

Curriculum Analysis of the College of World Englishes at Chukyo University

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Abstract

This paper is about the curriculum of the College of World Englishes at Chukyo University. This curriculum analysis is done by three methods: syllabus check, interviewing teachers, and collecting survey data from students. The subject of this investigation is two representative foundation courses and overall program. Analyzing from these three areas, two main suggestions came up to the surface. First, the syllabus needs an improvement: to be written in more detail, and the other is that Introduction to World Englishes course needs a change: change the format of the class, and extend more World Englishes classes. I believe that by following these two suggestions will improve the department more for students' awareness of world Englishes.

1. Introduction

Traditionally, English language education in Japan has focused on the native variety, especially American English, as the ideal goal for which to strive. Many high school students who want to continue English studies at university often express a desire to learn an inner circle variety. Yoshikawa (2004) indicates that although high school English teachers compare two varieties of Englishes, for example, comparing the pronunciation, they compare either British English to American English or Australian English: the comparison is of the inner circle varieties only. In addition, Kirkpatrick (2006) mentioned that schools tend to hire the English teacher from inner circle countries even if those teachers do not have an English masters degree, at the 19th national conference of the Japan Association for Asian Englishes held at Aoyama Gakuin Women's Junior College, Tokyo, on July 2006. However, as Honna (2003) implies, most Japanese communicate with Asian people in English mainly because of their business. Then, it is unnecessary for Japanese or Asian people to use inner circle English, and all the more so for learning inner circle countries' cultures perfectly. The most important is that other Asian people use English just as a tool in the international situation to express themselves and be conscious with their customs and cultures. The

College of World Englishes at Chukyo University in Nagoya Japan was the first university program to focus exclusively on the teaching of world Englishes. Now beginning its 5th year of existence, the initial class graduated in March 2006; in addition, I, too, graduated from this department, and took an examination to enter the graduate school of the College of World Englishes at Chukyo University. Now, I am one of the first six graduate students of the College of World Englishes at Chukyo University. During study for the examination and in an intensive graduate school class, I found I was still a beginner in world Englishes studies. This fact was quite shocking, so I started to think about why it happened. Due to such a motive, I began my research of the curriculum of the World Englishes department.

This study will focus on the curriculum of the CWE to examine whether classes match WE ideals as a practical matter by examining some representative classes of the CWE, such as, Introduction to World Englishes, and the overseas seminar program which includes compulsory trips to Singapore, as well as an overall program review of this department; moreover, I will compare these classes to analyze their role and significance to the CWE. I examined the classes using three methods, which are (1) syllabus check, (2) a survey of the students, and (3) interview with faculty coordinators of each class category. Then I analyzed the data to discover if the CWE's classes are either effective to raise each student's awareness of world Englishes or not. Too, from this study, I can discover students' requirements and actual awareness of world Englishes. Consequently, I will devise some suggestions to improve weak points of the curriculum.

2. Syllabus check

First, I defined world Englishes into two points. One is world Englishes is the study of English varieties, and two, it is combination of English with local characteristics to create international intelligibility. This definition was also written on the survey that was handed out to the students, because since world Englishes is a conceptual idea, there was an anxiety about a number of different thoughts which may confuse both students and myself. I was concerned that there is a need of a coherent definition.

Then, the syllabus of the College of World Englishes which was published in April 2006 was investigated. According to the syllabus (2006), there are 38 foundation courses, for example, Oral Communication, Presentation, Communicative Writing, Singapore seminar, Introduction to World Englishes, and Computer Skills, and about 55 elective courses in this department: English Phonetics, English Linguistics, international area studies, studies of communication, studies of language teaching, studies of literature, studies of international business, distance learning, and language skills. From those courses, two representative foundation courses were chosen: Introduction to World Englishes and Singapore Seminar.

