English as Harmony Catalyst: Language, Identity, and Intercultural Dialogue

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Abstract

The English language makes communication, identification, and interaction easier. It also promotes harmony among people. Human uses of language involve a dynamic exchange of meanings through symbolic systems. The use of any language directly influences how people construct their identities and build relationships. When engaging in a specific communication event, social processes help shape identities. English is a widely accessible language in multilingual settings, enabling people to access knowledge from cultures around the world. Intercultural relations are embedded in the communication process and influence body language, concepts, dress, food, habits, music, rituals, values, and local dialects. These cultural features become more diverse and pronounced, so much so that a person's original cultural traits are seen as remnants of the past- features that are fading in the globalised world.

Keywords: English, Harmony, Identity, Intercultural dialogue, Language

1. Introduction

English worldwide as a global language will help the linguistic community to realise the wealth of many tongues. A considerable amount of theoretical and empirical work shows that people communicate in English in multilingual settings in ways that construct their identity and enhance communication.

The ideas of language as identity and of intercultural dialogue present English as an instrument for inclusive and flexible exchange. Interactions show people's desire to reason, which corresponds with social values. Just because the parties agree does not imply harmony. Harmony involves complex, dynamic interactions among the parties. This means allocating tasks among participants, ensuring

diversity of languages and cultures alongside global integration, and promoting mutual understanding by being seen as fair and direct in English expression (Wang et al., 2012).

Language is arguably the most important way people express their identity. When people use a certain language or language variant, they, consciously or unconsciously, instantiate and align with social meaning, symbolic pouvoir, and identity positions. Lopriore (2018) notes that, rather than being fixed and stable, identities are in constant evolution through processes of creation, negotiation, and recreation. An in-depth exploration of the language-identity link provides a better understanding of the role English plays for individuals and society as a whole. In today's world of increasing connectedness, sharing and understanding cultural elements and values are essential for the coexistence of local identities and global outreach. The importance of being aware of and engaging with cultural differences is growing. Intercultural dialogue is communication that encourages discussion among people and cultures to foster mutual understanding and coexistence. This dialogue takes the form of narrative, translation, practical knowledge exchange, and collaborative knowledge creation, among other methods.

Everyone strives for harmony and peace in this chaotic world. Communication is a very powerful process that can show harmony among people. could help learners see how English adds value to communication, identity, and intercultural exchanges.

2. Conceptual Foundations

Language is not only a mode of communication, but it also plays a vital role in identity formation. Cultural exchanges create social processes that allow individual and social groups to develop their linguistic identities. The choices made within our communicative repertoires, or the selection and arrangement of styles, practices or modes, seem to entail processes, whether intended or not, all of which are part of communication.

As the world becomes more interconnected, intercultural dialogue has become a vital area of scholarly study. In today's globalised environment, understanding the linguistic requirements for intercultural dialogue is increasingly important. Beyond analysing specific language varieties and expressions, attention has shifted toward the broader idea of English as a global lingua franca (ELF). Ignoring the significance of ELF limits the analysis of the linguistic conditions necessary for dialogue in the modern world. If English is seen only as a global

language, its linguistic needs are limited. However, when English is understood as a transnational communication and cultural practice, the relevant linguistic skills and reasoning change significantly.

Language forms a fundamental part of what it means to be human. Social interactions not only create sociocultural contexts where people influence routines, rules, and expectations of themselves and others, but also simultaneously shape the development of self and identity each time a text or discourse is produced (Hudkins, 2017). As a social construct arising from historical and contextual factors, individuals highlight specific linguistic traits from the range of what is imaginable, based on various contextual parameters. Language leaves traces of everyday life that influence individuals' experiences across different contexts.

2.1. Language, Identity, and Social Situatedness

The notion of social situatedness as an analytical tool highlights the relationship between language and identity through multilingual discourse and translingual practices in plurilingual contexts. Social situatedness refers to how social contexts influence the kinds of language varieties drawn upon to construct identities and language. The main point is that multilingual people do not simply choose between languages. Rather, they make code choices based on the social groups they want to identify with and the social characteristics they want to project. The code choices involve different uses along language, dialect, style, or genre. These are often called a repertoire. As such, repertoires connect social setting, agency, and belonging by showing how one navigates a social environment and projects or evokes a desired identity. The repertoire each individual has contains different styles, registers and languages which form a unique yet socially recognisable assemblage. No repertoire, however, is socially legitimate per se or permanently so. Rather, what constitutes a socially legitimate repertoire is open to change and may either enable or constrain people's communicative agency (Fisher et al., 2020).

