of pedagogical approach that should be regarded as accommodating 'plurality within language groups' and is likely to prepare ESL/EFL learners to be able to use English both in their local settings as well as in international circles. It could be deduced from Kachru's proposition that non-native varieties of English need to be recognized and accepted as varieties that have functional validity but for pedagogical purposes, the target language should be the native speaker norms for ESL/EFL learners to enable them communicate in both local and international settings. It should be pointed out that in the pedagogical domain, native speaker norms have remained the target norm for instruction in the educational system of many ESL/EFL countries even though it is recognized that local norms exist (Glenwright 2005; Kaplan, Richard. Baldauf Jr, & Kamwangamalu 2011; Kirkpatric 2002; Rubdy 2001, 2007).

It is striking to note that Kachru's proposition in not in isolation. In view of the spread of English all over the world, and how it is used as the lingua franca for many people who speak other languages, the pedagogical model that has been suggested by researchers and practitioners of ESL/EFL is an approach that accommodates local norms while focusing on native speaker norms for the purpose of maintaining mutual intelligibility across cultures (Alptekin 2002; Bannink 2010; Farrell & Martin 2009; Gill 1993; Hyde 1998; Kachru 1992; Kramsch & Sullivan 1996; Morita 2013; Zhang & McCornac 1996). For example, Morita (3013) laments that the methods of English language teaching in Japan makes the standard of English use in the country insufficient for it to function as a lingua franca. Hyde (1998) suggests an English language pedagogy that promotes intercultural communicative competence for ESL/EFL users; an approach that makes them aware of differences in English language usage and how to cope with the differences. Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) prefer an English language pedagogy that prepares learners to be local as well as global speakers of English. Farrell and Martin (2009) propose that teachers of English in ESL/EFL countries should be informed about the varieties of English that exist and adopt a balanced approach to teaching English where learners would be aware of the context and should be prepared for English use in international encounters. These pedagogical recommendations support IR pedagogical recommendations of raising learners' awareness of differences in rhetorical structures across cultures and guiding them to acquire the rhetorical structure of English.

In a recent study to find out successful English language teaching pedagogy, Hamid, Zhu and Baldauf Jr. (2014) investigated the views and judgment of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other

Languages) practitioners in an Australian university. It was discovered that "the teachers noted that judgments on L2 features would vary depending on whether the context was everyday usage or the pedagogical domain. They drew a distinction between mundane usage and pedagogical sphere, suggesting that the later should not compromise standards" (p.86). This is a clear indication that for pedagogical purposes, the TESOL practitioners uphold standard norms but recognize local norms for everyday communication. The conclusion of the study was that the collective stance of the teachers "reflected characteristics of both: the need to conform to SE (Standard English) and at the same time, the importance of recognizing language change and innovations" (p. 90).

The issue of a pedagogical approach for the teaching of English is a matter of choice which is left for ESL/EFL countries to make; whether to adopt a local norm or a standard norm. In making this choice, Davies (2012) observes that when it comes to the use of English in the educational systems of the various ESL/EFL communities, it is not clear if these countries wish to adopt local norms. It is obvious that ESL/EFL countries are not willing to adopt local norms for their educational systems. The case of Singapore is an example of lack of willingness on the part of ESL/EFL countries to use local norms in their educational system.

Singapore uses English as the official language of the country. The people of Singapore speak a local variety of English known as Singlish. The government of Singapore considers the local variety called Singlish a threat to Singaporeans not being able to acquire competence in Standard English. According to Goh Chok Tang (Senior Minister cited in Wee (2013:208),

> *Singlish is broken, ungrammatical English sprinkled with words and phrases from local dialects and Malay which English speakers outside Singapore have difficulties in understanding. Let me emphasize that my message that we must speak Standard English is targeted primarily at the younger generation. We should ensure that the next generation does not speak Singlish.*

As a result of the fear that Singlish will influence the grammar of Standard English which is taught in schools and used as the official language in Singapore, the government banned the use of Singlish. This means that it is prohibited to use Singlish for any official purpose in Singapore. The government of Singapore does not recognize the use of Singlish for official purposes. Goh (1999) cited in Wee (2013:208) made the following argument against Singlish.

> *We cannot be a first-world economy or go global with Singlish. The fact that we use English gives us a big advantage over our competitors. If we carry on using Singlish, the logical final outcome is that we too will develop our own type of Pidgin English, spoken only by 3 (million) Singaporeans, which the rest of the world will find quaint but incomprehensible. We are already half way there. Do we want to go all the way?*

The government of Singapore banned the use of Singlish because it is likely to have negative influence on the use of Standard English in the country. In the words of Goh (1999) if Singlish is encouraged "it will lead to" the development of their "own type of Pidgin English which the rest of the world will find incomprehensible" The government of Singapore took this step to ensure global acceptance and to maintain mutual intelligibility with the rest of the world that speak English. The aim of the Singaporean government is to prepare their citizens to be able to function globally using English. This is the concern of other ESL/EFL countries. This concern of ESL/EFL countries enjoins them to hold onto Standard English norms for pedagogical purposes to facilitate international communication between their citizens and the outside world as far as the use of English is concerned.

