EFL Education Students' Perceptions of Global Englishes in ELT in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

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Abstract

While previous research has delved into the influence of Global Englishes (GE) on English Language Teaching, less is known about English education students' perceptions of GE and its subsequent integration into their pedagogical methods. This study, grounded in the context of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, seeks to address this gap. Conducting semi-structured interviews with 18 English education students enrolled in courses pertinent to GE in two universities, the qualitative research identifies patterns and themes via a combined deductive and inductive thematic analysis. The results disclose the students' acceptance of linguistic diversity and shared ownership of English. They resist the notion of the sole possession of English by native speakers, underscoring the need to acknowledge diverse English varieties and cultures in their teaching practices. While the study participants appreciate the value of GE, there are concerns about their practical readiness to implement GE into their teaching manifest, citing potential opposition from educational counterparts or institutional norms. Notwithstanding the limited sample size and specific geographical context, the study findings bear significant implications, encouraging teacher educators to incorporate GE into their curricula, stimulate positive attitudes toward GE pedagogies, and incite curriculum developers to embed the concept of GE effectively into ELT courses. The conclusions anticipate a critical paradigm shift in English language education, embracing a globally diverse, contextually responsive understanding of English.

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การรับรู้ของนักศึกษาที่ศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศต่อภาษาอังกฤษสากล
ในการสอนภาษาอังกฤษบริเวณพื้นที่สามเหลี่ยมปากแม่น้ำแม่โขง ประเทศเวียดนาม

วู้ ฮวย นาน ดัง[2]

บทคัดย่อ

ในการวิจัยก่อนหน้านี้ได้ทำการศึกษาเกี่ยวกับอิทธิพลของภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกที่ส่งผลต่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ แต่ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการรับรู้ของนักศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษต่อภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกและการบูรณาการเข้ากับวิธีการสอนยังพบได้น้อย การวิจัยนี้จึงจัดทำขึ้นในบริบทของพื้นที่สามเหลี่ยมปากแม่น้ำโขง ประเทศเวียดนาม เพื่อเติมเต็มช่องว่างดังกล่าว โดยทำการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้างกับนักศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 18 คน ที่ลงทะเบียนเรียนหลักสูตรที่เกี่ยวข้องกับภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกใน 2 มหาวิทยาลัย การวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพนี้ค้นพบรูปแบบและประเด็นต่างๆ ผ่านการวิเคราะห์แก่นสาระที่ผสมผสานทั้งแบบอุปนัยและนิรนัย ผลลัพธ์ที่ได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงการยอมรับความหลากหลายทางภาษาและการเป็นเจ้าของภาษาอังกฤษร่วมกัน นักศึกษาต่อต้านความคิดที่ว่าภาษาอังกฤษเป็นของเจ้าของภาษาเท่านั้น ซึ่งเน้นย้ำความจำเป็นในการยอมรับความหลากหลายของภาษาอังกฤษและวัฒนธรรมผ่านการเรียนการสอน ถึงแม้ว่าผู้เข้าร่วมการศึกษาจะเห็นคุณค่าของภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลก แต่พวกเขาก็มีความกังวลเกี่ยวกับความพร้อมในการนำมาใช้ในการสอน โดยอ้างถึงกลุ่มคนที่มีแนวคิดทางการศึกษาที่ตรงกันข้ามหรือธรรมเนียมของสถาบันการศึกษา แม้ว่าจะมีกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่จำกัดและบริบททางภูมิศาสตร์ที่เฉพาะเจาะจง ผลการศึกษาค้นคว้านี้ก็สามารถตีความได้อย่างมีนัยยะสำคัญ เพราะช่วยกระตุ้นให้ผู้สอนเพิ่มภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกเข้าในหลักสูตรการสอน สร้างทัศนคติเชิงบวกต่อการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกและส่งเสริมการพัฒนาหลักสูตรเพื่อปลูกฝังแนวคิดภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทโลกลงในหลักสูตรการสอนภาษาอังกฤษอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ ผลสรุปคาดว่าจะมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงกระบวนทัศน์เชิงวิพากษ์ในแวดวงการศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษ รวมถึงโอบรับความหลากหลายที่เป็นสากลและความเข้าใจภาษาอังกฤษที่ตอบสนองบริบทดังกล่าว

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Introduction

English has grown and diversified remarkably, taking root in different forms across the globe due to its status as a global language. This linguistic diversity has solidified the status of English as a universally recognized language. With this evolution, scholars have turned their attention towards exploring the implications of this shift in the context of English language teaching (ELT), particularly in the settings of English as a second language and English as a foreign language (EFL). This makes it crucial to raise awareness among EFL education students about the sociolinguistic transformations occurring due to these new forms of English interactions and linguistic features.

