

English as Lingua Franca or World Englishes? Two approaches to achieving linguistic justice for all

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ABSTRACT: One of the key ways to realizing linguistic justice, as alluded to by Phillippe van Parijs (2011), is to welcome the use of English as a global lingua franca. Linguistic justice is defined as the condition in which the languages of linguistic groups are accorded official recognition, and the speakers do not suffer from social, economic, and dignity inequality on the basis of their language. However, the acceptance of English as an international language, as pointed out by many scholars, including Van Parijs himself, can also lead to potentially unjust linguistic situations. There are, in particular, three issues that come with the use of English as a global language, and they are (1) inequality in communication; (2) unfair resource allocation; and (3) lack of speaker dignity. This paper will provide a review of how political philosophers have talked about these problems, and the normative solutions to achieving linguistic justice. The aim of this article is to provide a linguistic perspective to the issue of linguistic justice. The author endeavors to do so by looking at linguistic justice through the lens of two dominant paradigms in the field of English linguistics: the World Englishes (WE) paradigm, pioneered by Braj Kachru; and the English as Lingua Franca (ELF) paradigm, a relatively more recent alternative developed by Jennifer Jenkins. The tenets of how each paradigm views speakers of English around the world are compared and a solution to the problem of linguistic justice is offered by thinking about “Englishes” instead of a single monolithic linguistic entity “English”. In doing so, efforts are made to highlight how linguistic justice can be achieved in the world of Englishes.

KEYWORDS: Linguistic justice, World Englishes, English as a lingua franca, global language, language planning and policy

논문초록: 필리프 판 파레이스 (Van Parijs, 2011)가 암시한 바처럼, 언어정의(linguistic justice)를 실현하는 핵심적인 방법 중 하나는 전 세계적 국제공용어(lingua franca)로서의 영어 사용을 환영하는 것이다. 언어정의는 다양한 언어집단의 언어가 공식적인 인정을 부여받으며, 화자들이 언어에 기반한 사회적, 경제적, 존엄적 불평등을 겪지 않는 상태로 정의된다. 그러나 판 파레이스 본인을 포함하여 많은 학자들이 지적했듯이, 국제어로서의 영어를 수용했을 때 잠재적으로 불공정한 언어상황을 초래할 가능성 역시 존재한다. 세계어로서의 영어 사용에는 특히 세 가지 문제가 수반되는데, 바로 (1) 커뮤니케이션에서의 불평등, (2) 부당한 자원배분, (3) 화자의 존엄성 부재이다. 본 연구는 이들 문제에 대한 정치철학자들의 논의, 그리고 언어정의 달성을 위한 규범적 해법을 검토하고자 한다. 이를 위해 본 연구는 영어학 분야를 지배하는 양대 패러다임의 시각에서 언어정의를 고찰하는데, 하나는 브라지 카츠루(Braj Kachru)가 선도한 '세계영어(WE)' 패러다임이고 다른 하나는 제니퍼 켄킨스(Jennifer Jenkins)가 개발하여 상대적으로 최근에 제시된 대안, '국제공용어로서의 영어(ELF)' 패러다임이다. 본 연구에서는 각각의 패러다임이 세계 전역의 영어 화자를 바라보는 관점의 원리를 분석하고 비교하는 한편, 단일한 언어 개체로서의 '영어(English)' 대신 다양한 '영어 이형(Englishes)'에 대한 고찰을 통해 언어정의 문제에 대한 해법을 제시한다. 이를 통해 본 연구는 다양한 영어 이형이 공존하는 세상에서 언어정의를 달성할 수 있는 방안을 집중조명하고자 한다.

핵심어: 언어정의, 세계영어, 국제공용어로서의 영어, 세계어, 언어계획 및 정책

1. The English Problem and Solution

For many speakers in the world who have the ability to use English, the spread of English as a global language is undoubtedly a major benefit. Having a shared language facilitates communication and links people across national borders that may otherwise have been linguistically and culturally impenetrable. On an individual level, English can also be used as a tool of individual empowerment and socio-economic progress (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). And according to Philippe van Parijs (2011), the global spread of English is even necessary to achieve resource equity and democratic progress worldwide, thereby realizing linguistic justice. Linguistic justice, according to Van Parijs (2011), is defined as the condition in which the languages of linguistic groups are accorded official recognition, and the speakers do not suffer from social, economic, and dignity inequality on the basis of their language. More specifically, to achieve linguistic justice, it requires “strong institutions on a scale that reaches far beyond linguistically homogeneous

communities and that the political feasibility and sustainability of such institutions has linguistic preconditions that can be satisfied only by the spreading of a lingua franca” (Van Parijs, 2015, p. 231). For Van Parijs (2011), English fits the bill, and welcoming it as a global lingua franca is the key to achieving linguistic justice for all.