The analysis of language choice is a key area of research for understanding how identity is formed through language in multilingual and translingual settings. Language choice still signals a speaker's identity even in well-studied multilingual environments such as urban North America and South Africa, which feature extensive and highly inventive code-switching and language mixing. This analysis complements the study of code-switching by examining which languages and dialects are used to

support identity work, while also considering the use of other semiotic resources, such as gesture, transmodal scaling, and spatial recontextualization. This type of analysis remains relevant globally, as seen in multilingual "African" rap, where English is often used- frequently as part of multilingual code-mixing- to signify the prestige associated with globalised modernity.

2.2. Intercultural Dialogue in a Globalised World

Globalisation has made intercultural dialogue more urgent and complex. The different ways intercultural engagement can occur can be seen in two contrasting – though not necessarily opposing – perspectives: as an inclusive ideal of interconnectedness and cosmopolitanism (Pece, 2016) and as a more practical focus on either functional communication or workplace efficiency (Rizk, 2013). This distinction helps manage tensions around English across various contexts and illuminates its current role within power-laden networks.

When English is used as a 'global language' or 'international language', it is often understood to function as a linear vehicle connecting global knowledge produced and subsequently transmitted in national languages. Knowledge of English is often referred to as 'knowledge' or 'competence'. Even when this knowledge is mentioned, it is positioned as secondary, with subject-matter knowledge framed as flowing through English. Stories showing how people can act on their wishes or become globally relevant are coming to the fore. Such cases are nonetheless rare. On the other hand, in contexts where attention shifts from global to local, various strata become visible, and English is perceived differently. Interventions cover more than just English; they encompass other languages and modes, so that English can be a widely understood lingua franca, supporting linking across boundaries without full standardisation.

2.3. Harmony as a Valued Communicative Ideal

Harmony, deriving from the Chinese term hexie, is a valued communicative ideal in diverse contexts, including China, Asia, and the global diasporas of both. It is sometimes also referred to as "harmonious" in translation. Such a perspective encourages the establishment of relations and inclusiveness among people. The notion of harmony extends beyond social domains, encompassing concepts such as culture and nature, as well as materials beyond the physically perceivable. Harmony is thus an ethical position that shapes the world of being and being-in-the-world. In interactions, harmony has been associated with enhancing social

connections and decreasing social distance among interlocutors (Wang et al., 2012). In China, a harmonious society is a national goal, and harmony is the highest moral value, shaping not only interpersonal exchanges but also the nation's tone, culture, ideology, and philosophy. The endorsed view of Chinese characters as the world's best writing system thus embodies the elements of embracing, proximity, and intelligent material.

The standpoint of harmony, through which individuals are always pushed toward the best state of conciliation, reflects both personal and public social forces. A smoother exchange and better communication channel among individuals are assumed to be elevated, governed, and even compelled towards such a frame in discourse construction and language use. Adopting a particular style or proposing choices and coordination methods may lead to a more harmonious and pleasant environment. Harmony, regarded as a national cornerstone, serves to protect China's sovereignty and maintain national strategic tranquillity in global affairs.

3. Historical Trajectories of English as a Global Language

English is widely regarded as a global language today. The concept of a global language, according to David Crystal, entails "a language which has acquired a genuinely international status, and which is widely studied and used in a range of international contexts" (Qasim Al-Tarawneh, 2014). The history of English as a global language can be studied in three main timelines: the spread of English during the colonial period, its transformation from a colonial to a postcolonial language, and its emergence as a global language after World War II. The first of these expansive periods is associated with political power and colonisation, while the latter two have been linked to cultural power and cultural exchange. This focus on historical trajectories is essential to English studies today, given the current hardships English-speaking communities around the world face, including language survival and preservation. Without an understanding of the extensive histories behind the global spread of English today, it is unlikely that they will remain aware of societal challenges facing formerly colonised countries in the future.

The modern English language emerged in the early Middle Ages, around 450 A.D., and began spreading to other regions of the world around the end of the fifteenth century. Between 1492 and 1810, during the first phase of colonisation, the English language

spread across the Americas, Oceania, and the southernmost part of Africa, as Britain was the only coloniser at the time. Countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were first British colonies and, as such, became places for international trade and the spread of English. Roughly at the time of their shift to the colonial status of the United Kingdom, investigations were conducted into the realities of English in various countries around the world and the sociolinguistic phenomena that often occur there. The British Empire's rise saw the creation of cultural centres across the world, playing a role in the gradual transformation of English from an imperialistic to a post-imperial global language.

3.1. Colonial Legacies and Postcolonial Reconfigurations

English became the language of the world. It was used to access information and communicate with people of different languages. The evolution of the World Wide Web (or simply the web) began during the colonial period, entailing political control and all-encompassing cultural traffic. The legacy of colonialism continues in postcolonial afterlives, transcolonial transformations and neo-colonial tensions. Different language policies have emerged in the last decade, framed as English Language Teaching. Policies motivated by

neoliberalism often prioritise compliance over democracy. The top-down language regimes (rather than 'managements') that restrict student choice can become impediments to collaborative knowledge-making, which is so closely associated with 21st-century learning (Cimarosti, 2015).