While the impact of Global Englishes (GE) on ELT has been explored, there remains a significant gap in the literature concerning the perceptions of English education students towards GE and its integration into language teaching. The perspectives of these future English teachers are vital for shaping effective pedagogical approaches that meet their needs and expectations.

The ELT community is beginning to realize that ELT policies, curricula, and teaching materials should embrace diverse varieties of English, rather than focusing solely on standardized English from predominantly English-speaking nations, or 'inner-circle' nations such as the UK or the US. However, 'native speakerism', or the ideology that native English speakers are the ideal teachers and models for English language learners, continues to exist, particularly in 'expanding circle' countries where English is learned as a foreign language (Fang & Ren, 2018; Galloway & Rose, 2018).

An interesting demographic shift has occurred where non-native English speakers now outnumber those who speak English as their first language (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021; Fang & Widodo, 2019). English interactions increasingly occur among non-native users from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This necessitates the development of awareness among English education students regarding these sociolinguistic transformations, enabling them to navigate the dynamic linguistic features of English (Baker & Ishikawa, 2021; Fang, 2019; Rose & Galloway, 2019).

To fill the identified research gap, this study will investigate the perceptions of English education students towards GE and its application in language teaching in the Vietnamese context. Specifically, the research questions we seek to answer are: 1) How do English

education students perceive and understand Global Englishes in the Vietnamese context? and 2) How ready are they to implement GE in language teaching?

By exploring these perspectives, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the readiness of future English teachers to embrace linguistic diversity. The findings will facilitate the development of inclusive, effective pedagogical approaches and curriculum designs. For EFL practitioners, this will signal a shift towards more inclusive teaching materials, diverse assessment tools, and pedagogical strategies that validate diverse English forms. Furthermore, the focus of the study on the Vietnamese context will provide a valuable case study for other 'expanding circle' nations to reflect upon their EFL methodologies, ensuring that English education remains relevant, comprehensive, and in tune with the dynamic global trajectory of English.

Literature review

Global Englishes

The concept of GE has attracted scholarly interest in recent years. Scholars have defined GE as a comprehensive paradigm that examines the diverse and dynamic nature of English usage in a globalized world, covering linguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural dimensions (Rose & Galloway, 2019). While there are variations in the specific definitions, the consensus is that GE goes beyond the traditional understanding of English as a monolithic entity, acknowledging its multifaceted forms within the processes of globalization (Pennycook, 2007; Canagarajah, 2013).

One fundamental aspect of GE is its challenge to the notion of English as a language exclusively owned by native speakers. Instead, GE recognizes English as a global resource accessible to all users, regardless of their linguistic background (Jenkins, 2011). This perspective empowers non-native English speakers, considering them competent language users with a range of choices in their language use, thereby challenging the widespread native-speakerism in English education (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins et al., 2011).

GE also highlights the importance of linguistic contexts and strategies that contribute to the diversity of English usage. Rather than perceiving variations in English as obstacles to effective communication, GE embraces and values them as integral components of language dynamics (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Accordingly, GE includes sub-concepts such as World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2011, 2015; Widdowson, 2015).

The study of WE focuses on uncovering and understanding the unique national varieties of English, giving credence to the linguistic diversity seen among non-native English speakers (Galloway & Rose, 2015). On the other hand, ELF explores the use of English as a chosen medium of communication among individuals with different first languages, emphasizing the global significance of English as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011; Galloway & Rose, 2015). Both WE and ELF contribute to the understanding of English as an adaptable means of communication in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Conversely, GE adopts a wider lens, merging concepts like ELF and WE. Instead of fixed categories, GE highlights the fluidity and adaptability of English in intercultural communication across the globe.

In summary, GE represents a paradigm shift that acknowledges the diverse and dynamic nature of English usage in a globalized world. It challenges the notion of native-speakerism, values linguistic variations, and promotes an inclusive approach to English education. The exploration of English education students' perceptions of GE contributes to the ongoing discourse and advancements in the field of English language teaching and learning.

Perceptions towards GE and its implementation in ELT

In English education, there is a growing body of research that examines the perceptions of English teachers regarding GE. These studies investigate how English teachers perceive and engage with the diverse forms and dynamics of English in a globalized world. There is an ongoing challenge to overturn the dominance of native-speakerism in English comprehension and instruction, promoting a broader, culturally considerate approach to English language teaching (Rose & Galloway, 2019; Rose, McKinley, & Galloway, 2021).

