

## **Iranian Critical ELT: A Belated but Growing Intellectual Shift in Iranian ELT Community**

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### **Abstract**

*Reviewing and discussing the development of critical studies in the field of applied linguistics in general and English language teaching (ELT) in particular in Iran, this paper attempts to highlight the main contributions in this field. Introducing a new growing critical-oriented shift in Iranian ELT community as the one which has been mostly dominated by the mainstream ELT is the main interest of this paper. To do so, after providing a scene of the past and current situation of English and ELT in Iran, the most outstanding critical works and the recent developments are classified and presented in three categories including a) English linguistic imperialism, b) ELT materials: nature and function and c) critical pedagogy. While this critical movement, directing the ELT from the mere technical learning of language to the more educational, social and political activity, is still in infancy, the development of politically and ethically motivated studies in this field is a clear indication of a growing critical awareness of the mainstream ELT that ignores the political, cultural, social and ethical issues of English and ELT. Undoubtedly these growing critical works, beginning to grow out of neutralism and objectivism that prevent the applied linguists and ELT professionals from engaging in politically and ethically motivated researches, will widen the global and local perspectives of ELT which has been basically confined to the technical aspects of teaching. To be more realistic, some practical hints and suggestions for further studies have also been provided and put forth.*

**Key Words:** English language teaching (ELT), Critical ELT, Iranian ELT community, linguistic imperialism

## 1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, the field of applied linguistics in general and ELT in particular have seen a number of remarkable and major evolutions. Among the foremost developments is the emergence of a newly growing critical-oriented shift which is now firmly established on the applied linguistics agenda worldwide. While the driving forces that have led to the rise of this intellectual shift are various, there is no doubt that its symbolic birth, especially in the field of ELT, dates back to the appearance of Phillipson's *Linguistic Imperialism* in 1992 resulted in raising some outstanding ideas and notable arguments and explanations contrary to the mainstream taken-for-granted ones widespread and current in this field (see Anderson, 2003; Davari, 2013; Ghaffar Samar and Davari, 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Tsuda, 1998).

The influence of this watershed work as well as the following critical ones have led to viewing English and ELT through different critical paradigms in such a way that many mainstream tenets and widespread beliefs in the field of applied linguistics have been challenged. In this regard, Hall (2000) maintains that the writers within the broad and somewhat diverse critical pedagogy paradigm have criticized the current view that sees the globalization of ELT as an inevitable, unproblematic and natural development. Johnston (2003) notes that possibly the most significant development in ELT in the 1990s was the acceptance of this idea that ELT is and always has been a profoundly and unavoidably political activity. In Gray's (2000) words, the appearance of an increasing wave of books has been instrumental in simulating a considerable degree of soul searching within ELT profession. In his words, what these works, as the main representatives of this critical-oriented shift, has had in common is a belief that the global spread of English is inherently problematic, inextricably linked to wider political issues and that ELT practices are neither value free, nor always culturally appropriate.

Not surprisingly, such a situation has led to some controversy surrounding ELT as the most systematic way of spreading English. As a result, it seems logical to see ELT not as a purely pedagogical, but as a socio-cultural, political and ideological issue. In a more precise word, experiencing such a situation, there is no doubt that ELT has undergone some radical changes

and can no longer be confined to the traditional and mainstream pedagogical features and attitudes mostly current in this field.

Following such changes, as Baladi (2007) notes, while teaching of English and English language teaching itself have, for a long time, been seen as clean and safe exports, as a practical means of communication carrying few ethical implications, today there is a realization that teaching and spread of English involve complex moral, social and political implications. Encountering such a new condition which mostly generated in the Center, namely the norm-providing countries where English is the first language including USA and UK, the writers and applied linguists in the Periphery, namely the norm-developing or accepting countries where English is not the native language but used as an official or foreign language, dared to challenge the long-lasting norms, tenets and beliefs transferred from the Center and accepted in the Periphery. In fact, following the advent of this critical-oriented intellectual shift in 1990s which was not confined to the limited scientific circles of the Center, the emerging researchers from the Periphery also fell into step with their Center's counterparts.

This intellectual shift, which can be introduced as a great shift in the conception of the global spread of English and the common norms and practices in ELT, has led to establishing a camp of thought reinforced by the new challenging views of the emerging group of scholars who have questioned the unquestioned tenets. Anderson (2003) believes that prior to this intellectual shift, there were certain unquestioned givens in the professional-academic discourse associated with the global spread of English and this discourse was (and to a certain extent still is) produced and reproduced by English teachers and their professional association such as TESOL as well as by academics, by institutions that propagate the global teaching of English such as the British Council, and finally by the mainly British and American publishing companies that produce teacher education publications and teaching materials.

The appearance of some significant works by Pennycook (1994, 1998 & 2001), Canagarajah (1999), Holliday (1994), etc. also added fuel to the growing debates and awakened the researchers belonged to the mainstream ELT to the significance and position of this new critical trend. This trend has revealed for the Periphery that the teaching of English and English language itself which have for a long time been seen as clean and safe exports involve complex moral and

political implications and as Matsuda (2006) writes, it is necessary to reevaluate and renegotiate the most basic tenets and assumptions vis-à-vis the current sociolinguistic landscape of the English teaching. Thus, it is nothing to be surprised that in this transition, many tenets including the neutrality of English as a mere vehicle of communication, native speaker as the ideal teacher, Center's methods, materials and expertise as the best, etc. were challenged.

Along with this global awakening, belatedly the Iranian ELT community also is going to experience a critical intellectual shift which its description and review are the main interest of this paper. Needless to say that before addressing this issue, it is necessary to review in brief the contextual considerations of the Iranian society as well as its experience and confrontation with English and ELT during the last decades.

