

Chapter 1

English Language Learning as Intercultural Experience: Promoting a Critical Understanding of Intercultural Relations

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ABSTRACT

Teaching English in higher education entails additional factors and considerations that exemplify the complexity of accounting for the diverse population in modern higher education institutions. In particular, the increasing flow of international students and the employment demands of functioning in multicultural contexts render helping students to develop a critical understating of intercultural relations an important aspect of English language teaching. With the increasing adoption of English as a medium of instruction and its use as a lingua franca in intercultural communication, it is important to structure English education in a way that accounts for intercultural relations both in and outside the university. In addition to the postmodern conceptualizations of interculturality that emphasize the fluidity of culture, language and identity intercultural relations are characterized by power imbalances. That is why this chapter makes a case for the necessity of considering sociopolitical realities in intercultural English language teaching in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Because the global spread of English has contributed to its wide use for intercultural communication, research on English language teaching (ELT) has widely examined various processes and factors involved

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in communicating interculturally using English. This is especially important in current times as language learners are expected to use English in order to engage in intercultural encounters with people of different lingua-cultural backgrounds (Baker, 2012; Liu & Fang, 2017). This chapter will make multiple references to intercultural English language education in higher education on account of “mobility projects in the global higher education sector” as well as the use of “English as a global language, as a medium of instruction and a competitive advantage” (Robertson & Kedzierski, 2016, p. 276). The premise of discussing intercultural relations with regards to English education in higher education is founded upon the interplay of language and culture as found in the context of internationalization. It primarily pertains to the English language and associated linguistic and cultural challenges faced by international students. Therefore, English as foreign language learning is an essential part of developing students’ capacity to meet the demands of globalization (Crichton & Scarino, 2007, p. 3).

As higher education institutes around the world are actively trying to internationalize, there has been an unprecedented growth in the number of non-language subjects being taught in English resulting in the association of ‘internationalization’ with the ‘Englishization’ of higher education (Galloway et al., 2020). The increasing adoption of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) (Macaro et al., 2018) reflects the status of English as a lingua franca (ELF), which can be used to engage in knowledge production and dissemination in addition to intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2007). This is also propelled by the current conditions of globalization and the necessity of developing a skilled workforce to function in both local and global settings. Therefore, the necessity of teaching intercultural communication in higher education (Altaher, 2019) is associated with a critical conceptualization of English-medium teaching in higher education (Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018). Conceptualizing language, culture and intercultural communication in higher education language programs (Moore & Díaz, 2019) entails engaging with cross-cultural communication barriers in globalized higher education (Bash, 2009).

Although an extensive body of research has examined interculturality and language teaching in higher education, e.g., intercultural communicative competence in the context of the European higher education area (Aguilar, 2009), there is a lack of scholarship that has investigated English and internationalization of higher education in southern spaces (Rahman & Mehar Singh, 2020) and their implications for global intercultural relations for southern individuals. An important step in furthering the discussion on intercultural communication and English language education in higher education is to realize that intercultural relations are characterized by North-South power imbalances (Mignolo, 2018; Sousa Santos, 2018) and skewed geopolitics of knowledge (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Garcia & Baca, 2019). Therefore, since most intercultural interactions are mediated through English, it is necessary to further examine the use of ELF in imbalanced intercultural relations and discuss the implications of these dynamics for intercultural English language education.

This chapter recognizes that ELT should consider the colonial-like relations between Northern and Southern spaces. Since less popular cultures use English to communicate or study, then it is a process that may entail considering southern cultures to be less valuable. This chapter will argue that (a) ELT should be mindful of the power imbalances in intercultural relations among different contexts and how the spread of English might perpetuate these inequalities, (b) English language theory and praxis should make use of other ways of knowing including southern epistemologies, and (c) it is necessary to help students in developing a critical understanding of intercultural relations and how they have been shaped by colonial legacies and continue to be influenced by the power of Northern spaces including the spread of global English.

English Language Learning as Intercultural Experience

The main aim here is to make a case for ELT that is interculturally critical. This requires paying more careful attention to the intersections of English, power imbalances and interculturality. Without the critical understanding of intercultural relations, it is indeed easier to (a) implicitly encourage students to abandon their cultures for the Anglophone ones, (b) fail to account for power imbalances and how they shape and exist in intercultural relations. The use of teaching materials and methods that favor Anglophone cultures does not imply that learning English is an intercultural experience, but it is rather an assimilationist process that tries to encourage students to embrace another culture and favor other epistemologies.

