

More than Teach: English Teachers' Advocacy in the Online Globalized Era

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Abstract: This paper reviews how language educators and researchers have responded to issues in the online era, such as globalization, transnational migration, and global challenges. Online technology has triggered increasing globalization of businesses and has become a powerful means of communication for individuals in establishing and developing relationships across national boundaries. Furthermore, it has served to raise awareness of social, economic, and environmental challenges of the 21st century. In spite of its positive effects, online technology development results in a more demanding world which requires individuals to enhance their competitive ability. Improving the quality of education is paramount in strengthening the quality of human resources. Based on the review of language educators' and researchers' responses toward issues in the online era, the writer considers what English educators, particularly those in Indonesia, can do to advocate the enhancement of education quality through their roles as teachers, researchers, and community members.

Keywords: *globalization, language educators, online technology*

Abstrak: Makalah ini mengulas bagaimana para pendidik dan peneliti bahasa telah menanggapi isu-isu di era online, seperti globalisasi, migrasi transnasional, dan tantangan global. Teknologi dalam jaringan (online) telah memicu meningkatnya globalisasi bisnis dan telah menjadi sarana komunikasi yang penting bagi masyarakat dunia dalam membangun dan mengembangkan hubungan lintas batas negara. Selain itu, teknologi online telah meningkatkan kesadaran akan tantangan sosial, ekonomi, dan lingkungan abad ke-21. Terlepas dari efek positifnya, pengembangan teknologi online menuntut sumber daya manusia untuk meningkatkan kemampuan kompetitif mereka. Peningkatan kualitas pendidikan sangat penting dalam memperkuat kualitas sumber daya manusia. Berdasarkan tinjauan terhadap reaksi para pendidik bahasa dan peneliti terhadap isu-isu di era online, penulis memberikan rekomendasi mengenai apa yang dapat dilakukan oleh para pendidik bahasa Inggris, khususnya yang ada di Indonesia, untuk mengadvokasi peningkatan kualitas pendidikan melalui peran mereka sebagai guru, peneliti, dan anggota masyarakat.

Kata-kata kunci: *globalisasi, tenaga pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, teknologi dalam jaringan*

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The development of online technology has disrupted many aspects of living due to its function in enhancing distant communication and transfer of information. For example, it increasingly promotes the globalization of businesses. It also supports transnational migrants in maintaining their relationships with their home countries. Online technology serves as a means for transferring and obtaining information about the global social, economic, and environmental challenges. In the field of education, online technology enhances distant learning and, thus, enables e-learning to be more widely used. Although, online technology development enhances standards of living, it poses challenges for individuals to strengthen their competitive ability. Therefore, improving the quality of education is paramount in improving the quality of human resources in the online globalized era.

This paper firstly discusses issues related to the development of online technology and how it contributes to globalization. Then, it explores current trends in English language teaching and research related to globalization. Finally, it considers possible ways that English educators can take to advocate the quality of human resources in their roles as teachers, researchers, and community members.

Online Technology and Globalization

In the increasingly globalized world, more and more people no longer associate themselves only with their local communities. Instead, they also build affiliations with the global community through online platforms, such as social media, e-learning applications, and interactive games. This phenomenon is influenced by cosmopolitanism, a view of the world which concerns "transgression of boundaries and markers" (Stevenson, 2003, p.332). In the cosmopolitan belief, the world is seen as one entity.

Appadurai (1990) argues that globalization involves five cultural flows, namely

flows of people (ethnoscapes), flows of technology (technoscapes), flows of money (finance-scapes), flows of information (media-scapes), and flows of ideas (ideoscapes). Ethnoscapes involves people who shift across geographical and cultural locations, such as immigrants, tourists, refugees, and guest workers. Technoscapes refer to the transmission of technology. Cultural exchanges are supported by the flow of technology, especially the internet which enables online interactions. Financescapes are the flow of money and commodity across national borders and enables free exchanges of goods. Mediascapes involves the use of media in transferring information and ideoscapes refer to the transmission of ideologies. Ideoscapes often relates to mediascapes in the sense that ideologies are often transferred through media. Appadurai's (1990) idea implies that globalization concerns physical and non-physical movements of people and cultural products across national borders. Non-physical movements are afforded by the use of online technology.

In terms of social connections, internet technology serves a significant role in maintaining relationships among relatives and friends across geographical distances. This is especially important for transnational migrants and people whose family members reside in countries other than their own. Online media has assisted world citizens in creating an interactional co-presence among family members who live in different parts of the world and introduces new ways of "doing family" (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2016, p. 202). Those media have helped people, such as Filipino mothers who work outside of their country, in conducting parenting duties toward their children who stayed home (Madinaou, 2012). Online technology also enables the exchange of information and self-representation among adolescents from various countries through transcultural digital literacy practices (Kim, 2015).