3.2. Euphonies of Language Contact and Hybridisation

English, as a global language, has undergone profound changes in colonial and postcolonial settings. The historical trajectories of English as a global language illustrate that linguistic transformations in specific languages do not result from colonisation itself but rather from the specificities of a country's sociopolitical and cultural landscape. Indeed, the contemporary development of English is influenced not only by the colonial past but also by postcolonial dynamics that shift allegiances and political choices, leading to new forms of English. Colonisation and decolonisation may also be examined from a different angle. English plays a greater role in mediating the communication process between the local variety of another language and French, reflecting a translingual approach that favours the reassessment of local and global languages. English operates within hybrid discursive structures and channels of multilingualism and

translingualism used by migrants as both identity markers and means of cultural exchange. English occupies an intermediate status in colonial and territorial relationships. The power of English lies in its broader globalisation process, which cannot be reduced to a monodimensional relationship between colonisers and colonised but rather follows a multidimensional interplay of power that goes beyond the mere geographical dimension.

Colonised subjects often explicitly resisted the imposition of English. Instead, the reinscription of English as a postcolonial language represented an implicit recognition of its power. However, the authors themselves considered it a lingua franca, a neutral tool, or a medium to promote the original local language and elite education worldwide. Linguistic hybridisation is a typical feature of contemporary English worldwide and provides stakeholders with a window to opt for the vanilla style rather than local encodings or hybrid forms. Globalisation is underpinned by power relations that articulate centralised and decentralised dynamics. Migrants constantly negotiate their identities through their conceptual repertoire and, through their life experiences, localise the trajectories of their mobility through the lens of their own cultural environment. Intransitivity

highlights the grassroots and bottom-up movements of the profound institutional changes initially.

4. English and Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence refers to attitudes, knowledge, and skills facilitating effective communication among people from different cultural backgrounds (Aguilar Pérez, 2018). Language competence, moreover, includes mastering a language's phonetics, phonology, vocabulary, and grammar, while communicative competence entails linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic knowledge (Marie Lowrey, 2019). Intercultural competence extends beyond language mastery to encompass contextual factors such as beliefs, perceptions, values, and attitudes. These competencies may combine in diverse communicative repertoires, enabling individuals to adapt to multicultural participants and negotiate cultural boundaries fluidly. Similar assets influence how Kachruvian concentric circles apply and how multilinguals draw on their languages within stable yet dynamic multilingual communities.

Language contact, hybridisation, and musicality (euphonies) constitute sociolinguistic phenomena in societies that modify social repertoires.

Multilingual skills remain essential for navigating plurilingual settings, coping with differing cultural and communicative norms, making choices at one's own level of participation and possession, and closely attending to the other to tune, adjust, and share. English fosters dialogue across cultures by amplifying narratives, translation, and mediation as meaning-making strategies that link people and enable cultural relationship-building while linking languages. Successful co-creation emerges from intercultural teams, globally devoted engagement, and hybrid repositories uniting social, cultural, and scientific techniques, logics, and sensibilities.

4.1. Multilingual Skills and Pragmatic Adaptability

English users continually refine their ability to express themselves in contextually appropriate ways. The concept of multilingualism encompasses the capacity to employ multiple languages. Such languages can involve widely spoken international vernaculars or regional varieties informally deemed as "languages." However, multilingualism also comprises the ability to draw from a range of linguistic, semiotic, discursive, and social practices typically associated with different persons and communities. Such a multiplicity can be regarded as a communicative resource to achieve varied social purposes. These include enacting different identities, indexing different stances toward others and the communicative situation, providing background information, fulfilling instrumental or aesthetic desires, and shaping engagement relative to the interaction's topics (Sousa, 2009).

Multilingual communicative configurations arise when users navigate social contexts in which their use of conventions associated with one variety of a "language" can evoke other persons and entities. Persons engaging in intercultural dialogue may share the entire contact zone of concerns, practices, resources, idioms, symbols, concepts, and references available across earlier stages of their development. The competent and responsible user seeks to maximise the potential for productive intercultural collaboration within the inevitably limited circumscription of such a configuration (Martín Laguna & Alcón, 2018).