However, the acceptance of English as an international language, as pointed out by many scholars, can also lead to potentially unjust linguistic situations. Phillipson (2008) likens English to an Anglo-American Frankenstein, and because English is not culture-free (Phillipson, 2009, p. 92), it becomes an agent that promotes and perpetuates Anglo-American linguistic imperialism, therefore extending the political and economic dominance of the English-speaking world. Numerous scholars on linguistic justice, including Van Parijs (2011) himself, have also detailed the problems of privileging English as a global language. This seemingly leads to a conundrum as well as a contradiction. Is English what Soler and Morales-Gálvez (2022, pp. 2-3) describe as “an either-or type of language, either hegemonic-dominating or liberating-empowering”? How can English be both the source of linguistic injustice and the solution to achieving linguistic justice? Given the problems associated with having English as a global lingua franca, what might be the ways in which linguistic justice can still be achieved? Would thinking about “Englishes”, instead of a single monolithic linguistic entity “English”, resolve the conundrum as pointed out above? In the rest of this paper, I look at linguistic justice through the lens of two dominant paradigms in the field of English linguistics: the World Englishes (WE) paradigm, pioneered by Braj Kachru (e.g., Kachru, 1992, 1985, 1976, 1965); and the English as Lingua Franca (ELF) paradigm, a relatively more recent alternative developed by Jennifer Jenkins and colleagues (e.g., Jenkins, 2006, 2002, 2000). As I unpack and compare the tenets of how each paradigm views speakers of English around the world, I argue that it is indeed possible to achieve linguistic justice, but only in the world of Englishes. Before going into the two paradigms, I lay out in simpler terms, linguistic justice as presented by Van Parijs (2011).

2. English for Linguistic Justice

Philippe Van Parijs is the first to provide a normative account of linguistic justice, first in the form of a series of articles (e.g., Van Parijs, 2008, 2007, 2004,

2002), before culminating in the first monograph ever written on the topic. In the first chapter of his book, *Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World* (2011), Van Parijs presents the highly controversial and contentious point arguing strongly for English as a global lingua franca as a normative solution to achieve linguistic justice. He states:

This common demos, in turn, is a precondition for the effective pursuit of justice, and this fact provides the second fundamental reason why people committed to egalitarian global justice should not only welcome the spread of English as a lingua franca but should see it as their duty to contribute to this spread in Europe and throughout the world. (Van Parijs, 2011, p. 31)

For Van Parijs, having one single lingua franca in the world makes for efficient communication. While it is possible to adopt any language for this purpose, it makes sense to pick English because it is a language that is already spoken by a large number of speakers worldwide. David Crystal (2008, p. 5) estimates English to be spoken by 2 billion people worldwide as of 2008, with such a large following mostly attributed to how it is the language learned as a foreign language by the greatest number of speakers around the world. And since English is already used by so many speakers, it has become a necessary good. This also means that speakers are likely to see its usefulness and therefore feel motivated to learn it. Over time, English will likely become the only common language of communication in multilingual and multicultural conversations. To put it bluntly, English is already on track to be a global lingua franca, and there is no need to reinvent the wheel. In fact, for Van Parijs, the push for English to be the world's sole lingua franca should not only be embraced, but accelerated. This line of thinking and argument has led to extensive debates and discussions on this topic over the last decade (see, for example, special issues on the topic in *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* (De Schutter & Robichaud, 2015), and *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (Soler & Morales-Gálvez, 2022)). While I will not rehash the debates here, it is necessary to lay out the three key tenets of Van Parijs's argument at this juncture. And these are the three tenets I will come back to later in the piece.