IR pedagogy and language socialization

The study of how learners acquire linguistic norms for communication in communities, schools and other settings and how learners or newcomers of the community gain competence to interact with other

members of the community falls under language socialization research. According to Schieffelin and Ochs (1986: 163) "language socialization comprises socialization through the use of language and socialization to use language." Language socialization; both first language and second language socialization requires that the learner becomes competent to be able to use the language to communicate with other members of the community. Duff (2007: 310) defines second language socialization as "the process by which novices or newcomers in a community or culture gain communicative competence, membership and legitimacy in the group." Language socialization research focuses on finding out the various practices and social interactions that make learners linguistically competent in a particular community or cultural setting. Ochs and Schieffelin (2011; 1) states that:

> *The study of language socialization examines how children and other novices apprehend and enact the context of situation in relation to the context culture. In so doing, language socialization research integrates discourse and ethnographic methods to capture the social structuring and cultural interpretations of semiotic forms, practice and ideologies that inform novices' practical engagement with other.*

Language socialization research therefore captures the activities and tasks that learners engage in and how these activities and tasks contribute to their communicative competence. The processes through which learners become socialized to use language involve their participation in interaction with more experienced members of the community. Moore (2008; 175) captures what language socialization research does precisely by stating that "language socialization research documents and theorizes the diversity of cultural paths to communicative competence and community membership."

Language socialization research has shown that the path or the process to language socialization and communication competence is achieved through interaction with expert members of the community to acquire the appropriate knowledge and skills. The process confirms IR pedagogical recommendations as practices that encourage language socialization and intercultural communication competence of ESL/EFL learners. Moore (2008:181) indicates that the path to language socialization is "guided by more competent interlocutors" as learners "engage in cultural/linguistic practices." Through these engagements, learners "come to view particular behaviors, perceptions and affective stances as appropriate to particular goals, settings and identities." This involves the learner acquiring knowledge about what is appropriate in particular settings and the skill to be able to perform the linguistic acts for successful communication. For second language learners who are novices in a new cultural setting, they need to have knowledge of the culture of their own first language as well as knowledge of the culture of the new setting. In addition to their knowledge of the new culture, they should have the skill to produce the appropriate linguistic acts to be able to communicate effectively in the foreign culture. Kiss (2008) points out that intercultural competence requires sufficient knowledge of the norms of appropriateness to operate in specific cultures. He also points out that it is important to have the necessary information about what is appropriate and acceptable but still lack the behavioral skills necessary to achieve competence. The actual skill required to perform the desired linguistic form is very important. Intercultural rhetoric pedagogy satisfies these two requirements by raising learners' awareness of differences in rhetorical structures across cultures and equipping learners with the skills to develop how to write to conform to native speaker norms.

One of the criticisms of IR pedagogy is that it is prescriptive and encourages assimilation and acculturation and therefore deterministic. This criticism is due to the wrong notion of enculturation and acculturation. The wrong notion of enculturation is that learners are passive recipients of knowledge. This notion views enculturation as the transmission of localized culture. This view of enculturation is based on the perception that cultural knowledge is reproduced through imitation without modification. According to Ochs and Schieffelin (2011), this wrong notion of enculturation stems from Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) assumption that educators inculcate and learners internalize implicit and explicit principles of practices.

Contrary to the notion of enculturation as a means of transmitting cultural information to learners who are passive receivers, language socialization research views enculturation as interactional rather than a unidirectional process. In every process of enculturation, the people involved are agents in the formation of competence. It is a process of language socialization which involves collaborations and exchanges among the participants. The learners are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in the

process. The learners are the novices but they do not imitate without modification. Contrary to the criticisms of IR pedagogical recommendations as acculturation and assimilation of English norms, Van de Poel and Gasiorek (2012: 60) strongly propose that ESL/EFL learners should be taken through explicit academic acculturation in order to become "acquainted with the conventions, norms and values" of English which is the target language and the target culture. They indicate that failure to explicitly take learners through the conventions and competencies applicable to the use of English leads to a gap between the academic literacy competencies expected by academic teaching staff and the learners. They emphasize that academic and language teaching professionals need to take EFL students through the process of acculturation to academic adulthood. They suggest that learners should be made aware of the norms and expectations of Standard English language use to prepare ESL/EFL learners for academic language and academic culture. This call for academic acculturation of ESL/EFL learners shows the positive notion of acculturation where the learners are seen as active participants and not just passive receivers of foreign norms.

Studies in language socialization research have demonstrated that even routine learning, imitation and repetitions do not constitute passive assimilation but generate creativity and individual resourcefulness. For example, Moore (2011) demonstrates how repetition of verses in Qur'an-based French schools in Cameroon is a cognitive activity rather than verbatim repetition of their teachers; a creative activity that leads to the transformation of the individual. Health (2011) reports that Pitjantjatjara youth in Australia imitate storytelling and sand-drawing practices but the stories of the youth are revised, improved upon and related to present-day changes and trends. On the basis of these studies, one can argue that the explicit teaching of rhetorical strategies in IR approach to the teaching of ESL/EFL writing does not constitute passive assimilation of rhetorical conventions without critical analysis. Learners are agents who actively participate in the activities to construct meaning for themselves and should not be regarded as passive assimilators of information received.