Disruptions due to online technology development in the field of business lead to

business globalization (Kilkki, Mantyla, Karhu, Hammainen, & Ailisto, 2018). Online globalized companies such as *Amazon*, *Grab*, and *Uber* allow sellers and buyers of products and services to connect with each other through their online applications. These companies' networks have expanded to many parts of the world without bearing the necessity to open physical stores in every location of their businesses. In Indonesia, the online application created by *Gojek* has taken over much of the transportation business with its ride-hailing application. Channel NewsAsia (2018) reports that *Gojek* Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Nadiem Makarim is expanding his business to Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines. Companies such as *Amazon*, *Grab*, *Uber*, and *Gojek*, facilitate the flow of information through their online applications. In conjunction with the transfer of information, those companies have strengthened new ideologies or beliefs in doing business which opposes the traditional ways which involve direct (non-online/face-to-face) communication. The ideology of free trade is becoming more salient. In addition to supporting the flows of business ideologies, online media (e.g. electronic newspapers, electronic journals, and websites) also facilitate the flows of other ideologies including environmentalism and human rights (Block, 2013).

The world undoubtedly offers increasing opportunities due to the development of online media. However, it also poses challenges. World Economic Forum (2016) reports a list of global challenges which includes economic issues (i.e. income inequality, global trade and investment, long-term investment, and global finance), agricultural issue (i.e. food security), environmental issue (i.e. climate change), social issues (i.e. healthcare, unemployment, and gender equality), and issues concerning the future of internet. This list suggests that it is necessary to improve the global economic system in order to minimize

income inequality, find solutions to world hunger, overcome environmental damages due to climate change, provide better healthcare, minimize unemployment, promote gender equality, and maximize internet security and protection of personal identities.

To pursue opportunities and overcome global challenges, individuals must equip themselves with competitive skills and knowledge. Thus, education becomes increasingly important. Because English is a primary means of communication in the global society, English teachers have a strong ability to empower their students and the community in which they live through professional and community services. English teachers can contribute to education quality improvement by providing language skills that enable people around the world to obtain and exchange ideas, to exchange knowledge of necessary skills, and to work together. Current trends in English language teaching and research show how English educators have responded to the issues of online technology use and globalization.

Trends in English Language Teaching and Research (ELT)

In her online post on Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association website, Lindahl (2017) suggests that there are five trends in English Language Teaching: 1) translanguaging, 2) global Englishes, 3) online teacher education, 4) social media for language education, and 5) advocacy. These trends are the results of how language teachers and educators' have responded to the current global issues.

Translanguaging

Ethnoscapes creates the emergence of new multilingual communities around the world. Within these communities, translanguaging is often found. Garcia and Wei (2014) define the term "translanguaging" as a process in which

language speakers make use of all of their linguistic repertoires without being limited by defined language boundaries. Teachers use a fluid approach in teaching and accept the various languages that students speak in the classroom rather than prohibit them (Lindahl, 2017). Wei (2017) asserts that translanguaging emphasizes on the use of multimodal and multisensory. He argues that “human beings have a natural drive to draw on as many different sensory, modal, cognitive, and semiotic resources as they are available to them” (p.17). Gallo’s (2013) dissertation research on Mexican-American families, for example, affirms this argument. Her study shows that research participants make use all of the linguistic and semiotic resources they have to construct meaning in conversations. This mode of communication is mostly true among English learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting as well as English as a Second Language (ESL) settings in which classrooms are attended by transnational and/or multilingual learners.

Global Englishes

In the last three decades, professionals in the field of ELT have become familiar with the term “World Englishes”. Kachru (1986) formulates the “three circles model” for World Englishes which consists of the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. The inner circle constitutes countries (e.g. United Kingdom and United States of America) considered as owners of English. The outer circle constitutes United Kingdom post-colonial countries which have adopted English as a secondary national language (e.g. India, Jamaica, Nigeria, Singapore, and the Philippines). The expanding circle consists of countries which were not under the colonization of Britain but uses English for communication with other countries. These countries include China, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and other countries where English does not serve as a national language or used in daily conversations. These divisions contribute to the

categorization of Englishes, namely English as a Native Language (ENL), English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as an International Language (EIL) (Bolton, 2012). Kachru’s model reflects the hegemonic imperialist power of English as a Native Language which asserts that successful acquisition of English is reflected when the learner acquires native-like English accent and proficiency.