Some terms need to be further explained to give more context to the discussion that this paper presents. The concept of ‘transcultural recognizes that due to globalization and the fluidity of identity and culture, cultural differences and similarities have relatively merged to create a space where culture is not most influential in intercultural relations. On the other hand, the concept of ‘intercultural’ emphasizes interculturality in terms of both differences and similarities at the level of culture, identity and power that continue to shape intercultural encounters. While ‘cultural awareness’ refers to one’s understanding of their own culturally signifying elements and those of other cultures, ‘intercultural awareness’ stresses the dynamic contexts of English use at the global level, and, therefore, it refers to an understanding of how culturally signifying elements comes to influence intercultural encounters. Intercultural communicative competence refers to the ability to ensure smooth functioning of intercultural contacts by drawing on one’s knowledge, skills and attitudes.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

ELF studies have developed our understanding of the relationship among the concepts of language, culture, identity and communication as they call into question essentialist perceptions and the fluidity of the interplay among these constructs (Jenkins, 2015). ELF studies argue that as English is used in intercultural encounters, cultural practices and identities are continuously evolving and going beyond any fixed boundaries such as local or global cultural infrastructures. This means that hybrid cultural practices and identities are supposedly generated during intercultural contacts. Imagining interlocutors as independent individuals bringing particular languages and cultures is an assumption that does not recognize how ELF communication is transcultural rather than intercultural communication (Fang & Baker, 2018). English is present in diverse transcultural and translingual settings, with most of its speakers using it as a second or foreign language. English is not anymore associated with a particular target culture. Therefore, the use and ownership of English go beyond the usual Anglophone countries.

English is used around the globe for different purposes, and mainly as a lingua franca through which intercultural relations are mediated. People from different lingua-cultural backgrounds are regularly engaged in processes of cultural becoming and performance that entail continuous reshaping of their cultural self. With the additional elements associated with the use of English and its global spread, important questions have been raised about the validity of assuming a well-delineated perception of how interculturality is taking place in current fluid times. The fact that there are more non-native speakers of English than native speakers invites critical questions about the usefulness of representing native speakers and Anglophone cultures as the owners of English language. Intercultural communication dialectics renders the conceptualization of English along with its teaching practices quite complex and encompassing a number of other factors both in ELT theory and praxis (R’boul, 2021a)

It seems that ELT is shaped by power imbalances that favor the perspectives and the experiences of native speakers and Anglophone cultures. It is driven by white privilege and native speakerism as highly influential in ELT theory and practice (R'boul, 2020a). As long as the dominant ideologies of ELT do not meaningfully consider the status of ELF, conceptualizations and representations of intercultural communication in ELT would remain uncritical and inaccurate. Presenting the native speaker as a model for language learners is likely to be at the expense of their own cultural reasonings. That is why intercultural speakers have been presented as a more appropriate alternative as a part of Byram's (1997, 2008) conceptualization of intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Presenting ELT without critical understandings of intercultural communication does not sufficiently account for the postmodern dynamics of interculturality and how individuals come to construct and perform their cultural practices and identities. Multiple conceptions have been introduced in the literature to conceptualize the importance of culture and interculturality in English language education.

Cultural awareness (CA) has been presented as an important conceptualization of the cultural dimension of language teaching. It maintains that users of English as a second/foreign language need to frame their communication using English as a cultural process that entails being aware of their own culturally-informed communicative behavior and that of others. However, the status of ELF renders CA as being rooted in a national conception of culture and language. On account of these conditions, Baker (2012) presented Intercultural awareness (ICA) as "an alternative non-essentialist view of culture and language that better accounts for the fluid and dynamic relationship between them" (p. 62). In multilingual and multicultural classrooms, language and culture are engaged in an interdependent relationship. Learning ELF is not enough without an accompanying understanding of how to ensure the smooth functioning of intercultural relations.

This could also be linked to the internationalization of higher education and the Englishization discourses that accompany it, which are embedded in a multilingual higher education context that involves regular intercultural encounters (Block & Moncada-Comas, 2019). Sung (2020) examined international students' experiences and perceptions of their language use in an English-medium international university in multilingual Hong Kong. The aim of the study was to investigate the use of ELF in relation to other languages. The study involved the use of in-depth interviews with a group of international students. Findings revealed that students emphasized the importance of ELF for their academic and social integration in the university. The study further noted that the participants expressed "monolingual ideologies with respect to the use of ELF as a result of their concerns about social exclusion and linguistic disadvantage" (Sung, 2020, p. 258). This seems to point to major intercultural challenges between teachers and students in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, especially in higher education, which need to be dealt with. Students may be "simultaneously learning English as the lingua franca and participating in an intercultural educational experience in order to become linguistically and interculturally competent global citizens" (Csillik, 2019, p. 1).