Broadly speaking, Introduction to World Englishes teaches students the basics of World Englishes. According to the syllabus, first the class studies about the origin and progress of lingua franca and its diffusion. Then, students get a general view of the varieties of English's present state via results of the diffusion by departing into the three circles, defined by Kachru (1992); furthermore, this class gives an outline of the recognition and application toward those kinds of Englishes. For the Singapore Seminar, when students are freshman, they go to Singapore to encounter the English varieties and experience multi-culture. During their preparation class in Japan, they realize the internationalization and diversity of English. After the preparation class, students will experience the symbiotically multiracial society through the seminar in Singapore which is a multiracial and multilingual society. In addition, students survey the contact and interchange of Singapore and Japan from the past to today.

Third, I determined five criteria and compared the two courses plus the program. The first criterion is, the term "world Englishes" or English varieties mentioned in the syllabi or not. From figure 1, in the Introduction to World Englishes and Singapore Seminar, about World Englishes or English varieties were mentioned. The second criterion is, does the class contain world Englishes material or not. For example of this material, we listed textbooks, CDs, and rhetorical structure of writing. The third criterion is, do classes appear to stress only English language skills. Indicating the detail of this result, 66.6% of the Singapore Seminar class focuses on English language skills. The fourth criterion is, are classes taught by outer or expanding circle teachers. There are great numbers of teachers from overseas who work for the College of World Englishes at Chukyo University. Enumerating those teachers, there are teachers from the US, Australia, England, Canada, Philippines, India, Africa, Singapore and of course, Japan. For this criterion, the Introduction to World Englishes is taught by a Japanese teacher. Singapore Seminar is quite a complex class, because students have a class in Japan for a semester for preparation, and then, they actually go to Singapore and study for three weeks. During those three weeks, they take English language and Singapore culture classes at the Regional Language Center (RELC). Therefore, for this criterion, I indicated that not only Japanese and American teachers who lead students on spot, but also Singaporean teachers who teach the students. The last criterion is that class provides the opportunity to improve intelligibility. Nothing is mentioned for the Introduction to World Englishes class, and it is not clear for the Singapore Seminar on the syllabus. Although it was not clear for the Singapore Seminar, during the three weeks stay in Singapore, indeed, the class provides the opportunity to improve intelligibility. In passing, these results reflect only the syllabus and not the actual class content.

Figure 1. Criteria

	1 the term "world Englishes" or English varieties are mentioned in the syllabi	2 class contains world Englishes material	3 classes appear to stress only English language skills	4 class taught by outer or expanding circle teachers	5 class provides the opportunity to improve intelligibility
Intro to WE	○	○	×	○	×
Singapore	○	○	○	○	○