Moreover, numerous studies have provided valuable insights into understanding and integrating GE into ELT. Galloway and Rose (2018) introduced the concept of Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT), which aims to raise the awareness of learners of GE and challenge traditional ELT approaches. Their research demonstrated that students developed a greater appreciation for the diversity of English and showed positive attitudes toward GE (Galloway & Rose, 2018). Scholars have explored various classroom activities, such as presentations, listening diaries, TED Talks videos, and engaging in conversations with international interlocutors and GE-related debates, to foster GE awareness (Galloway & Rose, 2018; Kusumaningputri, 2020; Rajprasit, 2021). Specialized courses focusing on GE have also been

implemented to enhance learners' understanding of the GE paradigm (Jindapitak, 2022; Rajprasit & Marlina, 2019).

The application of GE pedagogies in EFL contexts, particularly within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has proven to be beneficial in improving the language proficiency and intercultural communication skills of language learners. ASEAN, where a significant majority of community members are non-native English speakers without English as their mother tongue, uses English as the working language. Therefore, GE-informed ELT practices have facilitated effective communication within the ASEAN community (Jindapitak, 2019).

While existing literature provides valuable insights into GE and its implications for ELT, further research and the development of practical guidelines are still needed to fully integrate GE pedagogies into ELT classrooms. Exploring EFL education students' perceptions regarding GE within ELT settings can contribute to the development of effective and inclusive approaches to English language teaching and learning.

Teachers' beliefs significantly influence their instructional plans and decisions in the classroom (Galloway, 2017; Kirkpatrick, 2021; Rose & Galloway, 2019). Previous studies have shown that English language teachers hold mixed opinions about implementing GE in their teaching practices (Ahn, 2015; Tarrayo et al., 2021). While teachers acknowledge the existence of new English varieties, they are often hesitant to recognize the legitimacy of Expanding Circle Englishes (Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017). There is also a lack of recognition of Asian Englishes, such as Indian, Singaporean, Chinese, and Japanese, among teachers. This reluctance to embrace GE stems from a lack of awareness and exposure to different English varieties (Ahn, 2015). However, in contexts such as Thailand and Japan, which have some similar features with Vietnam, some teachers demonstrate flexibility and actively incorporate GE into their teaching, emphasizing the importance of introducing students to GE through course materials (Takahashi, 2017; Tarrayo et al., 2021).

Addressing the reluctance of teachers to include GE in ELT requires engaging them in GE-informed teacher professional development, which includes workshops, conferences, and seminars focusing on GE-informed approaches (Çeçen & Tülüce, 2019; Eslami et al., 2019). Through such professional development, teachers can gain a better understanding of how English language learners can achieve mutual intelligibility in communication with interlocutors, rather than strictly adhering to a particular model of English (Kang, 2015; Luo,

2017). This approach acknowledges that English contains multiple varieties with diverse usage by people from various multicultural and multiethnic communities (Matsuda, 2018).

Although teachers may hold ambivalent opinions about the inclusion of GE in ELT, scholars specializing in GE (e.g., Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Matsuda, 2020; Sharifan, 2013) emphasize the benefits of GE-informed ELT. With this awareness, teachers can develop confidence in using English without judging others based on linguistic variation, redefine language learning goals, and reconceptualize instructional models (Jindapitak et al., 2022).

In the specific context of Vietnam, several studies have examined the perceptions of Vietnamese English teachers and students regarding WE in the light of GE perspectives and its implications for English education. These studies shed light on the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing English varieties beyond native-speaker norms in the Vietnamese teaching context.

Hao and Phuong (2017) conducted a comprehensive study in Vietnam to explore Vietnamese English teachers' perceptions of WE. The research involved administering online questionnaires and conducting focus group interviews with English lecturers from universities and colleges across Vietnam. The study revealed that American and British English are widely used in English teaching in Vietnam, but non-native varieties and Vietnamese English are also recognized. Introducing English varieties was considered important, but challenges such as teaching materials and the reluctance of students were identified. The study emphasized the benefits of exposure to different English varieties, improved communication, and increased confidence and awareness among students and English learners.

Another noteworthy study conducted in Vietnam by Huong and Hiep (2010) examined the preferences of Vietnamese students and teachers regarding the type of English they desired to learn and teach. The study indicated that while English was more frequently used with non-native speakers outside the classroom, British and American English tended to be the preferred models within the classroom. The study emphasized the need to move beyond the native speaker model and suggested focusing on British and American English in the classroom while also encouraging learners to explore other varieties of English outside the classroom.

In another significant study, Hao and Moore (2015) explored the perceptions of Vietnamese English teachers of WE in English teaching. Their research employed a combination of online questionnaires, individual interviews, and a focus group interview. The study found that English teachers in Vietnam had unequal understanding of the term "WE" and a preference

for American or British English. Native varieties, particularly British and/or American English, were perceived to strongly influence English teaching. Students in Vietnam were found to communicate more with non-native English speakers. Vietnamese English was accepted as a term, with accent being the primary criterion for distinguishing different types of English. Despite challenges, participants expressed their intention to introduce different English varieties and suggested conducting needs analyses and raising awareness.