4.2. Ethnographic Perspectives on Language Use

The interactions of emergent multilingual communities provide new ethnographic insights into everyday language use and the social realities and interactional norms of their inhabitants. Arabic dialects and a youth code are discussed, opening avenues for inquiry

into sociolinguistic mobility, inno-vation, and translocal networks. In homes where multiple languages are spoken, they speak Urdu, Punjabi, and other languages, along with English and French, as they enact language attitudes, identity work, and their associated capital. The use of different dialects, styles, and a rich diversity of linguistic repertoires through indexicality conveys the speaker's relative power relations, migratory trajectories, and access to resources. It orients to ideologies that engender both global, relational mobility and local rootedness. When members of a community translate together, that cooperation stretches beyond an intercultural encounter to become instead a practice through which belonging is further elaborated and hybrid identities constructed (Chaparro, 2014).

4.3. Policy Implications for Education and Migration

The commitment to English remains potent in many countries, such as Lebanon and Italy, where the language's global status is both appreciated and contested (Rizk, 2013). Various socio-historical processes shape language learning and use in diverse contexts (Kilpi-Jakonen & Alisaari, 2022). Several key policy implications, therefore, emerge. Those wishing to prioritise a commitment to English as a harmony-

catalyst should consider the following proposals:

(1) make language policy recommendations explicit in education plans;

(2) evaluate both social and academic languages and how modes of language relate holistically; and

(3) Embrace equity-oriented engagement with alternative vernacular choices through language practices that extend beyond English.

Some groups championing languages other than English are, in fact, working toward the same basic aims of equitably distributing power and affording people access to their basic and shared human rights. Demonstrating solidarity with such groups can enhance cross-harmony and broaden the base of allies capable of working together toward building wider harmony.

5. Identity Formation in Multilingual Contexts

The upkeep of a community is usually closely tied to its language. While individuals can hold multiple identities that overlap, flourish, or conflict with one another, a shared language holds people together. Concepts of agency, creativity, and identities cultivated through languages are susceptible to change. The clustering of languages is influenced by

several factors, including the continual evolution of societies (Fisher et al., 2020). Language policies often centre on languages rather than speakers, and languages are often perceived to make place through the "productivity" of creativity, which continues with requests to "bring the world along".

In multilingual or translingual settings, people often resort to a wide range of semiotic and linguistic resources, utilising these resources of language through the stance taken on iconic representations and through resonance, or the absence of it; they hold different identities and cultures. The full range of multilingual resources, within and outside linguistic systems, contributes to and changes, or at least acts upon, agency, for agency is increasingly perceived to emerge in relation to the multitude of semiotic and linguistic resources available to society. Since the advent of the internet, new technologies also played a role in enhancing agency.

5.1. Agency, Prestige, and Language Attitudes

Considerable research examines the relationships among language, identity, and multilingualism. Much of this work has emerged from different theoretical backgrounds (sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, sociocultural linguistics, etc.). It has addressed a range of language modalities and communicative acts (spoken, written, socially mediated, etc.). Even so, several scholarly works establish a clear connection between the notion of language-as-identity and what is often referred to as social situatedness.

Social situatedness refers to the ongoing, dynamic relationship between the speaker and the social context, or context-of-use, in which the communicative act takes place: the relationship among the speaker's positioning, the meaning of the communicative acts produced, and the type of social context in which the acts occur. The situational context-of-use varies in many dimensions, with relevance to identity-formation activities. Important situatedness variables include: — the speaking style of the speaker (formal, informal, casual, etc.); — the social scale of the context of use (micro, meso, macro, etc.); — the power relationship between the speaker and other participants; and — the social change that is taking place at the same time.

Both harmony and agency thus emerge as critical to understanding the role of English in multilingual contexts. In the context of a harmonious communicative practice, agency becomes less about the ability to make independent, autonomous choices. It rather involves the ability to take up, navigate, and articulate the various opportunities and

constraints available in a given situated context. In contexts where agency is perceived to be lost, the result is often a turn towards more restrictive, simplified modes of English without local adaptations (Gurrutxaga Etxeberria, 2018; Rizk, 2013).

5.2. Digital Communication, Social Media, and Community Building

Interactions between individuals concerning their various identities and differing levels of linguistic skill are commonplace in non-institutionalised media; however, they offer an overlooked perspective on digital intercultural dialogue. The immediacy and publicity inherent in the above platform often lead users to negotiate not only cultural and personal identities but also a wide-ranging intercultural recapitulation (Diana Deris & Rahim Salam, 2017). The manner in which assistance, restraint, or magnification of the agentive trajectory of the self results in an understanding of English as a world language. The comedy, politics and everyday intention inscribed on the wall overwhelmingly reveal how people strive to come together through multilingual practices that allow for distribution, whether for the aim of individual community, social-regional sameness or global reach (S. Pfister & Soliz, 2011).

