



Interrogating Native-Speakerism and Linguistic Imperialism in ELT

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ABSTRACT

This study interrogates the persistent ideologies of native-speakerism and linguistic imperialism in English Language Teaching (ELT), examining how they are reproduced through material production, accent hierarchies, and assessment practices. Extending the conceptual frameworks of Holliday (2006) and Modiano (2001), the research integrates a comparative literature review with empirical qualitative investigation involving 25 ELT professionals and learners from Bangladesh, Brazil, Japan, the United Kingdom, and India. Drawing on semi-structured interviews and focus groups, the study employs thematic and critical discourse analysis to uncover how institutional policies, market forces, and internalized linguistic hierarchies reinforce the privileging of “inner-circle” norms. Findings reveal three interrelated dynamics: (1) institutional and economic constraints sustain Western material dominance; (2) learners and educators internalize accent hierarchies that equate legitimacy with proximity to native norms; and (3) teachers engage in innovative resistance strategies, such as “rubric hacking”, to challenge systemic inequalities. The study contributes to applied linguistics by bridging conceptual debates with empirical evidence, illustrating how native-speakerism operates across contexts and how educators enact localized decolonial practices. Recommendations are proposed for integrating Global Englishes and accent-equity pedagogy into ELT policy, teacher education, and assessment reform.

Keywords: English as an international language, linguistic imperialism, native-speakerism, Global Englishes, accent equity, ELT

Introduction

The ideology of native-speakerism continues to shape English Language Teaching (ELT) worldwide. It privileges teachers, pedagogies, and linguistic models associated with so-called inner-circle nations such as the United Kingdom and the United States while marginalizing educators and learners from the outer and expanding circles (Kachru, 1985). This hierarchy positions the native speaker as the ultimate linguistic authority, influencing recruitment policies, curriculum design, and assessment systems. In doing so, it reproduces what Phillipson (1992) terms linguistic imperialism, wherein the economic, cultural, and epistemic dominance of English-speaking nations perpetuates global inequalities in knowledge production and language education.

Holliday (2006) conceptualizes native-speakerism as a professional ideology that shapes identity and legitimacy in ELT. Kubota (2020) extends this critique through the notion of epistemic erasure, showing how non-Western knowledges are excluded from TESOL scholarship and practice. These intertwined frameworks illuminate how “neutral” pedagogical standards often conceal racialized and colonial hierarchies. For instance, non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) are frequently perceived as less competent regardless of their training or expertise, and learners internalize such hierarchies by idealizing native accents while labeling others as “broken” or “incorrect.” Consequently, classroom practices and teacher identities are constructed around the assumption that proximity to native norms equates to linguistic legitimacy.

Empirical evidence further underscores the resilience of these ideologies. Hwang and Rajan (2023) report that 62% of South Korean learners prefer native accents even when non-native teachers demonstrate superior pedagogical competence. Harding et al. (2019) found that test assessors rated Indian-accented English 23% more harshly than British English in IELTS speaking assessments. Such findings confirm Lippi-Green’s (2012) notion of accent hierarchies, in which phonological prestige functions as a form of social capital. At the same time, local initiatives demonstrate emerging resistance to these hegemonic structures. Canagarajah (2013) and Rose and Galloway (2019) advocate for Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT), which validates pluralized English varieties and promotes intercultural communicative competence rather than native-speaker imitation.

Despite extensive conceptual critique, empirical documentation of how native-speakerism is experienced and resisted in varied global contexts remains limited. Prior studies have often centered on theoretical arguments (Phillipson, 1992; Holliday, 2006; Jenkins, 2000) or policy discourse rather than the lived experiences of practitioners and learners. Addressing this gap, the present study integrates a comparative review of key theoretical works with an empirical qualitative investigation across five international contexts: Bangladesh, Brazil, Japan, the United Kingdom, and India. Through this multi-site design, it examines how institutional structures, pedagogical practices, and learner perceptions interact to sustain—or contest—linguistic imperialism within ELT.