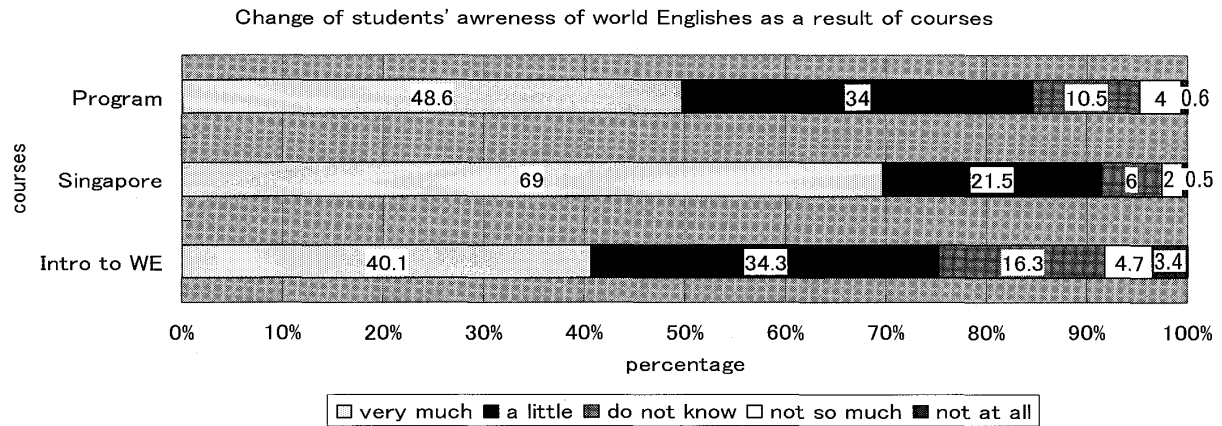
3. Interview

After the syllabus investigation, I interviewed the coordinators of each course to understand their intention of each course. Introduction to World Englishes is a lecture type class; thus, it is difficult to raise each student's English skill. By studying world Englishes, I suppose that learning about intelligibility is inevitable. Smith (2003) elucidates that "intelligibility is the recognition of a word or another sentence-level element of an utterance." Nonetheless, "Intelligibility" is still not clearly defined in this class in view of the fact that "intelligibility" is still being contrived and considered by scholars of world Englishes. Therefore, during the class, the teacher does not discuss about it. Yet, this class is just an introduction class; furthermore, students will study concrete world Englishes later on in elective courses. In addition, the coordinator inclined to link this course to the basic linguistic courses. The Singapore Seminar focuses more on cross-cultural communication than learning English skills. The aim of this course is to teach students to be more professional with both their language skill and their communication ability so that they are able to use their potential fully in business in the future. Hence, this course has an eye on a professional school. The coordinator revealed about the possibility of indicating merit to take this course, and to write the syllabus in more detail.

4. Data of survey

I succeeded to collect 294 surveys from the undergraduate students majoring in world Englishes at Chukyo University: moreover, that is approximately 80 percent of student population whom registered for the Department of World Englishes. There are 15 to 18 questions for each three areas, and to sum up, there are 47 questions for this survey. In addition, these three areas imply two courses plus the program of the department. For this

paper, I selected seven distinctive questions which are most closely related to my topic. The first question is about the change of students' awareness of world Englishes as a result of each class.



By considering "very much" and "a little" as a positive aspect, comparing the three areas, Introduction to World Englishes, Singapore Seminar, and program have a striking effect. To detail the particulars of this data, 74.4% of students have a positive aspect, 16.3% are unsure, 8.1% have a negative aspect to the Introduction to World Englishes: Furthermore, there is a 90.5% of positive aspect, 6.0% unsure, and 2.5% negative aspect for the Singapore Seminar. The overall program shows that 82.6% students have a positive aspect, 10.5% are not sure, and 4.6% have a negative aspect. From this data, it is easy to recognize that these classes are surely effective to the students to raise their awareness of world Englishes, and it indeed reflects the curriculum. The data shows, it is distinct that the Singapore seminar is a salient course which students' awareness of world Englishes is always outstanding. Despite the fact which is verified from this survey data, it is interesting that question 44, What is your favorite class in the curriculum?, shows students' favorite class is the Seminar Abroad: every sophomore student will go to either the University of Massachusetts, Boston in the United States, Macquarie University in Australia, or Surrey University in England for three weeks. This research reveals, 29.2% students like the Seminar Abroad class the best, 17.3% students like Singapore Seminar the best, then 14.9% for the presentation class, 14.2% for the Workshop, 11.2% for the Oral Communication, 8.1% for the Communicative Writing, 7.4% for the Computer Skills, and 1.3% for the Introduction to the World Englishes. This data demonstrates that, it can be conjectured that in spite of its success of raising students' awareness of world Englishes, students might prefer native speaking English to non-native speaking English. It can also be presumed from question 25 to 29. Question 25 is about whether a non-native speaking teacher teaches the class as effectively as a native speaking teacher or not. 55% of the students consider that a non native speaking teacher is also effective to teach the class for Singapore Seminar. However from question 26,