Van Parijs acknowledges that while it is necessary to have English as a global lingua franca, it can only be done if these three conditions are met, failing which will lead to linguistic injustice; and they are: (1) equality in

communication; (2) fair resource allocation; and (3) maintenance of dignity. The following is a brief summary of the key points, in which I will first outline the injustices that will emerge with English as the global lingua franca, based on De Schutter's (2018, pp. 170-176) illuminating exposition, followed by Van Parijs's explanation of how these injustices can be eliminated.

2.1 Equality in Communication

This first tenet is based on the idea that there will be unequal opportunities accorded to speakers of different languages, and the way to mitigate this is to even out the losses caused by the inequality. When inequalities arise in the opportunities made available to speakers resulting from the language(s) they speak or do not speak, there is communicative injustice. In the case of having English as a lingua franca, this injustice is between native Anglophone speakers, and non-native learners of English together with non-speakers of English. Given the emergence of a new lingua franca, it is inevitable that there will be opportunities made available to those who speak the language, disadvantaging those who do not speak it, or those who do not speak it as well as the native speakers. What this means is that native speakers of English will be in demand to fill jobs that require English, and English will also become an asset in many jobs that did not traditionally require English. And this injustice goes beyond job opportunities. In most cases, native speakers can generally be said to be more fluent and confident in English, compared to speakers who have learned English only after learning their first language(s) and those who use English functionally. Especially from the psycholinguistic standpoint, if these non-native speakers only start learning English after passing the critical age of language acquisition, it is likely that it will inevitably become near-impossible to reach a native standard of the language, no matter what learning strategies are employed (e.g., Lenneberg, 1967; Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978). When it comes to using English to get opportunities in life, therefore, it is conceivable that the learners of English will be at a distinct disadvantage compared to the native speakers.

Van Parijs's response to this problem is to suggest "accelerating the dissemination of the lingua franca beyond the elite of each country" (Van Parijs, 2011, p. 116). What this means is that English will no longer be just for the native speakers or the privileged elites. What used to be considered a distinct advantage will no longer be so when the world population uses

the same language. And for him, a cheap way of making it possible for the world population to learn English is to ban dubbing, as he claims that there is evidence showing a higher proficiency in English in countries where English-language movies are subtitled but not dubbed.

2.2 Fair Resource Allocation

This second tenet is based on the idea that there should be equal contribution of resources to achieve a common good that everyone enjoys. Creating a lingua franca for international communication will require all speakers to learn this language to begin with. Yet, for English to be the global lingua franca, the burden of learning English lies solely on the shoulders of the non-native speakers of English. This is a case of resource injustice. There is injustice because the learning of any language involves investments of resources including time, energy and money, and this burden is borne by non-native speakers of English. According to Gazzola and Grin (2013, p. 97), there is a staggering difference in the time and effort spent on language learning between native and non-native speakers of English, the latter which can expend several thousands of hours of learning and practice in order to have “some degree of fluency in the language”. The injustice here is all the more striking in consideration of the fact that the extra expenditure carried by the non-native speakers is in order to transform a language that is someone else’s native language into a common vehicular language that presumably benefits everyone. Not only are native speakers free-riding on the expenditure of the non-native speakers, but to make things worse, native speakers are also the recipients of these investments. Native speakers are the stereotypical providers of English education and of the materials on which they are based. In the same vein, students seeking an English-based education are likely to go to schools and universities in English-speaking nations. This then becomes a good source of revenue for the English-speaking nations. Native speakers are not only free-riding, but also double-dipping at the expense of the non-native speakers.

To this, Van Parijs proposes that native speakers need to bear the cost proportional to the benefits they receive from the non-native speakers in the creation of the lingua franca. This could be in the form of a tax to subsidize the learning of English by the non-native speakers. However, since it is unrealistic to expect Anglophone nations to pay such a tax, Van Parijs

suggests an alternative, and that is retaliatory free riding. Given that English-speaking countries are free-riding on the non-native speakers' learning of the global lingua franca, non-native speakers should retaliate by poaching the web. He claims that since there is a lot of English-based content on the web, non-native speakers should take whatever is available from the web in the learning of English. This retaliatory move will therefore suffice in balancing out the resource inequality suffered by the non-native speakers.