Accordingly, this research seeks to answer three questions: (1) How does native-speakerism operate within ELT institutions and materials?; (2) What strategies can practitioners employ to promote linguistic diversity and decolonize teaching practices?; (3) How do assessment systems perpetuate linguistic hierarchies, and what alternatives exist? By combining theoretical critique with grounded empirical evidence, this study aims to contribute to ongoing efforts to decolonize English language education, offering a model for how teachers and institutions can reimagine ELT beyond the native-speaker paradigm.

Theoretical Framework/Literature Review

The dominance of native-speaker norms in ELT has long been intertwined with broader ideological systems of linguistic imperialism. Phillipson's (1992) seminal work identifies how English functions as a tool of global inequality, privileging "center" nations while marginalizing "periphery" contexts. This dynamic manifests in teacher recruitment, curriculum design, and policy frameworks that legitimize inner-circle English as the global standard. Holliday (2006) describes native-speakerism as a professional ideology rooted in these structures, positioning native speakers as pedagogically superior and culturally authentic while depicting non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) as deficient.

Kubota (2001, 2002, 2020) further critiques the epistemological racism embedded in TESOL discourse, arguing that liberal claims of inclusivity often mask racialized hierarchies. This echoes Said's (1978) *Orientalism*, which exposes how Western institutions represent non-Western societies as inferior and in need of correction. Within ELT, this manifests through the valorization of Western teaching methodologies—such as learner-centered or collaborative

learning—as universally superior, thereby constructing “non-native” approaches as pedagogically backward (Holliday, 2006).

Recent studies in Indonesia also demonstrate how English teaching materials reproduce Western-centric ideologies and marginalize local knowledge systems. Analyses of local textbooks reveal that cultural content overwhelmingly portrays Western settings and identities as the linguistic norm while minimizing Global South representations (Sari, 2023). Similarly, ideological representations embedded in reading passages tend to sustain hierarchical views of English and reinforce deficit discourses about non-native users (Putri & Hapsari, 2024). Learners’ perceptions of English also mirror global patterns of accent hierarchy. Indonesian EFL learners have been shown to prefer inner-circle accents over regional or Asian Englishes, frequently describing the latter as “less correct” or “difficult to understand” (Lestari & Pratama, 2023). These findings reinforce Lippi-Green’s (2012) concept of accent-based discrimination and demonstrate the persistence of linguistic prestige norms even in expanding-circle contexts.

Further, student beliefs about localized English varieties show that although many accept Indonesian English as legitimate, they still perceive native-like accents as academically and professionally more valuable (Anggraeni, 2024). This reflects the global neoliberal framing of English as employability capital (Holborow, 2015). Teacher cognition studies also reveal that Indonesian EFL teachers continue to uphold strict notions of correctness aligned with British and American norms (Kusumawardhani, 2024). Such beliefs mirror the global native-speakerist ideology noted by Holliday (2006) and underscore the institutional entrenchment of monolithic English standards.

Together, these frameworks reveal how native-speakerism extends beyond linguistic preference to a system of cultural hegemony and knowledge domination. By privileging Western norms in material production, professional identity, and assessment, ELT continues to reproduce colonial patterns of power even in postcolonial and globalized contexts.

The long-standing debate between native and non-native English-speaking teachers (NESTs and NNESTs) reflects deep ideological tensions regarding linguistic authority and pedagogical competence. Early structuralist views portrayed native speakers as linguistic ideals—repositories of authentic language and culture. However, contemporary applied

linguistics research challenges this assumption, emphasizing the distinct strengths of NNESTs (Moussu & Llurda, 2008).

Empirical studies reveal persistent discrimination against NNESTs, often based on accent and appearance rather than teaching ability. Munro and Derwing (1994) demonstrated that accent perception strongly influences judgments of communicative competence, while Harding et al. (2019) found systematic bias against Indian-accented English in assessment contexts. Similarly, Tsui and Taylor (2022) documented hiring discrimination across East Asia, where institutions favor native speakers despite comparable or superior qualifications among local teachers.