6. Mechanisms of Intercultural Dialogue fostered by English

Intercultural dialogue is the right practice in today's world, which is increasingly interpenetrated and requires understanding other cultures. Working together is so much easier because English allows people to get together in all kinds of ways. It is important to communicate and interact across cultures, especially for projects that aim to involve communities (Gregory Keller, 2011). In this context, we generate meaning together through stories, translations, and mediations. Experiences of meaning-making anchor English to action, strengthening connections. Also, knowledge can be gathered when documents or other materials are shared. Setting up intercultural teams will take the co-creation process further. The widespread use of tools and the establishment of shared collections of practices are seen as important components of intercultural dialogue.

6.1. Narratives, Translation, and Mediation

Due to its versatility, lingua franca status, and global reach, the English language is used in a variety of imaginative pieces (stories) in both local and global contexts. Narrative frames serve both as an analytical framework structuring retold

experiences and as a vehicle for mediating a concrete lived moment within a range of contexts. The English language is central not only to the contents of narratives but also to the forms rhetorical, aesthetic, or stylistic through which social experiences are articulated and circulated. Further, narratives may connect, mobilise, and give visibility to issues that resonate across cultural, ethnic, and political domains at various geographical scales. When we tell stories, we are simultaneously engaging in a shared conversation, not just about the 'what' of the story but the 'how' of the story. Once considered a passive form of communication, translation is now emerging in translation studies as a site of negotiation and mediation…(Catenaccio, 2016) As translation entails processes involving the difficulties posed by transposition and adaptation, rather than aiming at unqualified fidelity, and therefore plays a key role in the transfer and incorporation of knowledge between different communities, English provides a good example to discuss. The use of English as a first or primary language still opens up avenues for translingual, hybrid, and fusion experiments for better local and global communication. Narratives serve as memory banks that provide a shared framework for tackling social problems. In contrast, in the space

of translated texts, the presence of multiple codes allows speakers to engage with others beyond their own communicative repertoire. In all of these cases, English facilitates individuals' discursive engagement with various communities and furthers dialogue on local and global social issues, as well as cultural and political ones.

6.2. Collaborative Knowledge-Making Across Cultures

Initially, collaborative knowledge-making through English is considered in terms of co-creation, intercultural teams, and shared repertoires; these elements are analysed in relation to culture and the specification of the collaborative-space concept. The collaborative-space dimension is subsequently elaborated through a consideration of educational opportunities that explicitly prompt co-creation in local collaborations to galvanise collaborative knowledge-making across cultures.

Media and technology in globally connected societies invite spontaneous co-creation of knowledge across cultures, creating opportunities for collaborative knowledge-making through English. Collaborative knowledge-making concepts include co-creation (the joint creation of knowledge and artefacts), intercultural teams (temporary groups formed to collaborate across cultures), and shared repertoires (knowledge and

artefacts contributed that are considered relevant to the collaborative space). Collaborative, across-cultures knowledge-making through English thus occurs across local, regional, and global knowledge-making spaces. Societal shifts towards increased mobility and connectivity exacerbate trends towards collaborative knowledge-making through English.

Language practices that involve co-creation vary in levels of formality and institutionalisation. Educational opportunities that prompt co-creation in local collaborations can galvanise across-cultures collaborative knowledge-making in English. (X Bonilla Medina et al., 2009)

7. Challenges and Tensions

Though English may bring people together, it does not. The rich use of English distorts markets, with majority-language speakers (like Spanish) having less market power. The gap in English access between and within countries further contributes to a digital divide, which, in turn, excludes certain marginalised language communities from participation in discourses and from access to online resources (K. Sarroub et al., 2012). When English is framed as a global lingua franca, it creates an illusion of fair distribution like language-as-identity. In contrast, paying attention to the social, geographical, and digital divides highlights the diversity of ideas and views that have until now hardly been communicated (Colarusso, 2010). Such differences can be fought through ethical language policies, educational reforms, and digitisation measures.

The second challenge lies between cultural uniformity and pluralism. While some worry that the dominance of English further marginalises indigenous languages, other experts argue that new English varieties support the vitality of cultures. Many strategies exist to resist hegemonic forces and preserve linguistic diversity, although there is no single, clearly defined design or theory (H. Chenowith, 2014). Campaigns that are based primarily on popular languages – such as English and Mandarin – rather than on a myriad of lesser-used languages can influence and create opportunities for the transfer of culture, as already occurs in colonised spaces. Getting a dose of English content and global mass and social media appears to energise, revive, and diffuse local cultural materials, styles, and processes related to hybridity as a dynamic cultural practice.

These considerations rest on the need for ethics. Exploration of harmony within the personal, institutional, and communal spheres has to date avoided

the social justice issue, but language ideologies embody ethical dimensions concerning representation, consent, and bias.