These studies conducted in Vietnam offer valuable insights into the importance of recognizing and incorporating the diversity of Englishes in the Vietnamese teaching context. They highlight the need to move beyond the native speaker model and embrace the concept of World Englishes to enhance effective communication in English within and beyond Vietnam. The findings from these studies have implications for English educators and policymakers in Vietnam, who are actively seeking to develop inclusive and culturally responsive approaches to English language teaching.

In summary, studies conducted both inside and outside of Vietnam contribute to our understanding of GE concepts in ELT. These studies emphasize the importance of recognizing the diversity of Englishes and moving beyond the native speaker model in English language teaching. The insights gained from these studies can guide educators and policymakers in developing inclusive and culturally responsive approaches to English language teaching and learning. As Vietnam continues to navigate its position in the global community, further research and practical guidelines are necessary to fully integrate GE pedagogies into ELT classrooms and address the specific needs and challenges faced in the Vietnamese context.

Methodology

Contexts and Participants

This qualitative study aimed to explore the perceptions of English education students in Vietnam towards GE and its integration into the Vietnamese education system. Two major universities in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam were chosen as the research sites due to their offer of courses relevant to GE, such as "Intercultural Communication" and "English and International Integration", and their location in multicultural urban hubs attracting a global tourist mix.

The study involved 18 English education students, nine from each university, selected through purposive-convenience sampling. Participants were Vietnamese residents enrolled in GE-informed courses; thus, they could be presumed to have an understanding of English

diversity, multilingualism, and multiculturalism. The study acknowledges that the stringent sampling approach may have excluded individuals with valuable perspectives.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom, each lasting approximately 30 minutes. Recognizing the difference in linguistic competency and comfort levels of the participants, interviews were conducted in either Vietnamese or English. This bilingual approach was intended to prevent any linguistic biases and ensure genuine responses from the participants. All interviews, regardless of the language used in the interview, were recorded upon obtaining participant consent and subsequently transcribed and translated into English to maintain uniformity in data analysis.

During the analysis phase, the transcribed data was subjected to coding to identify relevant information. The accuracy of the transcripts and translations was validated by the participants to reduce potential misinterpretations. Thematic analysis, using both deductive and inductive coding, was then used to identify patterns, commonalities, and emerging themes. This dual coding approach aimed to provide a comprehensive exploration of the data, establishing a coherent structure for the presentation of primary findings. This process involved multiple readings of the transcriptions, with manually assigned codes grouping related information into important themes. The analysis focused solely on the interview content, intentionally excluding suprasegmental features such as facial expressions, intonation, and pauses.

Findings

English education students' understanding of GE

During the interviews, the participants were asked to provide their definitions and perceptions of GE. One participant, U1S4, articulated that GE contains "*different places around the world have their own unique ways of speaking and writing English.* " This definition highlights the recognition of linguistic diversity and acknowledges that English is not a monolithic entity but rather exhibits variations across different geographical contexts.

Similarly, participant U1S7 emphasized the importance of using English that is situationally appropriate and intelligible to interlocutors. He expressed his understanding of GE as "*We should use the type of English that makes the most sense in each situation. It's not just about American or British English - there are lots of other kinds of English to think*

about too." This viewpoint underscores the need for communicative effectiveness in diverse linguistic settings, advocating for adaptability in using English as a global lingua franca.

Participant U2S1 pointed out the cultural and social aspects of GE. She mentioned that there are "*different versions of English language across the globe, each with its own unique cultural and social traits influenced by the societies where they are used*." This viewpoint acknowledges that the cultural and social environments where English variations grow can shape their unique language features tied to specific regions and communities.

Participant U2S7 provided examples of variations in pronunciation, graphics, and language use while defining GE. He noted, "*Chinese, Indian, British, and American Englishes as just a glimpse into the diverse range of expressions within the GE framework.*" This acknowledgement of the multifaceted nature of GE underscores the existence of distinct linguistic features and practices within different communities, reflecting the sociolinguistic realities of language users worldwide.