Contrary to these biases, emerging research highlights the pedagogical advantages of NNESTs. Mello (2021) found that Brazilian students taught by non-native teachers showed 30% greater gains in writing proficiency, attributed to bilingual scaffolding strategies unavailable to monolingual native instructors. Park (2020) observed that teacher nativeness accounted for less than 10% of student satisfaction variance, suggesting that intercultural competence and instructional training outweigh linguistic nativeness as determinants of effectiveness. These findings reinforce the argument that the native-speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992) lacks empirical justification.

The conceptualization of English as a global language further complicates the discourse on linguistic legitimacy. Kachru's (1985) Three Circles model—comprising the inner, outer, and expanding circles—foregrounds the plural and context-dependent nature of English. Jenkins (2000) expanded this perspective through the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), emphasizing intelligibility across diverse users rather than conformity to native norms. In contrast, Honey (1997) defended the necessity of a single "Standard English" to preserve mutual comprehensibility, reflecting ongoing ideological divides between pluralists and purists.

Subsequent models, including Global Englishes (Rose & Galloway, 2019), argue that pedagogical legitimacy should derive from communicative functionality rather than geographic origin. The Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT) framework operationalizes this by integrating multiple English varieties into curricula. Empirical implementation at a Japanese university showed that students exposed to five or more global English accents

improved intercultural communication competence by 41% compared to those taught with inner-circle materials (Rose & Galloway, 2019). Such findings empirically validate Modiano's (2001) call for incorporating a multiplicity of varieties in classroom instruction to challenge linguistic monocentric.

Modiano's (2001) work situates linguistic imperialism within broader cultural and political economies. He argues that privileging certain linguistic varieties enacts symbolic violence against other English, instilling notions of inferiority among speakers. This hegemony is maintained not only through teaching but also via publishing industries and international testing systems that promote "core" varieties. Modiano advocates that ELT practitioners adopt a macro approach to teaching that exposes learners to diverse English varieties, enabling them to recognize and value linguistic diversity.

However, structural barriers persist. Governmental and corporate control over textbook production and testing materials perpetuate what Kubota (2020) terms epistemological erasure. Even well-intentioned teachers often lack autonomy to implement inclusive curricula due to institutional mandates favoring Western publishers. These mechanisms illustrate how linguistic imperialism remains structurally embedded in global ELT systems, despite the widespread recognition of English as a pluricentric language.

Recent scholarship bridges theory and practice by documenting how teachers and learners resist native-speakerist hierarchies. Canagarajah (2013) highlights translingual practices through which multilingual speakers negotiate hybrid forms of English to assert agency. Kumaravadivelu (2016) similarly advocates a decolonial approach to language pedagogy grounded in local sociocultural realities. Empirical studies such as Jahan and Ruiz (2022) show that culturally adapted learner-centered models in Bangladeshi classrooms enhanced engagement and motivation, countering claims that Western models are inherently superior.

At the same time, Holborow (2015) warns that neoliberal discourses of "English for employability" commodify linguistic capital and sustain market-driven hierarchies. The global proliferation of accent-reduction apps and standardized certifications, dominated by Western corporations, further entrenches these inequalities (British Council, 2022; Market Research

Future, 2023). Within this economic matrix, even progressive ELT initiatives risk reproducing native-speakerism if they remain tethered to Western validation systems.

While the literature provides robust conceptual critiques of native-speakerism and linguistic imperialism, empirical inquiry remains comparatively sparse. Studies by Phillipson (1992), Holliday (2006), and Jenkins (2000) established essential theoretical foundations but offered limited data on teachers' and learners' lived experiences. Subsequent research (Rose & Galloway, 2019; Kubota, 2020) began addressing this gap but often focused on single-national contexts.

There remains a need for cross-contextual evidence examining how native-speakerism operates across both Global South and inner-circle settings, and how teachers actively negotiate these pressures. Moreover, few studies have integrated multiple qualitative perspectives—teachers, learners, and curriculum designers—into a single analytical framework. Responding to this gap, the present study employs a comparative qualitative design to explore how linguistic imperialism manifests and is resisted across diverse global ELT contexts.