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION, ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

One structural feature often theorized as part of internationalization is to "impose or strongly recommend language learning for all" (Byram, 2019, p. 99). The use of English as the main language of international and intercultural communication (Baker & Hüttner, 2019; Phillipson, 2009) has contributed to the cur-

rent demands for the ‘Englishization’ of higher education (Kirkpatrick, 2011). This is one of the reasons why non-western universities have been increasingly adopting EMI. Although learning English in higher education may be conflated with the symbolic values associated with the USA or neoliberalism (Brumfit, 2004), English communicative skills are commonly seen as an indication of individuals’ capabilities and employability (Shin & Park, 2016). A sign of this association is the fact that the English language proficiency levels of international students have long been a major concern in international universities where students “who have English as an additional language (EAL) often struggle to complete the requirements of studying for a degree” (Benzie, 2010, p. 448).

Another important dimension to consider is that EMI has been presented as a “key strategy through which universities, propelled by academic, political, social and economic motives, respond to the influence of globalization” (Rahman & Mehar Singh, 2020, p. 40). Given the important role of English for internationalization, universities have been implementing EMI in their courses and degree programs (Doiz et al., 2013; Dearden, 2014) by restructuring their language policies (Liddicoat, 2016; Saarinen, 2020). EMI in higher education has rapidly increased in countries around the world (Baker & Hüttner, 2019) as a strategic initiative in educational internationalization (Chen et al., 2020). Engaging with the role of English associated to the internationalization of higher education necessitates examining the sociolinguistic contexts where ELF is used in intercultural communication between local and international students (Jenkins, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2014). In the context of higher education’s pursuit of internationalization, studies of ELF in higher education institutions have mainly examined “students’ learning outcomes and intelligibility in ELF (Choi, 2020, p. 1).

The current literature shows a general agreement on the need for internationalization to include an ‘intercultural dimension’ (Crichton & Scarino, 2007, p. 1). Therefore, since intercultural communication focuses on “the importance of understanding other’s language and cultural background in order to create appropriate and effective communication” (Wello et al., 2017, p. 8), it is indeed “a core skill for students of higher education” (Brighton et al., 2019, p. 178). With regards to foreign language education in higher education, the purpose of English education should be to “equip graduates with rich linguistic competence, cross-culture communication expertise, and high political consciousness without the cost of native cultural and domestic moral ethics” (Wen, 2018). Problematic aspects of intercultural communication should be considered in the context of: “an increasingly internationalized market for higher education; the globalization of knowledge; the compatibility of distinct national higher education cultures; and the capacity for successful cross-cultural cooperation” (Bash, 2009, p. 475).

Besides the aim of achieving “marked growth in students’ confidence in using the English language for academic purposes” (Gu et al., 2010, p. 16), English education is supposed to tackle issues of culture shock and adaptation for international students in higher education (Zhou et al., 2008). The growth in the number of ‘international’ students in higher education is certainly “a phenomenon of increasing importance to educators, researchers and policymakers worldwide” (Young et al., 2013, p. 151). In particular, the relationship between the academic performance of international students and their language proficiency has been extensively researched (Benzie, 2010). Multiple studies concluded that proficiency in ELF is important for academic success (Neumann et al., 2019) Language proficiency can also contribute to adjustment (Young et al., 2013). Students tend to associate improved mastery of English with better intercultural experiences and preparation for working in international and intercultural environments (Wächter & Maiworm, 2014). Factors contributing to the success of international postgraduate students’ adjustment include intercultural competence, language proficiency, social contact and social support (Young et al., 2013).

The diversity of languages, identities and cultures present in many higher education institutions means that “we can no longer assume a connection between the language of instruction, a local host community and a national culture and language” (Baker, 2016, p. 437) because higher education institutions are often intercultural spaces with internationalizations attempts and student mobility dynamics (Liyanage, 2018). Such perspective allows for a more profound engagement with the topics of international students and cross-cultural communication education (Young & Scharfner, 2014), intercultural foreign language teaching and Learning in higher education contexts (Romanowski & Bandura, 2019) and bringing cross-cultural communication analysis into foreign language classrooms (O’Brien, 2019). For instance, the intersection of ELF, intercultural citizenship and student mobility (Fang & Baker, 2018) has shaped the “roles and conceptualisations of English and other languages in multilingual university settings” (Baker & Hüttner, 2019, p. 78).