Notably, the participants also highlighted the notion of ownership in relation to GE. Participant U1S8 expressed that "*English isn't just spoken by people from a certain area; it's a worldwide language with many versions, which are shared by all people who use the language across the world*." This statement emphasizes the global nature of English and challenges the notion of English belonging solely to native English-speaking countries. It recognizes the agency and ownership of English by speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

English education students' perceptions of English varieties and standard English

In exploring the perspectives of the participants on the diversity of English, positive attitudes were evident towards the utilization of different English varieties by speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The interviewees emphasized that most English users nowadays are non-native speakers coming from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, each with their unique first languages. These multilingual and multicultural individuals utilize a variety of English forms in their interactions. However, the belief that the ownership of English exclusively belongs to native speakers, particularly those from British and American backgrounds, was challenged. The participants argued that this notion is outdated and emphasized the importance of treating diverse linguacultural users equally and recognizing their right to claim ownership of English. Moreover, the participants stressed the need for English teachers to acknowledge the current diversity in the English language. Knowing about

different types of English would help teachers to adjust their teaching methods to better meet their students' needs.

During the interviews, 12 out of the 18 participants expressed their views on the importance of learning different English varieties and their advantages in real-life communication. One participant (U2S2) stated:

"English has really become a language that's recognized all over the world. It's not just limited to British English or American English anymore. From my perspective, I truly believe that being able to develop proficiency in different varieties of English can bring significant advantages. As you can see, in real-life interactions, we often find ourselves in situations where people from diverse ethnic groups use English in their own ways. And that's when we need to be adaptable and communicate effectively. It's all about being able to understand and connect with others, regardless of their English background."

This highlights the recognition of the participants of the practicality and relevance of understanding and using diverse English varieties.

Moreover, 15 of the 18 interviewees underlined that teaching English should not be limited to native English versions, as this doesn't reflect the current, authentic use of the language. They advocated for the acknowledgement of English varieties used by non-native speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds, despite their departure from traditional English norms. One participant (U1S5) shared:

"I think that it's essential to acknowledge the different English varieties used by nonnative speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds. These variations may have distinct structures and norms compared to inner circle English, but it's crucial to give them due recognition. Nowadays, relying solely on native English varieties for English language instruction doesn't align with practical usage anymore. Since most of our conversation partners are nonnative English speakers, we need to adopt a more inclusive approach that embraces their linguistic diversity."

Moreover, it is significant to mention that a considerable majority of the participants, specifically 16 out of the 18, acknowledged English as a language with extensive global usage. Their emphasis was on the significance of English being inclusive and not limited to any specific cultural or ethnic group. One participant (U1S9) claimed:

" More and more experts are saying that English is a worldwide language, with more people learning it as an additional language than those who speak it from birth. So, I really think that English has changed into a language for everyone. It shouldn't belong to just one

group of people based on their culture or ethnicity. Instead, anyone who speaks English should be able to say it's their language too."

The results showed that the interviewees had favorable views towards the diversity present in the English language. They acknowledged English as a worldwide language used by people from many different cultural and linguistic groups. As a result, they considered the rigid following of grammar rules specific to British or American English to be impractical. Most of the participants (17 out of 18) rejected the notion of native speaker ideology, emphasizing that English should be learned as a tool for global communication rather than focusing solely on a specific form of the language. As one participant (U1S6) expressed,

" English has become really important all over the world and it changes to fit what its users need. So, learning English to communicate well is more important than sticking strictly to standard forms."

This highlights the perspective of the participants on English as a flexible and adaptable language.

The participants also acknowledged the international nature of English, emphasizing that it contains multiple varieties and identities beyond being associated solely with American and British speakers. They emphasized that English is not confined to a specific nation, country, or group of people but has gained various varieties worldwide. Recognizing this diversity, 11 out of the 18 participants emphasized the importance of learners being aware of different English varieties to achieve effective communication. They highlighted the role of English language teachers in familiarizing learners with these varieties. One participant (U1S3) explained,

"It's important to understand that English isn't just for Americans and Brits anymore. It's now an international language with lots of different versions. Each one is unique and can't be easily copied from others."

Contrary to the idea of restricting learners to a single variety, 13 out of the 18 participants expressed concerns about the demotivation that arises when learners are forced to conform to a particular English variety. They emphasized that learners should not be discouraged from exploring the different varieties of English. One participant (U1S4) said,

"Telling English learners that they must only use a certain type of English isn't helpful, especially since there are so many different kinds of English out there. What is more, making them follow just one kind might make them not want to learn at all. Instead, we should

celebrate how many different ways there are to speak English. This is really important for learning the language well."

The responses to follow-up questions further highlighted the importance of learners being exposed to multiple English varieties, as relying on a single variety limits their ability to adapt and communicate effectively in various contexts.