which specifies non native speaking teacher to ENL teacher, 43% of the students are unsure about it. The same fact can be seen from question 27, which specifies an ESL teacher, question 28 which specifies an EFL teacher, and question 29 which specifies to Japanese teacher. From these data, it becomes clear that students do not care about the nationalities of the teachers. Likewise, in Introduction to World Englishes, students showed that they are not particular about the nationalities. In passing, from question 45, Introduction to World Englishes is the most disliked class of the students despite its effectiveness of raising students awareness of world Englishes. In consideration of the result of question 45, there are two demerits being known. One is that Introduction to World Englishes class is a lecture type course, and the other is that it is, perhaps, the biggest class of the College of World Englishes: approximately 90 students, which is all the students from one grade, take this class. On account of these demerits, less interest toward this class can be presumed.

5. Conclusion

From these overall data, three suggestions came up. First, by the process of the syllabus check and interviewing teachers, it is obvious that the syllabus has less information. Consequently, it is necessary to recompose the syllabus in more detail and full with class content to enable students to expect how the class will be operated and to make it easy to prepare for. By way of illustration, teachers should make a syllabus with a carefully thought-out plan, and hand it out to the student before the class or each class. Second, there is a need to change the Introduction of World Englishes class from lecture type class to active type class, or change to a smaller class, so that students can interact with both students and teachers. Ergo, the change is needed for the format of the class, but not with the content of the class since this course shows the highest rise of awareness of the world Englishes. Third, I suggest to extend the Introduction to World Englishes class. As it is written above, this class is held for only a year for freshman. It is an utterly stimulating class for the students who start their first year of the university. Nevertheless, there is no such class similar to this course in later years; therefore, students tend to forget what they had learned from this class. Thus, it is necessary to arrange continuous classes of the Introduction to World Englishes. For instance, after the Introduction to World Englishes class, students are able to take World Englishes 2 the next year, and then they will take World Englishes 3. It is preferable if these courses are foundation courses. The merit is that teachers are able to teach students about world Englishes in more detail, and also, students can take time to be convinced of world Englishes. I consider that this work will connect to raise the students' awareness of world Englishes. Subsequently, more and more highly motivated students of world Englishes will spread not only in Japan, but also all over the world through these

students perhaps by work. According to Funabashi (2000), not only Japan but also the world is riding on a trend toward internationalization, so it is important to use English as a tool to convey the way of life, for example, humor, wit, consideration, passion, culture, common property of each country to all mankind, and adjustment with other countries. Therefore, taking World Englishes classes will help students to eliminate the native preference and make them confident to communicate with people from different cultures. Then, because these students took an active part in the business from the background the world Englishes, perhaps the world Englishes idea will increase in geometrical progression. In other words, more and more people will know about world Englishes, which equates to the encouragement of a non-native speaking English. From this suggestion, I expect that the English education in Japan will change from native speaking English thinking to non-native speaking English. To bring this suggestion to fruition, it is necessary to sacrifice the other courses or try to add a new foundation class to the curriculum. Thus, perhaps substitute WE 2 and 3 for the courses which are often in danger of being closed due to lack of interest, such as Computer Skills 6, 7, and the Distance Learning class.

From this curriculum analysis, it is obvious that students indeed have a high awareness of world Englishes although some weak point came up. Nevertheless, by following the suggestions written above, the future classes of the College of World Englishes and the operation of the Chukyo University will be better than now.

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Appendix

World English is

1. The study of English varieties.
2. The combination of English with local characteristics to create international intelligibility.

Please circle A~E to answer questions.