7.1. Linguistic Inequality and Access

English occupies an unequal position in the world, which often gives rise to asymmetries and inequities that accompany the imposition of linguistic hierarchies. The concentration of state resources on promoting Standard English has denied people access to non-standard language varieties, leading them to misconstrue their language use as "bad English" and to view themselves as inherently inferior. Multimodal, multiliteracy, and multiliteracies movements have identified avenues for fostering inclusion and co-building understandings of language that emphasise individual agency rather than proficiency. Movements such as One Laptop Per Child and One Laptop Per Teacher advocate for the provision of low-cost laptops to institutions unable to afford sets of devices, linking local programs to global initiatives and thereby creating opportunities for people to participate in broader dialogues around education and the use of digital technologies (Chaparro, 2014) and to remain connected to local networks alongside transnational dynamics. Such initiatives highlight linguistic inequities that accompany the digital divide,

demonstrate interest in local languages and forms of expression alongside English, and affirm that the language used to connect across boundaries varies according to local sociocultural contexts and cannot be predetermined (Marie Lowrey, 2019).

7.2. Cultural Homogenization versus Pluralism

Cultural homogenization implies a determination of existence tied to the prevailing sameness everywhere, discrediting the specific and the unique (Rizk, 2013). It is, therefore, on the part of all societies, an attitude of precaution and refusal in the face of the impossibility of remaining different that becomes a source of vitality, renewal, and curiosity about the new. Cultural homogenising pressure implies the marginalisation of a differentiated national community struggling to remain. One encounters a proliferation of resistance to French cultural liberalism.

Plurality neither presupposes a localised contextualization of cultural creation nor forecloses a trans- or supralocal dimension, permitting the existence of diverse constellations coexisting and interacting in balance and unevenness, for example, movements that adhere first to a national language and context before operating beyond when conversed about the movement itself. Cultural dynamics, generically characterised by the locus

and focus of recreation, activate mobility, permanence, convergence, and divergence without conflating into recurrent trends and stable framing patterns of time and space, or into the ideologies of time and space. Creators are empowered to project cultural works into a pool of collectively defined publicities, gaining acclaim across constituencies of followers devoted to a specified aspect of the original agenda and often spurring hasty cloning by others.

7.3. Ethical Considerations in Language Ideologies

Language ideologies rooted in the historical, political and socio-economic structures shape language practices and cultural inclusions and exclusions. The language they use determines the accessibility of the language and the representation of the speakers in those spaces, e.g., in South Africa, the language is one of the major identity markers in the fight against oppression. The specific use of specific languages in specific contexts elicits language ideologies and reflects responses (E. Antia & Dyers, 2016). Individuals interpret these ideologies, either consciously or unconsciously. Language ideologies are the way through which political ideologies that support or oppose multilingual recognition are materialised. Language ideologies heavily impact language

practices and pedagogies in Kenyan classrooms. By unpacking these ideologies, one gains insight into the linguistic and epistemic inequalities pervading educational systems (Kananu Kiramba, 2018). The way languages, peoples, and cultures are taught may construct, challenge, or transform existing representations. These representations are often mapped through monolingual ideologies of education, which limit whatever is recognised as a language to systems denoted by particular codes (Kostogriz & Doecke, 2008).

8. Methodological Approaches

Language, identity, intercultural dialogue: a complex field and finding the connections between these different elements constitutes a unique challenge. The idea of having a communication-oriented approach is based on Bakhtin, who argued that language is more than mere thought. It suggests that the ideal of harmonious, ethically responsible communication is both theoretically interesting and ethically imperative.

According to the social situatedness of language, all language practices used by multilingual people, both in terms of languages and styles, are relevant to the construction of identity strategies. As multilingual repertoires grow, so do the chances that language practices will be

used to construct identities. The circumstances of language and identity in multilingual settings do not only deserve investigation through frameworks of ideology or competence appended to the subject, but also as a focus in their own right.

8.1. Mixed Methods in Language and Identity Research

Mixed-methods studies are increasingly attracting attention in linguistics for opening up walls to address complex questions with multiple perspectives and the lived experiences of individuals in casual interactions and formal educational settings. When researching language and identity, data from varying scales, e.g. respondents and modalities, can simultaneously inform, enrich, triangulate and clarify the analytical work and the insights produced (Gabryś-Barker, 2019). The use of this approach as a viable means to investigate language and identity development within a culturally mixed, linguistically hybridised milieu thus continues to open opportunities for more penetrating investigations of various situated understandings. We can characterise the current context by the constantly growing number of newcomers. That brings other languages and cultural backgrounds into regular contact and school practices.