INTERCULTURAL POWER IMBALANCES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The previous two sections have provided some context regarding the shift in perspective from essentialist consideration of intercultural communication mediated through ELF to postmodern approaches that recognize the fluidity of intercultural relations and the complex intersection of language, culture and identity. This section argues that the failure to recognize global inequities in intercultural communication in addition to the hegemonic status of the English language is likely to maintain power imbalances between Anglo-Atlantic and Southern spaces. Intercultural communication is shaped by historical colonial-like relations that favor Northern perspectives while northern knowledge, cultures and ontologies are perceived as alternative perspectives (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; R’boul, 2020b). That is why Intercultural communication education in ELT has to be developed on the basis of a critical understanding of North-South imbalances (R’boul, 2021b). The premise here is that “Language is not neutral; there is a strong yet hidden relationship between language, ideology and power relations” (Fitzgibbon, 2013, p. 2).

Current critical research on the cultural politics of English language education and its global spread has called for more critical engagement with the hegemonic implications of the spread of English as a ‘global’ language (Helm et al., 2012). For instance, enforcement of native-speaker standards and the fact that a wide number of people who study English are increasingly being influenced by Western ideology make it clear that “some EFLs tend to think that English and the associated occidental culture are superior to their native culture” (Gao, 2020, p. 3). Other scholars have suggested approaches to undermine monolingual ideology and potentially monoculture mindset in language teaching in higher education, e.g., translanguaging (Fang & Liu, 2020). On the other hand, some studies continue to consider the cultural and mental differences of the native speakers to be “a necessary condition for a successful dialogue of cultures” (Akbarov, 2019, p. 197).

The widespread use of ELF is likely to maintain power imbalances through the perpetuation of the dominance of Anglophone cultures in intercultural communication. Helm et al.’s (2012) qualitative study explored the impact of potential linguistic, technical and educational hegemonies on the learning outcomes for English language students in Hebron, Palestine, and Padova, Italy as they were participating in the Soliya Connect Program, a telecollaboration project constructed to explore critical issues that divide the ‘West’ and the ‘predominantly Arab and Muslim world’. The focus was to examine the hegemonies and the power imbalances that shape the experience of this telecollaboration project. Data

was collected using learner diaries and reflective papers, facilitator reports, and questionnaires. The findings revealed that the emergence of a third space which refers to cultural hybridity and fusion was perceived as not only a site of struggle and conflict, but also a dialogic, fluid and evolving space. The researches emphasized the role of trained facilitators in addressing power imbalances.

Liu & Fang's (2017) study investigated how English language learners' perceptions of home culture influence the social practice of intercultural communication. Data collection involved the use of questionnaires and interviews to investigate Chinese university students' awareness of their own culture and how that may influence intercultural communication. The findings show that: "1) the majority of students had a rather superficial understanding of their home culture; and 2) most students reported that perceptions and awareness of home culture play critical roles in negotiating with speakers of other backgrounds" (p. 25). The researchers argue that home culture should be used as a resource to challenge the dominance of Anglophone cultures in ELT classrooms. This can be achieved by the integration of home culture and other international cultures into the curriculum, material development and pedagogical practice.

An important element to consider is that students may be feeling inferior to an idealized native speaker model of culture and language and their intact yearning for the Imagined West (Kobayashi, 2010, p. 323). Students may be seeking to embrace an Anglophone culture that they perceive to be superior and more modern than their local cultures (R'boul, 2020c). This fact is not only a manifestation of power imbalances but also another step in the entanglement of linguistic and culture dependency which would perpetuate the colonial-like relations in intercultural communication. Moreover, the teaching of English as a second or foreign language has always integrated some aspects of cultural information, but "the full and rather complex nature of cross-cultural and intercultural communication has not always been an explicit pedagogical focus" (O'Brien, 2019, p. 71). Therefore, it is necessary to develop English language education that "questions how practices of dominant language groups reproduce unequal relations of power that may hinder educational opportunities for language learners" (Chamberlin-Quinlisk & Senyshyn, 2012, p. 16).