Cultural aspects in ELT

When it comes to cultural elements, the results showed that 12 out of the 18 interviewees concurred on the significance of integrating local subjects and cultural aspects into English teaching curriculums in Vietnam. These participants highlighted the need for English teaching curriculums to expand their focus beyond just native English cultures and speakers, and instead support a diverse and inclusive cultural approach. They suggested that curriculums enabling learners to convey their cultural identities through dialogue and investigation would be more practical and successful in fostering cross-cultural communication. One participant (U1S9) voiced their perspective, stating that "*integrating local cultures and familiar content into teaching activities would offer Vietnamese learners the opportunity to engage with their own cultural heritage in English, equipping them with the linguistic skills needed to be global citizens.*"

Furthermore, all participants exhibited positive attitudes toward incorporating other Asian cultures into ELT classrooms. Another participant (U2S8) emphasized that

"Vietnamese learners would greatly benefit from exposure not only to native English culture but also to their Asian local culture in English language classes, enhancing their proficiency in intercultural matters."

While the majority of participants supported the inclusion of local content and cultures as primary components in ELT, they also recognized the significance of native-English cultures. In fact, 13 out of the 18 participants suggested that native-English cultures should be integrated into ELT classrooms alongside learners' cultural content to promote cultural diversity. These participants highlighted the importance of focusing on the cultures relevant to the learners themselves. One participant (U2S5) shared their learning and tutoring experience, noting that

"...incorporating cultural content into English instruction contributes to comprehensive learning and I recognized the importance of cultural content that learners can relate to, as it holds greater meaning compared to distant content solely centered on British and

American cultures. However, I also acknowledged the importance of occasionally studying other cultures to broaden our perspectives."

Perceptions of GE- raising awareness activities

When asked about their involvement in activities aimed at raising awareness about GE, the participants revealed a consistent pattern. They explained that, apart from studying courses related to intercultural communication and related subjects, they had not specifically attended any GE-raising awareness activities. Nevertheless, they acknowledged the importance of such activities, such as seminars, conferences, workshops, and training events, as valuable means to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to effectively implement GE awareness in their classrooms.

One participant, identified as U1S1, shared their belief in the following manner:

"Teachers play a big part in making new methods work in their classrooms. That's why it's so important for students studying to be teachers to learn about GE. They should have regular training and workshops. I don't remember going to any trainings or conferences about GE in Vietnam, even though I know that learning about GE helped me talk with different English speakers more effectively."

Similarly, U1S6 highlighted the significance of GE-raising awareness activities in disseminating information about GE and introducing them in English classrooms, stating:

"There are numerous opportunities such as training, workshops, online courses, webinars, seminars, conferences, and more that can greatly benefit education students in understanding and integrating the concept of GE in their classroom contexts."

Moreover, several participants engaged in conversations about prospective subjects that could be covered in activities aimed at raising awareness about GE. These included the emergence of novel English varieties, specialized talk programs centered around GE, workshops delving into the potentials and applications of GE, as well as hands-on sessions that focus on the practical aspects of GELT.

English Education Students' Readiness to implement Global Englishes in Teaching

The readiness of the participants to incorporate GE into their teaching practices revealed an interesting dichotomy. The majority expressed a theoretical appreciation of the value and importance of GE, but there was some hesitancy about their practical preparedness to implement these principles.

U1S2 commented, *"I certainly see the value in using GE in the classroom and the importance of reflecting the reality of English's global use. But in terms of how ready I am to integrate it into my teaching? I guess there's still a lot for me to learn."*

An important theme among the participants was a recognition of the need for professional development to effectively incorporate GE into their teaching practices. U1S5 stated, *"We have the theory down, but what we really need is practical guidance on how to implement GE in the classroom. I think professional development and training sessions would be beneficial for us."*

Some participants also acknowledged potential barriers to the successful implementation of GE in teaching, such as resistance from other educators or institutional expectations. U2S3 noted, *"I'm ready to use more GE in my teaching, but I worry about potential pushback from other teachers or from the administration. I think there's still a belief in some quarters that 'proper English' is British or American English."*

However, despite these challenges, the participants generally expressed a strong commitment to incorporating GE into their future teaching practices. U1S8 shared, *"Despite the challenges, I firmly believe that it's our responsibility as English teachers to reflect the true global nature of English in our classrooms. We need to prepare our students for the reality they will face outside of the classroom."*

Discussion

Education students' understanding of GE

The understanding of GE as revealed by these findings enriches the ongoing discourse in the contemporary linguistic characteristics. The recognition of linguistic diversity is in harmony with Galloway and Rose's (2015) examination of WE, emphasizing the dynamic and diverse nature of English language use across various geographical contexts. Simultaneously, the emphasis of the participants on English as a tool for situational appropriateness reflects the principles of ELF as expounded by Jenkins (2011). This underlines the premise that English, as a medium of communication, demands flexibility and adaptability rather than a perceived 'standard' form.