Although Kachru’s model of World Englishes established a recognition toward the post-colonial forms of Englishes, Canagarajah (2012; p.58-59) argues that the notion of “World Englishes “doesn’t go far enough in pluralizing Englishes or reflecting the dynamic changes in communicative practices” as reflected by varieties, such as Campus Kiswahili in Tanzania (an outer-circle country) and Chicano English in the USA (an inner-circle country). The notion of Global Englishes, in contrast, recognizes these varieties and the hybrid nature of English. However, it does not mean that standard English is not important. Instead, Global Englishes permits teachers to see the varieties in students’ languages more positively (Shelton, 2007). As a result, perspectives on English learning and teaching changes and Non-native English Speaker Teachers (NNESTs) are more widely accepted.

Online Teacher Education

With the more widely accessible internet and computer technology, e-learning has become a current trend in language teachers’ professional development. This system of learning provides greater opportunities for English teachers who do not reside in proximal distance to language education centers. A study conducted by Daniel et al. (2016) reveals that teachers are comfortable with online learning and believe that learning through online coursework is effective when the course is organized flexibly and instructors are available in providing positive feedback. Information of

such online courses is available on the internet. Websites, such as TESOL International Association (www.tesol.org), American English (americanenglish.state.gov), and British Council (<https://www.britishcouncil.pt/en/teach/online-teachertraining>) offer online courses for English teachers including those that are free.

Social Media for Language Education

The existence of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp has undoubtedly changed the way people communicate with each other across the globe. Internet-mediated communication replaces the use of cassettes tapes by parents who work away from their countries (Madianou & Miller, 2011). Social media platforms give access to worldwide connection and collaboration. It enables globalization of individuals without physical movements to other countries. Additionally, social media allows people to communicate in a variety of languages and, thus, become significant platforms for language exposure. Although social media users sometimes do not understand each other, meaning-making of interactions can be supported by applications (e.g., online dictionary and Google Translate).

For transnational individuals, social media serve more than just as means of communication and maintenance of relationship with their home countries. Those media also serve as means of maintaining cultural identities and heritage languages. A breadth of research has shown the significance of social media in language and cultural exposure among transnational individuals. Lam's (2009) study examines how instant messaging contributes to the maintenance of local, translocal, and transnational affiliations for a Chinese adolescent. Yi's (2008) research shows how two Korean-Americans fluently transport across Korean and English in their multimodal interactions (i.e., through the internet and paper-based writing). Yi (2009) refers to online communication by

1.5 generations of Korean youth as an effort to "stay locally, but act globally" (p.118). In more recent studies, Christiansen (2015) examines how Facebook interactions in a Mexican-American community assist in the construction of the community members' *ranchero* identity. Christiansen (2017) explores how Mexican-Americans' interactions through social media demonstrates the continuance of cultural practices from their homeland and, thus, maintaining their transnational affiliation.

Advocacy

The community in which we live is a complex mix of groups of people with various ethnic, religious, cultural, and socio-economics backgrounds. Lindahl (2017) asserts that teachers should always reflect on what they have done to ensure fair access to education for the English learners in the classrooms, schools, and communities. Kinloch (2018) highlights that educators should continually consider four components of teaching (i.e. how we teach, what we teach, why we teach, and who we teach). These four components require educator's investments to engage with students inside and outside of the classroom. "How we teach" involves pedagogical choices, interactions with students and others, and using languages based on equity, inclusiveness and humanity. "What we teach" includes the choice of materials which should include marginalized intellectual traditions to ensure inclusivity of all students. "Why we teach" involves a reflection on the reasons for becoming teachers. "Who we teach" includes caring about students, understanding their backgrounds, and realizing that, as students are being taught, they are also educating the teachers. Teachers have the responsibility of making the "necessary disruptions" through implementing approaches grounded in humanity (Kinloch, 2018).

Bearing in mind the challenges in the online globalized era and reflecting on the current trends in ELT and existing teacher

education, the following question arises: what roles do English educators serve to enhance the quality of human resources? In the following section of the paper, the writer discusses English teachers' roles in advocating the enhancement of education quality.

English Teachers' Advocacy

Lindahl (2017) and Kinloch (2018) suggest the necessity of extending the roles of teachers inside and outside of the classroom to advocate equality and improvement of education. Indonesian Act No.14 2005 (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2005) regulates that teachers transform, develop, and extend knowledge through education, research, and community involvement. English teachers are able to make the "necessary disruptions" using language as a powerful tool in their roles as educators, researchers, and community members.

English Teachers as Educators

As educators, English teachers have the ability to empower students not only with knowledge and skills of the English language and literacy. They also have the ability to develop students' knowledge about other fields of study, such as science, arts, and humanities. Furthermore, English teachers have the power to assist students in developing their characters and personality. With necessary knowledge of various fields along with good character and personality, students will be more ready in facing challenges throughout their lives.