In the context of higher education, these issues are of significant importance as universities are often intercultural spaces where students and teachers belong to different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. If English language education in higher education fails to reflect critical engagement with power imbalances and intercultural relations, southern students would be subject to overlapping systems of privilege and marginalization. Furthermore, students are likely to work in multicultural environments, that is why having a mindset that favors Anglophone knowledge and practices would also influence their future experiences. Importantly, assuming that English language education is simple, benign and meant to develop students' linguistic competence is an approach that would contribute to the maintenance of power imbalances. Higher education institutes and ELT theory and praxis have been dominated by Anglophone perspectives (Kromydas, 2017). This means that without active and critical consideration of the range of issues that may contribute to the global inequalities, ELT in higher education would contribute to these power imbalances between northern and southern contexts.

English language education that is informed by current scholarship on power imbalances in intercultural communication is a form of foreign language teaching that does not reproduce the uneven power relationship between Western and southern countries. Interculturally competent language teachers will recognize that "language learning as embedded within culturally complex systems and allow their students to define their own place in these activities" (Chamberlin-Quinlisk & Senyshyn, 2012, p. 19-20). Linguistic imperialism is a threat arising from the global spread of English and its status as a lingua franca which can limit linguistic diversity in universities (Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019), that is why language

teachers should try to “empower their students so that English does not exert a hegemonic influence over local cultures” (Ljungdahl, 2004, p. 3-4). Because “classroom instruction offered only limited channels for students to experience and understand intercultural communication and citizenship” (Fang & Baker, 2018, p. 608-609), teachers are expected to construct their practices in a way that questions long-continued global inequalities. Also, teachers should be mindful of the type of intercultural information that their materials and practices deliver, especially the kind that is conveyed implicitly.

In practical terms, as a first step, teachers should analyze the level of cultural diversity present in their classrooms and what type of power imbalances come into play between them and students as well as among the students themselves. Then, it is up to the teacher to design courses and activities that meaningfully consider global inequalities and try to undermine them or at least not reproduce them over the course of the lesson. Moreover, teachers can aim at developing students’ meta-awareness of their beliefs and the conditions that frame their interactions with culturally different others. Since university students are adults who have an advanced level of cognitive development due to their age and knowledge, it is feasible to remind students that intercultural relations are imbalanced especially those mediated through English. The domination of a particular linguistic pattern can be seen as a reflection of a process of coloniality that entangles southern spaces’ linguistic dependency. Importantly, English language education in higher education should not be simply about teaching grammar and communication. Higher education institutes are spaces of critical thinking and further profound engagement with societal issues. That is why ELT could make use of other theories and ideas that are discussed in sociology and international relations which provide various dimensions of intercultural encounters and the global spread of English which a typical class of English teaching would consider to be out of its scope. For instance, teachers could draw on the postcolonial theory that provides multiple accounts of enduring colonial structures and skewed geopolitics of knowledge influence intercultural communication. Also, higher education institutes are not similar in their orientations, framework and goals. It is important to situate the discussion on English language education, intercultural communication and power imbalances within context-dependent conditions. Institutions in the global south are quite different from those in the global north in terms of cultural diversity, level of internationalization and their appeal to international students. Therefore, it is indeed a matter of analyzing the respective classroom within its wider context. Teachers should develop lessons and activities that account for the specificities of that classroom and its wider context. This way, instructional decisions would be informed by the sociocultural and sociopolitical conditions of both students and the contexts in relation to other countries.

Interculturality is complex and the use of ELF in intercultural communication further problematizes how intercultural relations are handled. The intersections of issues of power, language and culture necessitate teachers of English to avoid advancing simplistic understandings of interculturality that may reproduce power imbalances and colonial-like relations between northern and southern contexts. Although the task of undermining global inequalities is unachievable through a number of lessons, teachers should make sure that their instruction is not another step in favoring Anglophone cultures over less popular cultures which could result in forcing students to abandon their own cultures and perspectives to embrace other cultural identities that are considered modern and superior. English language education is not a series of pedagogies that aim at developing students’ linguistic competence. It should be perceived as a discipline that might be highly influential as it can contribute to the perpetuation of power imbalances or raising individuals’ awareness of how global inequalities shape intercultural relations. The goal is to consider English learning as an intercultural experience that must involve developing a critical understanding of power imbalances and intercultural relations.