2.3 Maintenance of Dignity

This third tenet can be said to be the pillar of Van Parijs's defense of linguistic justice. While the previous two tenets are economically based, this third one goes deep into the heart of one's being. Language is not merely a means to an end, but marks one's identity, culture, and world-view. Having English as a lingua franca would therefore result in a situation where respect and recognition are accorded to English speakers by virtue of the fact that their language has a special superior status. This leads to dignity injustice, which has also been the most problematic and contested of the linguistic injustices suffered by non-English speakers. This is grounded on the idea that people generally value their own language, and when a particular language is accorded a superior status, it automatically accords the speakers of this language higher prestige than others. In Van Parijs's (2011, p. 141) own words, speakers whose language have not been chosen or accorded any status of importance have to "bow linguistically" to those whose language has been chosen. Therefore, while speakers of English will never feel the loss of dignity since English is the chosen global lingua franca, non-English speakers will undoubtedly suffer from a sense of inferiority. Moreover, on top of suffering from a lack of dignity, they also lose their right to their worldview. This is what De Schutter (2018) calls the life-world injustice, which is that when one adopts a particular language, its connected cultural life-world also gets adopted. This is based on an early Herderian (see Herder, 2002) and later Whorfian (Whorf, 1956) idea that language shapes the way we see the world. Not granting speakers the right to speak their own language will cut them off from the life-world their ancestors had access to, and making speakers learn English will correspondingly impose an English life-world upon them. De Schutter (2018, p. 175) goes as far as to say that this is a "colonisation of non-English life-worlds, not by the system but by another life-world, that of

Anglo-American culture”.

Van Parijs’s solution to this is the invocation of the Principle of Linguistic Territoriality. The idea is to make every vernacular language the “Queen” of each territory, and to impose coercive language policies ensuring proficiency in the local language necessary if one chooses to settle in that territory. This will create parity of dignity because every language community will still have their own language for them to express their identity, pride, culture, worldview, on a territory of which the language is sovereign. Whatever dignity is lost in the use of English outside the territory, one gets it back in the use of one’s own language in one’s territory.

As can be seen thus far, making English as a global lingua franca brings with it a host of problems that will lead to further injustices to the non-native speakers. While Van Parijs (2011) has offered possible solutions to mitigate the injustices, strategies like banning dubbing and poaching the web, while creative, can be deemed frivolous, to say the least. As Réaume (2015, p. 158) points out, “Hollywood blockbusters and sit-coms certainly would not prepare anyone to write a grant proposal, a brief to parliament for a land use planning body, or even op-ed piece.” The proposed coercive territoriality regime to maintain the dignity of speakers is also idealistic, and while possible in principle, the execution of it depends almost entirely on how territories (linguistic or otherwise) have been drawn through the passage of time and history. Whether or not states can impose any kind of coercive language regime to ensure the sovereignty of each vernacular language depends also on many other local concerns, of which ensuring the dignity of speakers in the scheme of English as a global lingua franca is probably not a priority for many states with other pressing problems to solve. However, this is not to say that Van Parijs’s proposal of English as a global lingua franca is without merit. The problem, which I will argue for in the rest of the paper, is the way English has been conceptualized by Van Parijs.

3. The English(es) Paradigms

One of the major criticisms Van Parijs has received over his linguistic justice model is his monolithic view of English. De Schutter (2018, p. 168) points out how Van Parijs and his followers have held “naïve assumptions about language and in particular of the ‘discreteness’ concept of language, the

idea that languages are territorially demarcated, are easily distinguishable, and that people always have one clear mother-tongue (L1) identity.” May (2015) argues along the same line but goes on further to criticize Van Parijs for working with a hegemonic view of English. For May (2015, p. 134), Van Parijs’s “monolithic conception of English stands in contradistinction, not only to the actual plethora of Englishes in the world today, but also, more importantly, to their widely varying status and use(fulness) in furthering cross-communication and related notions of social and economic mobility.” What Van Parijs has also failed to account for, according to May, is the multiplicity of Englishes in the world today, and that it is only the high-status forms of English that helps bring about mobility to the speakers. For these critics, having Englishes in the world only serves to complicate Van Parijs’s linguistic justice model. What is also implied in these critiques is that Van Parijs’s conception of linguistic justice sorely lacks a dose of linguistic reality, as well as engagement with issues outside of normative political philosophy.