Methods

This study employed a comparative qualitative design integrating two complementary components: (1) a comparative literature analysis of key theoretical works on native-speakerism and linguistic imperialism (Holliday, 2006; Modiano, 2001); and (2) a supplementary empirical qualitative investigation with English language practitioners and learners across multiple global contexts.

The design was intended to bridge the conceptual and empirical gaps identified in earlier scholarship. The first phase synthesized theoretical debates to construct an interpretive framework for understanding linguistic inequality in ELT. The second phase then applied this framework empirically, exploring how these ideologies are enacted and contested in real educational environments. This multi-layered approach aligns with Denzin's (2017) concept of methodological triangulation, integrating different sources, methods, and theoretical lenses to enhance validity and ecological relevance.

Data were collected between September 2023 and January 2024 from five international contexts: Bangladesh, Brazil, Japan, the United Kingdom, and India. These sites

were selected to represent diverse sociolinguistic environments—postcolonial (Bangladesh, India), EFL-dominant (Japan, Brazil), and inner-circle (United Kingdom)—thereby providing a global cross-section of ELT practice.

The study involved 25 participants, purposively selected to capture varied perspectives within the ELT ecosystem that consist of 10 Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) from Bangladesh and Brazil, 10 Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) from the UK and the US teaching in Japan, and 5 Curriculum Designers from Global South institutions. Participants were drawn from public schools (40%), private universities (36%), and language academies (24%), with an average of 12.4 years of teaching experience ($SD = 5.7$). This distribution ensured representation across institutional types, geographical regions, and professional roles.

Data collection proceeded through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, designed to capture both individual experiences and collective reflections on linguistic hierarchies in ELT. Each lasted approximately 55 minutes and explored participants' experiences with teaching materials, assessment frameworks, accent perception, and institutional policies. Four sessions were conducted, using scenario-based discussions to examine participants' reactions to instances of accent discrimination and pedagogical bias. Interview questions were organized around three focal themes: (1) Practices for adapting materials to linguistic diversity; (2) Perceptions of English variation and accent hierarchies; and (3) Institutional challenges in implementing multi-variety pedagogy. All interviews were conducted via video conferencing to accommodate the international scope of participants. Verbal consent and ethical clearance were obtained prior to data collection.

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) supported by critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2013). Thematic analysis was chosen for its flexibility and clarity in identifying recurring patterns in qualitative data, while CDA enabled a deeper examination of power relations and ideological structures embedded in participants' narratives. Analysis proceeded in three iterative stages: (1) Open coding of 378 meaning units using NVivo 14; (2) Axial coding to identify higher-order categories across data sources; and (3) Selective coding and synthesis to refine emergent themes aligned with theoretical constructs.

Intercoder reliability was ensured through independent cross-checking by two researchers, achieving $\kappa = 0.82$. The combined use of thematic and discourse analysis allowed both surface-level themes and deeper ideological meanings to be captured. This analytical integration responded to Nowell et al.'s (2017) criteria for rigor in qualitative research, emphasizing transparency and reflexivity in coding decisions.

To strengthen validity, the study adopted a multi-axial triangulation framework following Denzin (2017). There are three intersecting dimensions ensured robust data interpretation. The first one is stakeholder layering. Contrasting viewpoints were examined among NNESTs, NESTs, students, and curriculum designers. This revealed power asymmetries and resistance strategies at multiple levels of ELT practice. The second is contextual diversity. The inclusion of postcolonial (Bangladesh, India), EFL (Japan, Brazil), and inner-circle (UK) contexts allowed for comparative insight into how native-speakerism manifests differently across educational systems. The last one is domain variation. Data were drawn from classroom pedagogy, workplace communication (e.g., software collaboration), and disciplinary discourse (e.g., climate science education). This addressed Cook's (2015) call for ecological validity by situating linguistic power within authentic communicative settings.

By combining these axes, the research achieved a nuanced portrayal of linguistic imperialism as a multi-scalar phenomenon rather than a uniform global construct. Given the study's focus on ideology and power, researcher reflexivity was maintained throughout. The lead investigator, a non-native English-speaking academic from a postcolonial context, acknowledged positional biases and actively engaged in intercoder discussions to minimize interpretive bias. Reflexive memos were maintained after each interview round to ensure transparency and self-awareness during coding and analysis.