The approach taken in recent studies integrates a narrative and a participatory perspective, acknowledging the influence of language on cultural narratives of identity and the need to support students in becoming active owners of their own intercultural exchanges through conscious reflexivity in language learning. Each of the two core studies employs a distinctive design, combining narrative-oriented material with the language prompt 'English is…', and then taps into students' meanings, reflections, and experiences through different methods, to document the role of English in various multilingual conditions and environments and trace the ways that students navigate the channels, shapes, forms, attitudes, and linguistic supplies drawn upon in their exchanges. Such articulations thus remain pertinent in multi-actor settings where individual educational trajectories involve the co-presence of established formal learning routes and parallel self-led studies situated outside the mainstream education system and acquired through non-institutionalised exposure.

8.2. Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Conversation Analysis (CA) are two analytical approaches that examine interactions from different angles. All

three approaches have their own distinct procedures and theoretical commitments but endorse a Fact–Action–Meaning (FAM) model of interpretation. CDA examines how social conditions shape discourse and, in turn, how discourse shapes social relations. CDA is interested in the relationships among language, power, and ideology. At the micro-level of conversation analysis, much of the focus is on how speakers collaboratively build social meaning. When one takes a multi-layered approach to something like a conversation, CDA and CA offer insights into how language, identity, and intercultural exchange are dialogically mediated.

CDA is a multidisciplinary approach that examines the connections between discourse, social science, and human cognition, exploring how textual and spoken communication conveys cultural and societal knowledge. It focuses on the interplay between discourse, society, culture, subjective understanding, and representations of social groups and power. CDA connects language production and comprehension to real-life social phenomena, examining how social circumstances—actors, contexts, practices, and institutional settings—are represented in discourse. As a socially situated semiotic resource, discourse provides a vehicle for enacting power and maintaining social inequalities. In this view, language is not merely a descriptive instrument; it enacts, constitutes, confirms, and legitimises social relations and power. Discourse participates in social life by endowing the social world with meaning, establishing and maintaining social identities, and constituting groups and their social roles. Ideas and words position speakers in relation to the world and to one another; they author oneself and others.

8.3. Longitudinal Perspectives

Data collection can take place at different times over a certain period. The first aspect focuses on changes over time in the emergence, expansion, establishment, and consolidation of intercultural dialogue activities within the concerned communities. Depending on the selected time period, the levels and types of intercultural dialogue engagement are observable (Frimberger, 2016). Each community may adopt different perspectives, not only on the types of intercultural dialogue initiated, but also on the themes of discussion, the cultures involved, and even the perceived purpose of these activities.

The second perspective describes changes in perceptions regarding other aspects, such as the goal of intercultural dialogue, expected outcomes, shared values within discourse practices, active participants, and group boundaries.

These observations shed light on why communities engaged in intercultural dialogue, what was hoped for by the surrounding social and political context, and how collective appreciation of this practice evolved.

9. Implications for Policy and Practice

English has served as a means of interaction, promoting reconciliation across language, identity, and intercultural relations. Language is an important marker of group membership and economic exchange, and one of the battlegrounds for both the state and the individual. Different populations have not always had the means for communication and hence connection because of varying linguistic conventions for much of history. People can tell something about the speaker's identity by means of the use of English; in other words, the use of English conveys social information. Also, it can contain the intra-group dynamics that a language enables. This includes a speaking style, a level of formality and an additional choice of code. In addition, choosing one language over another can indicate larger sociocultural issues or priorities.

English also plays an important role in our efforts to engage in intercultural dialogue in a globalised world. It is possible to utilise complex repertoires from multiple languages, media, and modalities to share a position. Keeping each other's speaking styles in mind helps us understand each other. There are many reasons why people wish to move forward interculturally, whether formally or informally: to engage cosmopolitanly, embrace multiculturality, generate economic cooperation, facilitate educational exchange, or forge political alliances. English is the most utilised tool for addressing this agenda at various levels. It serves at times as a global international language among a global population, a transnational lingua franca among people living in different local contexts, and a local language amongst people who live in proximity but differ in culture (Wang et al, 2012).

9.1. Education, Assessment, and Curriculum Design

The goal of holistic education is to develop learners' minds, bodies, hearts, and spirits, preparing them for a lifetime of open-ended learning. Holistic education embraces educational reforms to develop the head, heart, and hands jointly in the light of cogent academic, theoretical, and systemic research. It advocates love, kindness, and connection to others; it seeks a safe space in this time of great change for the "fullness of the human experience." Unless this is targeted directly as policy, it is merely tinkering. 'Creating the Sound. Track' integrates the ideals of holistic education,

heritage and identity exploration, arts and science, and twenty-first-century literacy inherent in the International Baccalaureate's Philosophy statements. English education within international schools should benefit from how literature, the Arts, and other disciplines can be harnessed, and from the ways problems and issues from these subjects may enrich other disciplines, including literature and English. Assessment Research now provides empirical evidence that investigating and supporting identity development influences learning outcomes in international and English education, both globally and specifically within the International Baccalaureate framework. In international settings, the focus on intercultural awareness is the same as 'Western' enhanced English; if intercultural awareness is added to the core curriculum, English acquisition research within international schooling can be established, and pertinent insights from this international setting can be enhanced with artefacts that have local and Asian significance, yet remain pertinent now in local, continental, and global discourse (Hudkins, 2017).