Indeed, the World Englishes (WE) paradigm has been the dominant approach in the field of sociolinguistics for the past fifty years. Pioneered by Braj Kachru with his Three Circles model (1985), the premise is that there are many Englishes in the world, and each variety, while different, is legitimate in its own right. The central belief in the WE paradigm is that different Englishes in the world embody unique sociological and cultural expressions. Therefore, Singapore English, Indian English, Hong Kong English, Korean English, British English, are all different varieties of English, because they have all evolved under different sociopolitical circumstances, and they also express different cultural nuances. While they may sit in different circles in Kachru’s model, they are no better or worse than one another. If they are different structurally, the differences can be explained by the evolutionary mechanisms of language evolution. The literature on the WE paradigm is rich and diverse, and it would not be possible to capture them all here. There are however some key ideas shared across the research on WE studies, especially in that the WE paradigm places importance on three linguistic conditions—structure, culture, and identity.

In the WE paradigm, all Englishes can be distinguished from one another based on their linguistic structures. The forms of Englishes differ because all Englishes develop out of language contact situations, and nativization is a necessary process for the development of each variety of English. Depending on what vernacular languages English comes into

contact with, linguistic features will be mixed and transferred, causing unique features (e.g., loanwords) to enter the English lexicon over time. This explains why we see a large number of Malay loanwords in Malaysian English, and an equally good number of Korean loanwords in Korean English, etc. This process then leads to the enculturation of every variety of English, each of which now encapsulates a unique cultural product. Specifically, each English is encultured within a national boundary. Taking Singapore as an example, the English that has been nativized within Singapore's national boundary becomes Singapore English precisely because of the language contact situation found within the national boundary. Speakers who now speak Singapore English are now using this language as part of their cultural output. With this enculturalization taking place in different national boundaries across the world, unique communities of speakers are formed, within which speakers find themselves identifying with the specific English they speak. The variety of English they speak becomes part of their linguistic repertoire through which they can now express themselves with, and also use that as part of their linguistic identities. The variety of English they speak is no longer just another foreign language, but is a language that represents who they are, and where they come from.

Incidentally, in the past decade or so, there has been an increased popularity amongst linguists in the English as Lingua Franca (ELF) paradigm, a split-off from the WE paradigm. One of the primary reasons for this split is that the WE paradigm has seemingly neglected the Englishes in the Expanding Circle. These Englishes tend to be in countries where English is not one of the official languages, such as Japan, Korea, and China, and it has been difficult for speakers of these Englishes to feel as empowered as speakers in the Inner and Outer Circles who have had English as a common language in their countries. ELF therefore is introduced as a way to level the playing field. ELF is defined as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7). Therefore, any use of English that fits the above definition is in fact ELF, and ELF belongs to everyone who uses the language. In this paradigm, like WE, English is said not to belong to the traditional "native" speakers. Like WE, ELF is also about the "legitimate use of English in its own right" (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 24). However, because there is only ELF, there are no Englishes in its multiplicities, marking a major difference between the ELF and WE paradigms. The major differences

between the WE and ELF paradigms can also be explained by the way they view linguistic structure, culture, and identity.

ELF does not subscribe to linguistic structures. In fact, ELF resists codification. ELF is transient, a snapshot of a moment of encounter between speakers who make use of English. While ELF researchers collect and make use of corpora to describe ELF, the purpose is not to document and codify the linguistic features. Instead, the aim is to understand how speakers make use of linguistic strategies in English to achieve their communicative goals. Incidentally, in the process of doing so, what is observed is that all the linguistic features used will be considered as situated within a “shared common ground” (Jenkins, 2009, p. 201). Even if they were to be considered ungrammatical or unidiomatic if taken from the traditional native-speaker perspective, they would work extremely well within ELF-based communicative settings, which are described to be liberal and all-encompassing in nature.

ELF also does not enculture language. In fact, it cannot do so, because it is meant to be a fluid “liberating additional means of communication” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 80). As a means of communication, there is no need for cultural knowledge to use ELF, and as a result, speakers will also not form any cultural attachment to their production of ELF. When speakers use ELF in an interaction, no culture or group sets the linguistic agenda. The purpose of ELF communication is mutual communication and effort to be understood, without any need for special attention or accommodation to any specific cultural norms. The outcome of this is that speakers use ELF not as any kind of variety or variant of English, but simply as a “lect”—a more “neutral” way of conceptualizing ELF (Mauranen, 2017, p. 9) that allows it to avoid being representative of any nation, group, or type. For Jenkins (2013), this is a particularly important point because ELF represents a post-national sphere of globalization, unlike WE, which she claims is a reflection of the age of nationalism. For Jenkins (2013, p. 28), ELF is “so bound up with globalization that it is no longer realistic to talk of Englishes, be they native, nativized, or foreign, only in a national sense.” Therefore, this means that the lack of a culture tied to the usage of ELF also means that there is no identity or esteem tied to the usage of ELF. ELF does not belong to anyone, and therefore cannot be claimed to be an identity marker for any user of ELF.