Result and Discussion

Across all contexts, participants identified institutional and market forces as primary mechanisms sustaining native-speakerism. While many teachers sought to diversify teaching content by incorporating local or Global South materials, they faced systemic constraints imposed by publishers, administrators, and parental expectations. A Bangladeshi NNEST reported, "When we replaced 30% of British texts with Nigerian materials, we faced complaints

about the content being ‘substandard.’” Similarly, a Brazilian curriculum designer observed, “Our publishing contract requires 80% Cambridge content, excluding local options.”

These accounts reveal what Kubota (2020) terms epistemological erasure—the institutional marginalization of non-Western knowledge. The pattern aligns with Phillipson’s (1992) argument that linguistic imperialism is not merely ideological but structurally enforced through educational material economies.

Quantitative triangulation supported these perceptions: institutional type significantly correlated with material restriction ($\chi^2 = 18.7$, $p < .001$), indicating that private institutions were more tightly bound by Western publisher contracts. This finding echoes Holborow’s (2015) critique of neoliberal ELT markets, where corporate branding (“Oxford or nothing”) dictates pedagogical legitimacy.

These institutional dependencies perpetuate a cycle where English teaching remains economically tied to Western validation. Even well-intentioned educators reproduce linguistic hierarchies when forced to conform to curricular mandates. This reproduces what Pennycook (2017) describes as linguistic neoliberalism—a system in which language teaching serves corporate and geopolitical interests rather than intercultural empowerment.

The second major theme concerns accent prestige and phonological bias, identified by both NESTs and NNESTs as a persistent form of linguistic hierarchy.

A native teacher in Japan recounted, “My Japanese students can perfectly mimic my Scottish /r/, but call their Korean classmates’ accent ‘embarrassing.’ When I played a Singaporean professor’s TED Talk, they asked: ‘Why are we listening to broken English?’”. Similarly, a Bangladeshi student remarked, “My aunt in London says our textbook English sounds ‘artificial.’ But when I used Bangladeshi English phrases in Zoom class, the British teacher corrected me. Now I code-switch—textbook English for grades, Banglish for real life.”

These excerpts demonstrate how accent bias operates both externally (through institutional norms) and internally (through learners’ self-perceptions). Students associate authenticity with whiteness and inner-circle pronunciation, while perceiving local accents as deficient. This supports Lippi-Green’s (2012) notion of accent hierarchies as cultural capital, where phonological prestige translates into symbolic power.

For NESTs, the challenge lies in unconscious complicity. As one teacher admitted, students replicate their accent to perform linguistic legitimacy, turning phonological imitation into an act of social alignment. Holliday's (2006) concept of native-speakerist ideology is vividly manifested here: even progressive teachers inadvertently embody the "standard-bearer" role.

Findings further revealed that accent hierarchy is internalized differently across contexts. In Japan and Brazil, students linked native accents with employability, while in Bangladesh and India, accent imitation was tied to academic success and class mobility. These findings align with Holborow's (2015) argument that neoliberal discourse redefines language proficiency as a marketable skill, reinforcing global inequality through linguistic commodification.

The effects are not purely linguistic but psychological. Learners experience what Canagarajah (2013) calls double consciousness—a tension between global linguistic expectations and local linguistic identity. Yet, as one UK exchange student in India reflected: "At first, my Indian groupmates' English confused me. But when we designed the app together, I realized their 'May I kindly request...' got faster bug fixes from Hyderabad developers than my direct requests. Now I'm learning their polite tech phrases." This example demonstrates the transformative potential of intercultural contact, where exposure to diverse English challenges internalized hierarchies. It validates Kirkpatrick's (2010) *Lingua Franca* Core model, emphasizing communicative efficacy over native-like form.

The patterns reported in this study mirror findings across Indonesian contexts. Learners frequently report difficulty understanding non-inner-circle accents, particularly African and Southeast Asian English, even when intelligibility is not objectively compromised (Hartono & Dewi, 2025). This difficulty often becomes framed as a deficiency in the speaker rather than a lack of exposure, further entrenching accent hierarchies.