The participants' thoughts about how culture, society, and language connect in GE are similar to ideas Pennycook talked about in 2007. This shows that language, culture, and society are all linked when it comes to English being used around the world. This affirmation of the sociocultural underpinnings of GE emphasizes that the evolution and manifestations of English

cannot be separated from the societal and cultural contexts in which they emerge. These perspectives align with the inclusive and holistic understanding of GE that places language not merely as a tool, but as an expression of socio-cultural realities.

Finally, the notion of shared ownership, where English is perceived as a global resource rather than the exclusive property of native speakers, is a crucial highlight of the findings. This perspective fits with the paradigm shift advocated by Jenkins et al. (2011), challenging ordinary notions of language ownership and upending the dominance of native-speakerism. The agreement of these findings with the principles proposed by Rose and Galloway (2019) and Rose et al. (2021) stresses the relevance of GE in the current discourse of English education. These reflections call for further empirical exploration to examine how these insights can be practically integrated into pedagogical practices across diverse socio-cultural contexts, thereby contributing to the advancement of GE discourse.

English education students' perceptions of English varieties and standard English

The current study provides insights into the perspectives of English education students of English varieties and standard English, revealing a strong tendency towards the appreciation of English language diversity. These perceptions align with the noted shift in ELT, discussed in the literature review, where the focus is moving away from native English speaker norms towards an inclusive approach recognizing the prevalence of GE (Cogo, 2012; Galloway & Rose, 2018). The findings underline the participants' practical recognition of different English varieties, resonating with the shift towards GELT suggested by Galloway and Rose (2018). This shift suggests a need to reconsider the predominant pedagogical norms, aligning the ELT practices with the linguistic realities of the 21st century.

The perceptions of ownership, a key concept explored in the literature review, are also reflected in the views of the participants. The majority of the participants rejected the idea that English ownership should be exclusive to native speakers, particularly those from British and American backgrounds. This aligns with the growing acknowledgment of English as a language for everyone who uses it, as posited by GE scholars (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Matsuda, 2020; Sharifan, 2013). The participants' perception of English echoes the concept of English as a lingua franca in the literature, which emphasizes the extensive use of English among non-native English speakers (Jindapitak, 2019). The belief in the necessity for learners to be exposed to different English varieties for effective communication supports GE-informed ELT practices.

Finally, the findings challenge the reluctance of some teachers to incorporate GE into ELT (Ahn, 2015; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017). While some teachers express hesitance, the participants of this study support an inclusive approach, suggesting that getting stuck with one specific variety can discourage learners from engaging with the language. Their emphasis on the importance of exploring the richness of English language diversity proposes a significant shift in ELT pedagogy. This could motivate educators towards GE-informed teacher professional development that encourages GE-informed approaches (Çeçen & Tülüce, 2019; Eslami et al., 2019). These insights underline the need for a pedagogical adaptation to meet the evolving needs of English language learners in a globalized world.

Cultural aspects in ELT

An emphasis was placed on the inclusion of local content and cultures in ELT, which mirrors the arguments put forth by researchers such as Jindapitak (2019). These scholars have highlighted the potential of GE-informed pedagogies to enhance language proficiency and intercultural communication skills, particularly in contexts like the ASEAN community. The suggestion of allowing learners to explore their cultural identities through English language activities reflects this perspective.

Furthermore, the findings meet with the conclusions drawn from the studies conducted by Hao and Phuong (2017), Huong and Hiep (2010), and Hao and Moore (2015) in the Vietnamese context. These studies emphasize the necessity of moving beyond the native-speaker model and embracing the diversity of English varieties. The importance of integrating native-English cultures into ELT parallels Hao and Moore's (2015) findings, which reported a preference among Vietnamese English teachers for American or British English, despite acknowledging other English varieties. However, the emphasis on the inclusion of cultural content means the need for a balanced approach that complements the insights from these studies. Such an approach would integrate both native and local cultural elements, aligning with the broader objective of preparing learners for effective communication in a globalized world, as advocated by scholars specializing in GE (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Matsuda, 2020; Sharifan, 2013).

Perceptions of GE- raising awareness activities

The findings of the study align with the broader literature that suggests the importance of GE-informed teacher professional development in shaping teachers' attitudes and

pedagogical approaches towards GE (Çeçen & Tülüce, 2019; Eslami et al., 2019). There was a consensus among the participants regarding the necessity of involvement in GE-raising awareness activities, such as seminars, workshops, and training events. These experiences were recognized as instrumental in equipping them with the necessary knowledge to effectively integrate GE into their classrooms. This resonates with prior studies indicating a lack of awareness and exposure to different English varieties among teachers, suggesting that increased involvement in GE-informed training could help bridge this gap (Ahn, 2015; Tarrayo et al., 2021).