It truly is a coincidence that Van Parijs’s idea of having English as a global lingua franca seems to have developed in a separate universe from the

ELF paradigm, given that both have emerged around the same time, share common ideals, and have also utilized similar terminologies. In fact, apart from De Schutter (2018) and more recently Soler and Morales-Gálvez (2022), the two sets of conversations on English as a lingua franca have not crossed, and there has been little engagement on trying to connect linguistic justice to linguistics. In the next section, I aim to make the connection between linguistic justice and the WE paradigm, and in doing so, this would be, as far as I know, the first to undertake such an endeavor.

4. ELF or WE for Linguistic Justice?

How can each paradigm help in resolving the linguistic justice problem as presented by Van Parijs? According to De Schutter (2018), while ELF is an attractive model, it not only fails to resolve the problems of linguistic injustice, it even intensifies some of the problems. In what follows, I go back to Van Parijs's three tenets in the linguistic justice model and compare how ELF (based on De Schutter, 2018) and WE fare for each point.

4.1 Equality in Communication

As we recall, this first tenet is grounded on the idea that having English as a global lingua franca would result in unequal opportunities for speakers and non-speakers of English. If we simply take English as a monolithic entity, in other words, one that is pegged to the traditional “native” speakers of the language, then there is a huge gulf to be bridged before learners of English can reach that same level of competence or confidence. However, if we take English as ELF, like what the ELF paradigm has been advocating, then the ideology of the “native” speaker disappears, and with that, there is no need to attain that “native”-like competence. Would reframing English as ELF help our case though? De Schutter (2018) claims it would not.

As De Schutter (2018) has pointed out, the fact that ELF does not believe in standardization and codification does not mean that speakers do not make mistakes when speaking the language. As long as speakers do not know what is considered good or bad ELF, one would never know what would be considered an acceptable form of ELF for employment, or even for basic communication. In essence, no matter the packaging—English or ELF, fluent

speakers of ELF will still be at an advantage over the less competent speakers.

On the other hand, this communicative disadvantage gets reduced when one does not think about English (or ELF for that matter), but Englishes in its multiplicities. The WE paradigm sees all Englishes as equal, each developed uniquely out of their national boundaries, and their evolutionary processes dependent on language contact situations. What this means is that every nation or territory by default, has the potential to develop a variety of English they call their own. Each variety of English, through its own nativization process, will develop linguistic forms unique to their own locale. Kachru's (1985) Outer Circle Englishes, such as those in Singapore, India, and Nigeria, are even said to be developing their own norms in the linguistic structures of these Englishes. Since every variety of English has its own norms, this also means that the speakers of each variety of English will be the most competent speakers of their own variety. Take, for example, a speaker of Singapore English in conversation with a speaker of Indian English. No speaker can be said to be disadvantaged over the other. Just as the Singapore English speaker will have to understand and learn to work out the nuances of Indian English, the Indian English will likewise have to work as hard to communicate with the Singapore English speaker. To be fair, ELF does not discourage speakers from asserting their cultural backgrounds. Jenkins (2013, p. 35) has argued that speakers can "introduce their own cultural norms to ELF speakers from other backgrounds" by codeswitching between ELF and their own vernacular languages, and therefore marking their own cultural background. However, it is important to remember that ELF does not believe in fixed linguistic structures, so these cultural or national references will never be permanent. If anything, they are temporary snapshots of a communicative encounter. In WE, however, any kind of cultural or non-English inferences is part of the linguistic code. Speakers of different Englishes are therefore operating on the basis of having a shared language which, for the most parts, is comprehensible to each other, but yet different structurally from one another. The communicative disadvantage is therefore evened out.