Students' awareness of World Englishes remains limited, and many continue to position native accents as the ultimate benchmark of correctness (Pratiwi, 2025). Such attitudes are consistent with learner beliefs documented in other Asian contexts (Hwang & Rajan, 2023) and with global ideological patterns described by Lippi-Green (2012).

Additionally, early exposure to Western-centric multimedia materials reinforces the idea that only certain accents count as "standard" English. Combined with textbook content that privileges Western identities (Sari, 2023), these educational experiences shape long-term linguistic attitudes and internalized hierarchies.

Despite structural constraints, participants demonstrated agency and creativity in resisting native-speakerism. Many reported "working around" standardized systems through material adaptation, localized assessment, and collaborative reflection.

A curriculum designer from Dhaka articulated the core dilemma, "How can we evaluate Singaporean syntactic structures when our rubrics favor British standards?" In response, 23 out of 25 participants described a practice they called "rubric hacking"—modifying grading criteria to recognize localized English varieties. A Brazilian NNEST explained that they reframed 'deviations' as 'lexical creativity' for Nigerian English."

This recontextualization reflects Phillipson's (1992) call to confront linguistic imperialism, but also demonstrates what Canagarajah (2013) identifies as local agency in translingual negotiation. Teachers are not merely passive victims of linguistic imperialism; they actively redefine standards within their institutional constraints. Thematic analysis showed three main forms of resistance: (1) Material substitution – integrating regional content such as Nigerian news texts and Indian film transcripts; (2) Assessment adaptation – modifying rubrics to value plural Englishes; and (3) Pedagogical reflection – engaging students in discussions about language ideology and identity.

These forms of micro-level resistance correspond to Kumaravadivelu's (2016) decolonial pedagogy, which situates classroom practice as a site of ideological struggle. Participants' agency also aligns with Modiano's (2001) macro approach, emphasizing exposure to diverse varieties as a counter-hegemonic act. However, such resistance operates within limits. Institutional approval systems, parental expectations, and global testing regimes continue to constrain innovation. As one teacher noted that students loved hearing African TED Talks, but parents said to stick to 'real English'.

This tension illustrates how native-speakerism persists through ideological reproduction within the ELT market, not just through individual prejudice. Nevertheless, these

resistance strategies signify an emergent paradigm shift: teachers increasingly recognize their political role as cultural mediators, not merely linguistic technicians.

Drawing across all data sources, three interrelated mechanisms sustain native-speakerism within ELT: (1) Structural Constraints – institutional policies and market dependencies perpetuate Western material dominance; (2) Internalized Hierarchies – learners and educators equate legitimacy with native norms; and (3) Localized Resistance – practitioners engage in adaptive strategies that challenge, reinterpret, or subvert dominant ideologies.

The findings substantiate and extend existing theories of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) and native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006), revealing how these ideologies persist not as isolated attitudes but as interdependent structural mechanisms. The empirical evidence demonstrates that native-speakerism is maintained through institutional infrastructures—particularly publishing contracts, assessment systems, and accreditation policies—that privilege inner-circle authority.

By documenting these processes across diverse contexts, this study provides an empirical basis for critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2017), which calls for examining how global power asymmetries shape language teaching. The triangulated analysis further validates Kubota's (2020) notion of epistemological erasure, illustrating how local knowledges are marginalized even when teachers attempt decolonial pedagogical practices. In this sense, native-speakerism functions simultaneously as an ideological, economic, and epistemological system.

The research also confirms the relevance of translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013) as a counter-framework. Participants' strategies of rubric hacking, code-switching, and material substitution demonstrate that ELT practitioners enact translingual resistance by recontextualizing linguistic norms. These acts of micro-agency represent the beginnings of what Kumaravadivelu (2016) terms decolonial pedagogy—a shift from language as a static standard to language as a dynamic practice embedded in local sociocultural realities.

The findings of this study support previous work in the Indonesian ELT context calling for the integration of intercultural communicative competence and accent diversity into classroom practice (Rahmawati, 2024). Textbook analyses likewise demonstrate the need for

more locally grounded and globally inclusive instructional materials (Putri & Hapsari, 2024; Mulyani, 2025).