In addition, language socialization in every community and setting is oriented towards a target norm. Ochs and Schieffelin (2011: 12) state that language socialization transpires "through explicit practices that express goals and instruct novices." In every language socialization process, learners' acquisition of appropriate linguistic forms is assisted by speech acts and activities that guide them to what is acceptable in specific contexts. This means that in every language socialization process, learners' mastery of competence is not immune to goals or target norms. Several language socialization studies have demonstrated that every process of language socialization, is guided through explicit instruction towards goals that are norms accepted in the community (Burdelski, 2011: Fader, 2011; Howard, 2011). Davies (2012: 191) makes reference to Leonard Bloomfied's expression of surprise when he discovered normative attitudes in a small community of people speaking a uniform language without schools or writing during his study of the Menomini Indians of Wisconsin and pointed out that adherence to norms "may be a generally human state of affairs, true in every group and applicable to all languages" This shows that in every situation where language is used, there are norms to be adhered to. It is therefore not out of place for IR researchers to recommend teaching techniques that adhere to English rhetorical norms. In every situation or community in which language is used, there are regards to norms or standards.

To make the argument clear, what is regarded as native speaker norm in ESL/EFL instruction is an abstract norm. According to Davies (2012) whatever is considered as native speaker norm is the written form of the language which is a myth and not the reality of any particular variety of native speakers because there are varieties of native speakers of every language. What happens is that in the face of several varieties of native speakers of a language a particular variety is chosen as the standard language, modified and improved upon through language planning and codification and therefore ceases to belong to any group of native speakers. This is what had been done for many languages including English (Davies 2003). The selected form becomes the written standard that is transmitted through education. Kahn and Kerr-Jarrett (1991: 123) indicate that "the various dialects of English differ from the standard language in rough proportions. Nevertheless, the vast majority of words in the various dialects are common to all forms."

What is therefore regarded as the native speaker norm is the written form which has to be learnt by both native and non-native speakers of the language. Davies (2012) maintains that "both the native speaker and the near natives are enjoined to model their language goal on the myth rather than the reality of native

speaker." What is therefore regarded as native English speakers' norm is Standard English; and Standard English is always difficult to define because it is a myth and all attempts to define it make reference to the written form of English (Jenkins 2006; McArthur 2003; Strevens 1980; Trudgill 1984; Trugill & Hannah 1995). For example, McArthur (2003) defines Standard English in a simple way by stating that "Standard English is easiest to recognize in print because written conventions are similar world-wide." Trugill and Hannah 1995: 1) also define Standard English with reference to the written form as stated below:

> *The variety of the English language which is normally employed in writing and normally spoken by 'educated' speakers of the language. It is also, of course the variety of English that students as Foreign or Second Language (EFL/ESL) are taught when receiving formal instruction.*

On the basis of the recognition that both native and non-native speakers of English model their speech on the written English which serves as the standard and that there are several varieties of the English language, a pedagogical approach that is appropriate for instruction wherever English is being taught should recognize the local varieties and at the same time adhere to the standard norms. This pedagogical approach should be considered as the appropriate approach to achieve intercultural communication. With this pedagogical approach, all people learning English everywhere regardless of the setting will model their English language use on the standard norms. This will facilitate intercultural communication in English and at the same time enable the learners function within their local settings. This type of English language pedagogy is likely to produce users of English from various cultural settings who would be able to function in different cultural settings.

Conclusions

The literature shows that researchers who advocate plurality in English pedagogy are concerned about intercultural communication competence of ES/EFL learners. The pedagogical approaches suggested indicate the need to make ESL/EFL learners able to function locally as well as internationally to communicate with users of English all over the world. An important aspect of the use of English is writing. Since the general concern of pedagogical models for teaching English in ESL/EFL settings is to develop competence to enable learners use English to communicate locally as well as in international circles, the pedagogical recommendations and practices of IR researchers should be seen as appropriate for developing the desired competence for users of English to communicate both in their local communities and in international circles.

The pedagogical recommendations of IR researchers promote second language socialization which is key to intercultural communication. Duff (2001, 2004) conducted studies on the experiences of Asian ESL students' participation in class discussions in a Canadian school and found out that the participation of the ESL students was hindered because of their lack of knowledge about Canadian pop culture and their lack of linguistic skills. This finding shows the importance of creating awareness about cultural differences between the first language culture and English cultural norms for ESL/EFL learners. It also shows the importance of equipping ESL/EFL learners with the linguistic and text organization skills that they need to be able to become members of the school discourse communities in which they find themselves. These are the two things necessary for language socialization and attainment of communicative competence for intercultural communication.

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