CONCLUSION

The dominance of English and its use as a lingua franca in intercultural encounters have significant implications for language education. With the growing trend of internationalization of higher education (Galloway et al, 2017), universities across the globe have been increasingly embracing “English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in their curriculums and teaching in various disciplines (e.g. engineering, medicine and architecture)” (Yuan et al., 2020, p.). The equation of English with internationalization might entail monolingual English ideology in international EMI programs (e.g. Dippold, 2015; Doiz et al., 2013; Jenkins, 2014; Liddicoat, 2016). In learning ELF multilingual and multicultural classroom, culture holds important status since the lingua franca not only mediates communication between language teachers and multilingual students, but also represents an important source for navigating intercultural relations. In the context of higher education, cultural connections enable “students to engage in social and interactive activities and allow them to become active participants of the multilingual classroom” (Csillik, 2019, p. 1).

Linguistic competence is not enough as it needs to be complemented with deep intercultural competence. The main question here is how English language educators can “help language learners to develop increasingly sophisticated linguistic and intercultural knowledge and skills and apply them in other courses and experiences so as to enact their intercultural citizenship in the here and now?” (Byram & Wagner, 2018, p. 140). ELT in higher education needs to draw on the complex interplay of globalization, power imbalances, linguistic imperialism, interculturality and global spread of English in relation to power, culture, and language. This includes a call for “the further understanding and embracement of socio-politically sensitive and ideologically informed approaches to ELT theory, research, and practice” (Mirhosseini, 2018, p. 19).

Postmodern approaches to intercultural communication recognize that the use of ELF in highly multilingual and multicultural settings entails fluid and complex linguistic and cultural practices. On account of these understandings, Baker & Sangiamchit (2019) argue that “a transcultural perspective provides a significant new dimension to research in which borders between languages, communities and cultures are transcended, transgressed and transformed” (p. 471). Another important element to consider is the use of English in higher education and how it may entail a power-infused relationship among students and between students and teachers. Academic programs should equip students with not only proficiency in foreign languages and cultures but also an awareness of power imbalances and cross-cultural understanding. There is a need to incorporate intercultural communicative competence into academic programs in order to “produce graduates who are well-equipped and prepared for multilingual and multicultural working environments” (Jhaiyanuntana & Nomnian, 2020, p. 204-205). English language education should avoid the simplistic representation of culture and language in order to contribute to more successful and balanced intercultural communication. This is particularly important to the experiences of international students (Andrade, 2009) with regards to their level of adjustment and adaptation (Gill, 2007; Young & Schartner, 2014).

While the usual aim of intercultural English language education is to develop in students’ “the ability to get by in a multicultural society, where none of the speakers who interact may have the language they use as their mother language and all bring to the interaction their own cultural background” (Aguilar, 2009, p. 253), power imbalances is an issue that renders intercultural communication unequal in the sense that Southern individuals have to reflect the language, culture and the perspective of northern contexts. English language education offers the possibility of undermining the reflection of power imbalances

in intercultural relations and linking intercultural experience to education (Alred, 2003). Moreover, the global spread of the English language can be linked to linguistic imperialism where “English becomes dominant at the expense of indigenous languages. The spread of English may marginalise other languages since English can be a gatekeeper to education, employment, business opportunities and popular culture” (Ljungdahl, 2004, p. 3).

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Colonial-Like Relations: Refers to imbalanced intercultural relations that are shaped by the superiority of northern spaces and the inferiority of southern perspective which results in relations that resemble those of colonizer and colonized.

English as a Lingua Franca: Refers to the use of English to mediate intercultural encounters between two people who do not speak the same native language.

English as a Medium of Instruction: Is the use of English as the language of teaching and instruction; it involves delivering courses in English along with providing textbooks and materials in English.

Intercultural Communication: Is a category of communication that involves interlocutors belonging to different cultural backgrounds.

Intercultural English Language Education: Is a framework that recognizes the need to develop users of English who are able to interculturally function in multicultural contexts. Therefore, instructional practices draw on theories on interculturality and seek to develop students' intercultural abilities.

Internationalization of Higher Education: Is the integration of the international dimension in higher education institutions through the worldwide flow of ideas, resources, ideas and people. It usually involves the recruitment of international students and expanding universities' presence by establishing international campuses.

Northern Spaces: In geographical terms, it refers to the Northern hemisphere that includes Europe and North America. In this chapter, northern spaces refer to those countries that have power in terms of economy and power. The global North is used here as a state of possession rather than a geographical region.

Power Imbalances: Refers to the unequal distribution of power in terms of economic resources and global status.

Southern Spaces: Commonly refers to southern hemisphere that includes Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In this chapter, it refers to a state of dispossession. It stands for those countries that economically developing and do not hold a significant status in global affairs. These are usually contrasted with northern spaces, but its inclusion of some contexts is not definite as their terms are sometimes questioned and contested.