The discussions about potential subjects for GE-raising awareness activities suggest a desire for exposure to GE. This reflects a need for coverage not only of the theoretical aspects but also the practical elements of GELT. Such an approach aligns with previous research that highlighted the use of varied classroom activities, specialized GE courses, and exposure to different English varieties as effective methods of fostering GE awareness (Galloway & Rose, 2018; Kusumaningputri, 2020; Rajprasit, 2021; Jindapitak, 2022). Further, the willingness to include discussions about novel English varieties and the potential applications of GE supports GE-informed ELT approach, acknowledging the diversity of English and preparing learners for communication in a globalized world (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Matsuda, 2020; Sharifan, 2013).

English education students' readiness to incorporate Global Englishes in teaching

The readiness of the participants to incorporate GE into their teaching practices, as highlighted in the findings, mirrors the literature review of English language teachers' mixed opinions towards GE. Similar to Ahn's (2015) and Tarrayo et al.'s (2021) findings, the participants expressed theoretical appreciation for the diversity of English and the value of integrating GE in their classrooms. However, they shared concerns about their practical preparedness, reflecting the teachers' hesitancy towards embracing Expanding Circle Englishes found by Sadeghpour and Sharifian (2017). This suggests that theoretical knowledge of GE may not be sufficient to ensure the readiness of teachers to incorporate these concepts into their teaching practices.

Furthermore, the expressed need for professional development aligns with Çeçen and Tülüce's (2019) and Eslami et al.'s (2019) proposition that engagement in GE-informed teacher professional development can help education students gain better comprehension of the various English varieties. This sentiment is also consistent with the recommendations from the

existing literature that emphasize the importance of continuous support and resources for teachers (Jindapitak et al., 2022). The recognition of the participants of potential barriers, including resistance from colleagues and institutional expectations, is also significant. These barriers underline the complexities of incorporating GE into teaching practices and underscore the need for systemic efforts at different educational levels to foster a more inclusive understanding of English.

Implications

Teacher Educators: The findings suggest that teacher educators need to revise their pedagogical strategies to reflect the evolving global nature of English. They should shift away from the 'standard' language ideology and incorporate the notion of GE into their curriculum (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This includes the teaching of English as an intercultural lingua franca, with diverse varieties based on the context (Fang & Baker, 2021). Teacher educators are encouraged to create positive attitudes toward GE pedagogies and incorporate real-world English varieties into their teachings. They should support student teachers to explore, discuss, and analyze examples of English users in various contexts, fostering their appreciation and understanding of the pluricentric nature of English (Rajprasit, 2021).

Education Students: Education students, as future teachers, need to understand and embrace the diversity of English and its role as a global communication tool. The study indicates that students already appreciate the existence of diverse linguistic variations of English and understand its shared ownership. Students need to further develop this understanding by learning to use the linguistic practices that are appropriate for each communicative environment using GE perspective. They should actively participate in GE awareness activities, exploring different English varieties and considering practical aspects of GELT (Jindapitak et al., 2022).

Curriculum Developers: Curriculum developers should reinvent ELT courses and materials to integrate the concept of GE effectively. The study suggests that ELT should reflect multiculturalism and intercultural communication, combining local and non-local English varieties. This would help eliminate the disadvantages of traditional EFL approaches, which favor native-oriented practices. Developers should consider the use of 'glocal' materials - a blend of global and local content - which can introduce learners to cultural diversity and the pluricentricity of English, while focusing on effectiveness in cross-cultural communication (Rose & Galloway, 2019). The choice of materials should depend on the learning context, but should

always aim to promote awareness of English diversity and prepare students for global English use.

These implications reflect the necessity for a paradigm shift in English language education, from a monolithic understanding of the language to a more diverse and global perspective. All stakeholders – teacher educators, education students, and curriculum developers – have significant roles to play in fostering this transformation.

Limitations and suggestions

This study is not without limitations. The sample size was relatively small and limited to one specific geographic context (Vietnam), which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study relied on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect the actual behaviors or practices of the participants. Future research could benefit from a larger, more diverse sample and incorporate more objective measures of teaching practices and student learning outcomes related to GE.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study illustrates the evolving understanding and perception of GE among English education students. It underscores the recognition of linguistic diversity, situational appropriateness, sociocultural dimensions, shared ownership, and positive attitudes towards English varieties. The findings also reveal the belief of students in the importance of learning different English varieties and their rejection of native speaker ideology. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for exposure to multiple English varieties and the incorporation of diverse cultural content in ELT curriculums. The implications drawn from the study suggest a paradigm shift in English language education towards embracing the global, diverse, and contextually driven nature of English. Teacher educators, education students, and curriculum developers all play a critical role in this transformative process.

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