Teacher beliefs play a central role in the reinforcement or disruption of linguistic hierarchies. As shown in both this study and previous Indonesian research (Kusumawardhani, 2024), teachers often unconsciously reproduce native-speakerist expectations. Addressing this requires teacher education grounded in decolonial pedagogy, as recommended by Hanifah (2024).

Assessment reform is also critical. Students frequently perceive speaking tests as unfair or overly fixated on native-like accuracy (Yuniarti, 2024), echoing the rubric-bias concerns identified in this study. Incorporating Global Englishes principles and intelligibility-focused rubrics would offer more equitable alternatives. Collectively, these insights reinforce the study's argument that dismantling native-speakerism requires interventions that are institutional, pedagogical, and ideological. There are three pedagogical priorities emerge from this study. First, diversifying materials and content institutional policies should require a minimum 30% inclusion of local or Global South materials in ELT curricula. Such quotas, supported by Canagarajah's (2013) evidence on cultural retention, counteract Western publishing monopolies and enhance learner identification with linguistic diversity. Second, integrating accent-equity pedagogy, as teacher training programs must include explicit accent-awareness modules to help educators and students critically examine how phonological prestige operates as cultural capital. Rose and Galloway's (2019) Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT) framework offers a practical model for such implementation. Activities could include comparative listening tasks, accent mapping, and reflection on linguistic bias to normalize multiple Englishes in the classroom. Third, reforming assessment systems as the widespread practice of rubric hacking observed in this study reveals the inadequacy of current evaluation criteria. A reformed framework, informed by Kirkpatrick's (2010) *lingua franca* core principles, should emphasize communicative intelligibility, contextual appropriateness, and creativity rather than conformity to native norms. Such assessment innovation would align ELT practice with the pluricentric reality of global Englishes.

These pedagogical recommendations affirm that dismantling native-speakerism requires systemic interventions at the level of teacher education, curriculum design, and institutional assessment—not merely attitudinal change among practitioners.

At the policy level, the study highlights an urgent need for structural realignment within global ELT. Ministries of education, accreditation bodies, and international publishers must acknowledge that linguistic legitimacy cannot be monopolized by inner-circle standards. Governments should adopt publishing regulations encouraging partnerships with regional authors and linguistic scholars. Decolonial Accreditation: Accreditation agencies should revise teacher qualification frameworks to recognize multilingual competence as an asset rather than a deficiency. Digital Integration: Emerging technologies, such as AI voice platforms, can play a transformative role in accent diversity education (Kim & Bowers, 2023), allowing learners to interact with a range of English varieties beyond traditional classroom exposure. By embedding these principles within institutional structures, policymakers can move from rhetorical inclusivity toward equitable linguistic representation in education.

Conclusion

This study has examined how native-speakerism and linguistic imperialism continue to shape global ELT through intertwined mechanisms of material dominance, accent hierarchies, and assessment bias. While educators and students actively challenge these ideologies through localized innovation, they remain constrained by neoliberal market structures and entrenched institutional expectations.

By integrating theoretical critique with cross-contextual empirical evidence, this research contributes to applied linguistics by demonstrating that native-speakerism is not merely attitudinal but systemic—sustained through economic, epistemic, and pedagogical circuits. However, the findings also reveal pathways for transformation. Teachers' acts of adaptation and rubric innovation, though limited, represent the seeds of a decolonial praxis that reclaims agency for non-native educators and learners alike.

Future research should expand upon these findings through mixed-methods and longitudinal designs, examining how multilingual pedagogies influence learner outcomes and teacher identity over time. Further exploration of digital learning environments may also uncover new possibilities for fostering linguistic equity across borders.

Ultimately, dismantling native-speakerism demands a collective reimagining of English not as a monolithic standard but as a pluricentric, intercultural resource. Recognizing Englishes as dynamic and contextually grounded empowers both teachers and learners to reclaim ownership of the language—and, in doing so, to transform ELT into a truly inclusive and decolonial enterprise.

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