4.2 Fair Resource Allocation

This second tenet is based on the idea that there should be equal contribution of resources to achieve the common good that is English as a global lingua franca for everyone to enjoy. ELF advocates like Wright (2015) claim that if

ELF becomes the norm for international communication, then everyone, not just the non-native speakers, would need to put in resources in order to speak ELF. Wright describes interaction as “dialogic creativity with speakers using linguistic repertoires to create meaning in context”, which then requires all speakers, native and non-native English speakers alike, to acquire “the toolbox to appropriate, calibrate, repair and re-present” (2015, p. 122). She also argues that “the monolingual (native English speaker) is not privileged”, because although ELF is indeed close to native varieties of English, the majority of native speakers are not as “form-focused” on the normative prescriptive rules of the language as they have been thought to be, with “professional linguists” being amongst the few speakers wielding the stability of being “oriented to the prescriptive and the normative” standards of the traditional Englishes (Wright, 2015, p. 122). This will allow the world to achieve equality in terms of resource allocation and investment.

However, as De Schutter (2018) points out, choosing ELF as the international language of communication does not approximate parity. Traditional English and non-English speakers do not start on even footing when it comes to acquiring ELF. Even if one were to push for the idea that ELF is something that everyone has to acquire, it is a fact that speakers who already speak English have a much easier time trying to acquire ELF as compared to speakers who do not yet speak English. In fact, speakers who do not speak English will have more work to do. They will first have to learn English before they can understand and then learn what ELF is. ELF is not an entirely new language which no one in the world speaks, unlike Esperanto, a constructed language that has to be learned from scratch by all speakers, which allows everyone in the world to begin from the same starting point. While still technically a European-based language, researchers such as Brosch and Fiedler (2018, p. 529) suggest that Esperanto possesses features that considerably reduce the “degree of unfairness” for non-European learners, along with surveys showing that non-European learners have an easier and quicker time acquiring it than ethnic languages like English. From this perspective, the potential injustice dealt by ELF becomes all the more apparent. Again, calling it English or ELF, as long as it is a monolithic linguistic entity, there will not be equal resource allocation when it comes to having English as a *lingua franca*.

Acknowledging that there are different Englishes attached to each locality reduces a potential global injustice into a national affair. The

evolution and development of a variety of English is due to a confluence of factors in each linguistic ecology, and these factors include sociohistorical conditions, sociolinguistic contexts, language policies, and speakers' identity construction (see Schneider's Dynamic Model (2007) for more details on how Englishes evolve). These Englishes are products of language contact, and the creation of these Englishes does not involve extra cost. Speakers of each variety of English will learn and use their own variety of English as part of a natural process of living in the territories where these Englishes are found, be it Ireland, Iceland, or Indonesia. How each state decides to allocate resources to language acquisition in their own nation is then dependent entirely on the state's language policies. The inequality comes about only if one insists on having a particular type of English as the global lingua franca, because then resources have to be allocated to master that type of English. However, if all Englishes are given free rein to develop, and speakers are free to speak their own variety of English without a reference to a prescribed native-speaker 'standard', then there really is no extra burden to be borne. If there were to be a disadvantage, that would be for the monolingual English speakers. It is not by chance that the WE paradigm is most actively applied in multilingual nations—after all, World Englishes develop out of language contact situations, and multilingualism is the default setting for language contact. Multilingual states will now see their citizens being proficient in their own variety of English, as well as other vernacular languages of their land. If English(es) become the world's lingua franca, then there is no real advantage for anyone with some form of English. Instead, the advantage will go to those with more languages in their linguistic repertoire, because the number of languages one speaks correlates positively with the amount of transnational linguistic capital they possess (Gerhards, 2014). Hence, the key takeaway here is that as long as a speaker possesses English in their repertoire, having other languages constitutes useful additions that further enhance their linguistic capital. Overall, the more languages one is equipped with, the more assets one can be said to have. And once the multilingual speaker becomes the norm to survive in the global economy, monolingual English speakers will now have to put in more resources to learn more languages in order to keep up with the competition.

4.3 Maintenance of Dignity

This third tenet, the maintenance of dignity, is perhaps where we can best observe the potential merits of the WE paradigm. This third tenet is based on the idea that having English as a lingua franca would therefore result in a situation where respect and recognition are accorded to English speakers by virtue of the fact that their language has a special superior status, and speakers who do not speak this language will feel inferior and therefore lose dignity. Making speakers learn English will also impose an English life-world upon them, making them lose their sense of culture and tradition.