A (very much) B (a little) C (don't know) D (not so much) E (not at all)

Introduction to World Englishes	
1. Did your awareness of World Englishes change as a result of this class?	A B C D E
2. There is no reluctance to listen to the other non-native speaker's English.	A B C D E
3. Started to have an interest to the other non-native speakers' English	A B C D E
4. Don't feel inferiority complex when I speak English.	A B C D E
5. I don't think my WE awareness had changed through this class.	A B C D E
6. How much do you think this class is focus on World Englishes?	A B C D E
7. Do you think the same class can be effectively taught by a non-native speaker?	A B C D E
8. Do you think ENL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
9. Do you think ESL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
10. Do you think EFL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
11. Do you think Japanese teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
12. To use World Englishes in this class, promoting more teachers from non-native countries is an effective way.	A B C D E
13. To use World Englishes in this class, teachers more accepting of Japanese English is an effective way.	A B C D E
14. To use World Englishes in this class, teaching materials	A B C D E

(listening tapes, text books) feature multiple English varieties is an effective way.	
15. To use World Englishes in this class, if the teachers' World Englishes knowledge is stronger, they can organize their classes with World English philosophy.	A B C D E
16. How satisfied are you with this class's curriculum?	A B C D E
17. Do you think this class is effective for the World Englishes curriculum?	A B C D E
18. What did you learn from this class? (Multiple choice)	a. listening b. speak fluently c. communication skill (gesture included) d. writing e. culture f. World Englishes g. grammar h. thinking skills i. reasoning skills j. knowledge
Singapore Seminar	
19. Did your awareness of World Englishes change as a result of this class?	A B C D E
20. There is no reluctance to listen to the other non-native speaker's English.	A B C D E
21. Started to have an interest to the other non-native speakers' English	A B C D E
22. Don't feel inferiority complex when I speak English.	A B C D E
23. I don't think my WE awareness had changed through this class.	A B C D E
24. How much do you think this class is focus on World Englishes?	A B C D E
25. Do you think the same class can be effectively taught by a non-native speaker?	A B C D E
26. Do you think ENL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
27. Do you think ESL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
28. Do you think EFL teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
29. Do you think Japanese teacher would be more effective to teach you this class?	A B C D E
30. To use World Englishes in this class, promoting more teachers from non-native countries is an effective way.	A B C D E

31. To use World Englishes in this class, teachers more accepting of Japanese English is an effective way.	A B C D E
32. To use World Englishes in this class, teaching materials (listening tapes, text books) feature multiple English varieties is an effective way.	A B C D E
33. To use World Englishes in this class, if the teachers' World Englishes knowledge is stronger, they can organize their classes with World English philosophy.	A B C D E
34. How satisfied are you with this class's curriculum?	A B C D E
35. Do you think this class is effective for the World Englishes curriculum?	A B C D E
36. What did you learn from this class? (Multiple choice)	a. listening b. speak fluently c. communication skill (gesture included) d. writing e. culture f. World Englishes g. grammar h. thinking skill i. reasoning skills j. knowledge
Program	
37. Did your awareness of World Englishes changed as a result of time at Chukyo?	A B C D E
38. There is no reluctance to listen to the other non-native speaker's English.	A B C D E
39. I started to have an interest to the other non-native speaker's English.	A B C D E
40. Don't feel inferiority complex when I speak English.	A B C D E
41. Do you think the curriculum is focus on World Englishes?	A B C D E
42. How satisfied are you of the college curriculum?	A B C D E
43. What did you learn from this curriculum? (multiple choice)	a. listening b. speak fluently c. communication skill (gesture included) d. writing e. culture f. World Englishes g. grammar h. thinking skills i. reasoning skills j. knowledge
44. What is your most like class in the curriculum?	a. OC b. CW c. CS d. Workshop e. Singapore seminar f. Seminar abroad g. Presentation h. Intro. To WE

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45. What is your most dislike class in the curriculum?	a. OC b. CW c. CS d. Workshop e. Singapore seminar f. Seminar abroad g. Presentation h. Intro. To WE
46. Do you think college of World Englishes classes are same with other universities' classes?	A B C D E
47. If there is a difference, what do you think it is?	a. LS Wing b. seminar abroad c. peer group d. philosophy of WE e. teacher's ethnic varieties f. others