9.2. Cross-Cultural Training and International Collaboration

Language-as-identity, or the role that language plays in shaping encounters across differences, describes communication as reflexively shaped by social contexts. The style of speaking that one adopts, and the scale of social reference that one invokes (i.e., who one is presumed to be speaking to and what part of one's identity is indexed), depend significantly on the circumstances of the encounter and on the relationships among speakers (X Bonilla Medina et al., 2009). A person's choice of discourse, therefore, expresses a range of language resources that constitute a repertoire — "the sum of properties of a communicative type observed in a variety of circumstances throughout a period of time — that announces who one is, where one belongs, and the social relationships established and maintained with interlocutors" (Marie Lowrey, 2019). In ecologies characterised by hybridity, commodification, and liquidity, one's aggregate repertoire constitutes an economising resource that minimises the justice-demand of a particular type of representation.

People draw upon translocal and transnational linguistic resources to negotiate everyday identities in collaboration with culturally and socially distant others. Lingua franca practices emerge from an assemblage of local knowledges, taken-for-granted cultural identities, and global communication technologies. Examination of digital and mobile Englishes within transnational

social networks underscores the importance of local practices in explaining how, when, and why 'English' and 'Spanish' come to matter as sociolinguistic resources in multilingual settings. The notion of harmony retains a practical dimension as communicative engagement emerges and widens to include sensitive topics, and as alternative approaches to cross-cutting these tendencies come into clearer focus. Meanings of harmony vary across communities and constellations; however, a focus on property and quality is widely shared in striving for richer, deeper engagement.

9.3. Media, Technology, and Public Discourse

Over the past few decades, rapid advances in media and technology have transformed how individuals communicate and engage in public discourse. The creation and dissemination of messages are no longer restricted to traditional media outlets; they now involve a wide array of digital platforms. These technological changes have contributed to the rise of new public spaces, such as social media networks, blogs, and instant messaging functions, facilitating public discussion on a wider range of topics.

Messages often circulate freely across borders, and ideas travel almost instantaneously via various means of communication, leading to new communication practices. The ability to share opinions on a particular topic worldwide or to interact directly with people from different geographical locations is unprecedented. Both traditional and new communication channels expose people to broader scales of action, inviting the exchange of formal and informal, private and public, mass and interpersonal messages (Wang et al., 2012).

10. Conclusion

English mediates language, identity, and intercultural dialogue as a harmonising communicative ideal. Individuals shape and express identity through social language use in culturally situated practices that reflect agency and belonging. Multilingual speakers shift language styles and language choices according to social contexts, adapting communicative practices and developing differing degrees of social capital and cohesion across local, global, and translocal domains. English language varieties evolving in colonial and postcolonial eras highlight simultaneous forces of power, resistance, and cultural exchange. Globalisation and technological change have accelerated the spread of English, in part due to education and migration policy choices. Counter-mainstream urban vernaculars in diverse settings signal the survival and

evolution of long-standing regional and local practices. In contrast, everyday digitally-mediated practices enable negotiation of belonging and intercultural reach across languages, dialects, and modalities.

English facilitates intercultural dialogue in narratives, translation, and collaborative knowledge-making across regions and cultures. Narrative formats help mediate, arrange, scaffold, and alter cross-cultural meaning-making; translation balances adaptation and fidelity while accounting for power differentials; and collaborative knowledge-production promotes transnational collectivity, co-creation, shared repertoires, and intercultural team engagement. Nonetheless, dominant ideologies and social conditions affect the practice and status of English.

English also enables and constrains agency, prestige dynamics, and social identity in multilingual spaces. Prestige hierarchies vary by demographic, context, and material conditions, shaping attitudes and communicative repertoires; online discourses inform community-building and belonging; and policy influences, by regulating usage and aligning with global norms, frame opportunities for invention and negotiation across diverse multilingual environments. Tackling the wide-ranging challenges of language, identity, and dialogue requires blended methodologies that integrate critical and conversation analyses, along with longitudinal perspectives on developmental trajectories, enabling the examination of social streams, situated practices, and broader interactions. Implications extend to education, curricula, cross-cultural training, media, governance, and international collaboration, highlighting the enduring significance of language, identity, and intercultural dialogue in a rapidly-altering world. (Rizk, 2013)

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