The ELF paradigm has been set up with the purpose to empower speakers who were previously believed to be non-native speakers of English. The powerful rhetoric invoking dignity, esteem, and recognition, is also peppered across ELF literature. ELF scholars claim that the very existence of ELF restores dignity to non-native speakers of English, as it allows everyone to speak ELF with confidence. ELF also strips the native speakers of the right to own English. ELF is something that belongs to everyone, and in that regard, it is owned by no one. The native speaker therefore can no longer make claims to linguistic ownership of English, or as De Schutter (2018, p. 188) puts it, native speakers lose their status because “their native tongue is suddenly seized, and changed, by others”. And since ELF belongs to no one, there will no dignity loss when speaking ELF. As Seidlhofer (2011) claims, “once one thinks of English as ELF, then the language obviously no longer poses the same threat of domination” (p. 68).

However, according to De Schutter (2018), these do little to reduce the dignity injustice to ELF speakers. The crux of the problem lies with the fact that ELF resists standardization and codification. And there are many situations in life, e.g., academic publishing, formal speeches, job interviews, that will still call for standard forms of English usage. One cannot say that we can use ELF in any form and fashion as we like simply because we are all ELF speakers. Ultimately, one will end up going back to a reference point, and since ELF does not believe in codification and therefore cannot provide a standard code, there is no choice but to go back to the old native-speaker model. The injustice to non-native speakers remains.

The WE paradigm, like the ELF paradigm, shares similar ideals in terms of empowering speakers, though in WE's case, the speakers speak different varieties of English. The WE paradigm also makes use of similar rhetoric

invoking dignity, esteem, and recognition. However, as described in the earlier sections, ELF deculturalizes English, whereas WE enculturates Englishes. The process of nativization in the linguistic forms of World Englishes leads to the enculturation of every variety of English, and each English now becomes a unique cultural product. And as communities of speakers are formed, the variety of English they speak now becomes part of their linguistic identities. In the same vein, World Englishes now become the means via which speakers can not only access their life-world, but also partake in the co-creation of the language variety that gives them this world-view.

More importantly, the WE paradigm accords linguistic ownership to the speakers of their own variety of English. According to Foo and Tan (2019), speakers can claim linguistic ownership if they (a) have the ability to use their own variety of the language; (b) are confident in their ability to make judgements in their own variety of the language; and (c) this variety of language forms their identity. It is apparent that speakers within the WE paradigm can comfortably make claims to linguistic ownership of their own varieties of English. This is unlike ELF, which resists the formation of community and the construction of identity. As no one can make claims to own ELF, all ELF speakers are equally powerless. Conversely, in WE, all speakers can claim to own their own variety of English. This ability to claim ownership is an act of empowerment, giving speakers dignity and esteem.

Specifically, each English is encultured within a national boundary. As De Schutter (2018, p. 179) aptly sums up, “whereas the World Englishes movement is concerned about nationalising language, ELF is about globalising language”. This is reminiscent of Van Parijs’s Principle of Territoriality, which is to make every vernacular language the “Queen” of each territory. This, according to Van Parijs, creates parity of dignity because every language community will still have their own language for them to express their identity, pride, culture, worldview, on a territory of which the language is sovereign. With the WE paradigm, we can now see the Principle of Territoriality at work, except it is not just vernacular languages, but each variety of English as the “Queen” of each territory. Speakers can now have dignity in their territory, through the use of their own variety of English.

5. Conclusion

Can thinking about “Englishes”, instead of a single monolithic linguistic entity “English” or ELF, help resolve the problems of linguistic injustice? This paper has argued that it certainly can. Having Englishes in the world repairs the communicative, resource, and dignity inequality as highlighted in the three tenets of the linguistic justice model. Furthermore, thinking about English(es) allows us to localize and contextualize linguistic justice according to the speakers and their communities’ actual linguistic practices and beliefs. Instead of relying on the abstract, transient, and temporary ideals of ELF, WE is empirically grounded and remains committed to linguistic codes and processes. Most importantly, WE provides speakers and their communities a way to construct their identities, giving them ownership of their language, and the resultant pride and esteem that come with that claim of ownership. Linguistic justice most certainly can be achieved, but only in the world of Englishes.

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Professional Profile

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