Content-based approach in language teaching has been utilized as a way in extending knowledge that students need (Richards & Rodgers, 2016). In line with the current trend in English teaching, extension of content knowledge can be done by using multimodal materials (e.g. printed books and magazines, e-books, and online videos). Availability of online learning allows teachers to improve their teaching and their English skills to be extended to

students. In conjunction, the mastery of the English language and support of online technology, students are able to access knowledge from all over the world.

There is a necessity for a growing realization that students are not passive receivers of knowledge. Instead, through education in families, schools, and communities, students develop independency and agency. In other words, students have the ability to develop their own knowledge and extend their knowledge to others. Moll et al. (1992) proposed the notion of "funds of knowledge", that is knowledge students obtain from cultural practices from within their families and communities throughout their daily lives. Furthermore, Moll et al. (1992) argue that by eliciting students' funds of knowledge, teachers can help students in connecting information they obtain in the classroom to the information and experiences they receive out-of-school. For example, when teaching about evaporation, students can relate the knowledge to the process of heating water at home. As students share their funds of knowledge, they also contribute to increasing the knowledge of other students' as well as their teachers'.

Funds of knowledge are important in assisting students to develop their character and personality. Through their use of online media, students receive an abundant amount of information outside of school which may influence the way they think and feel as well as the way they treat others. While they are exposed to positive information, students are also subjected to information about hate and violence. Information of hate and violence toward minority communities, for example, may trigger fear in minority students. On the other hand, it may elicit students' empathy toward the victims and/or hate toward the persecutors and the community that the persecutors belong to. Kinloch (2018, p.10) a question: "What would it look like if we gather together and establish a sustainable teaching and learning agenda that rejects hate and foregrounds love,

justice, and freedom?”. One of the ways to reject hate, encourage empathy, and support inclusiveness, justice, and freedom is to involve students in dialogues. Using literature (e.g. children’s books, short stories, and novels) is an example of methods that language teachers can do to initiate dialogues with their students through engaging activities of read aloud and critical responses toward the readings (Parr & Campbell, 2012).

English Teachers as Researchers

In their daily activities, teachers observe, evaluate students, and leverage learning to increase students’ knowledge. Therefore, teachers are constantly examining their classrooms. Officially, in Indonesian classrooms, teachers are regulated to conduct action research (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015) to leverage learning. In English classrooms, research may also include analysis of teaching content. For example, Pratama and Yuliati (2016) observe how global issues are integrated in English teaching. In their words “English teachers should be able to equip students to be more understanding and showing more respect to their surrounding” (Pratama & Yuliati, 2016, p.719).

Other possible studies include research in families and communities. The previous section mentions Gallo’s (2013) research on translanguaging in Mexican-American homes. Lam’s (2009) and Yi’s (2008 & 2009) online language and literacy studies illustrate how adolescents preserve their 2017) research shows how immigrant youth and families preserve identity and transnational relationships through online social media. These studies may bring understanding toward marginalized communities. Research also shows the use of online media to connect children’s lives in school and at home (Gillen & Kucirkova, 2018).

There is much to be examined in families and communities in Indonesia. Research on socio-economic condition of families, in

example, may inform families’ affordability and limitations in providing children with English education. Studies on family and community language practices inform the richness of language and cultural background of the community which, eventually, encourage acceptance toward the multiple languages and cultures that students bring into the classrooms.

English Teachers as Community Members

By being knowledgeable and skilled educators and active researchers, teachers contribute to establishing good communities. In other words, their involvement as community members includes their roles as educators and researchers. Language teachers and researchers such as those mentioned previously (i.e. Christiansen, 2015 & 2017; Gillen & Kucirkova, 2018; Lam, 2009; Pratama & Yuliati, 2016; Yi, 2008 & 2009) advocate for the communities they observe. Their roles as teachers and researchers support their activism for the communities, which some of them also belong to. English teachers in Indonesia can also contribute directly to the communities by volunteering and serving directly in the community. Examples of such contribution may be in the forms of various actions, such as conducting language trainings, establishing community libraries, and giving information about education opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Online technology has leveraged the globalization of businesses, become a powerful means for transnational communication, and raise awareness of social, economic, and environmental issues. The challenges in the online globalized era have called responses from English educators’ and researchers’. Their responses are reflected on the current trends in the field: translanguaging, global Englishes, online teacher education, social media for language education, and advocacy. Through their roles as educators, researchers, and community members, English teachers can

use language as a powerful tool in advocating the improvement of education quality. Their roles illustrate that they do more than just teach. They help their students and their communities turn challenges into opportunities.

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