## **2. English in Iran: Past & Present**

Reviewing the history of English presence in Iran shows that it has a more recent history and considered, as noted, to be part of the outmost expanding circle.

As Tollefson (1991) writes before the Iranian Revolution in 1979, English was widely taught and studied as part of country's push for modernization, in a way between the mid-1950s and late 1978, English steadily expanded at the most common second language in Iran and became the major language of business, the military, higher education, and the media. In his words, after the Islamic Revolution, English was gradually restricted to areas in which it would be beneficial to newly defined Iranian interests like diplomacy and access to scientific literature. He believes that the end of English domination was associated with the changing structure of power in Iranian society. Studying the position of English in two phases, namely before and after the Islamic Revolution, Beeman (1986) notes that after the Revolution, English was mostly associated with Western subjugation of the Iranian people.

Despite these attitudes to English stance in Iranian society after the Islamic Revolution, it seems that the current status of this language has significantly changed during the recent years, in such a way that it has received particular attention in various areas. As Riazi (2005) writes, a strong need for the use of English language in Iran is obvious. Talebinezhad and Aliakbari (2003) believe that English seems to have smoothly found its way right to the heart of Iranian society,

becoming an undeniable necessity, rather than a mere school subject. In Aliakbari's (2002) words, while English language teaching in Iran has passed through a host of ups and downs and has experienced extreme courses, at present the dominant trend in Iran is toward more English language teaching. Although ELT is a required course in junior high school and is taught three to four hours in a week and in senior high school, it is known as an important course which is taught in all the grades, it is taught in most of private primary schools and even at pre-school levels.

In fact, like many parts of the world, ELT is known as an important educational activity in private sector and also a large business. According to Talebinezhad and SadeghiBeniss (2005), the deficiency of public schools and universities in satisfying students' ever-increasing desire to learn English communicatively has resulted in an extensive and still growing private sector of English teaching in Iran. In this regard, Riazi (2005) states that today in addition to formal private schools offering English language at different levels in their curriculum, there are plenty of private and semi-private English-language institutes and centers that offer courses at different levels and for different purposes.

By all accounts, the teaching of English is thriving in Iran and an astonishing number of English schools are springing up all over this country. Due to some limitations and drawbacks in state educational system, private language institutes have simply attracted an increasing number of learners. Reviewing the teaching trend in this sector as the one which plays the pivotal role in English education in Iran, without any doubt the dominant force driving the Iranian ELT community is the mainstream pedagogy and the increasing English fever can be seen easily especially among the youth.

In higher education also, English has found an important status. According to Talebinezhad and Sadeghi Beniss (2005), universities in Iran also places in which English is taught in a range of independent fields of study such as English Language and Literature, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and English Translation. In such a situation, there is no doubt that the growth of English as a very popular major in Iranian universities has led to graduating many graduates at BA, MA, and PhD levels.

Alongside such a presence, in postgraduate entrance examinations, English is the subject to be examined and even in some universities, passing English entrance exams is a prerequisite to being allowed to take the PhD entrance exams.

Despite this situation, revealing that English and ELT have turned into a fashionable trend, and as a consequence the ELT market has flourished, against the mainstream ideology of ELT there have been some developments of a critical discourse for the past decade. In a more precise word, after only a few years of the advent of critical studies in ELT, the appearance of dozens of critical works in the recent decade indicates that this critical discourse is drawing quite a lot of attention.

### **3. Critical shift in Iranian ELT trend**

In this part, the most important critical developments in three categories are introduced:

#### **3.1. English linguistic imperialism:**

Akbari's (2003) paper entitled *Silent Hegemony: ELT as linguistic imperialism in Iran*, as the first important critical effort made against the mainstream ELT in Iran, was more or less ignored by the mainstream ELT community. In this paper, warning the current status of ELT, Akbari introduced ELT as the main tool of linguistic and cultural imperialism of the West in Iran. For the first time in Iran, the author introduced the concept of linguistic imperialism and the politics of the exploitation which is behind the promotion of English as the world lingua franca especially through ELT as the most systematic way of English spread.

Akbari (2005) also introduces linguistic imperialism as a recent development in foreign language teaching and as a concept which tries to sensitize language teachers to the political complications of what they do in the classroom. Reviewing the premises, mechanisms and outcomes of linguistic imperialism, Akbari notes this fact that since ELT scholars had no real knowledge of what was actually taking place in other countries in which English was taught as a foreign language, they had to resort to the invention and promotion of theoretical knowledge which is basically of a linguistic nature. In his words, through the creation and application of theories which were thousands of miles away from the realities of EFL classroom, Center scholars could secure leadership in the profession, making big publishers their economic allies. Having a look at

the Iranian context, Akbari maintains that while there is no overt resistance to the dominance of the Center in Iranian academic setting, some modifications in the syllabus or textbook structures can be viewed as measures to counter this silent hegemony.

Trying to introduce linguistic imperialism and its impacts in Iran, Aghaei (2009) aims at presenting the ideologies or in his word, the false ideas currently exist in the field of ELT, especially with their probable impacts on learners and teachers. In his critical view, these impacts have made the Iranian English language teachers and learners have native-based opinions and attitudes about English language teaching and learning.

Davari (2011) also, attempting to introduce the concept of linguistic imperialism, its tenets, principles and assumptions, in a comprehensive research tried to study the Iranian ELT community's attitudes to the mainstream tenets versus the new growing critical ones influenced by linguistic imperialism. His findings show that linguistic imperialism position is going to carry special weight alongside the mainstream ELT in Iranian ELT community's perspective. In fact, his findings can be used as a revealing research area in further studies in this field.

In an attempt to investigate the effect of the hegemony of English language on EFL learners' attitudes to learning English and also to probe into whether imported English textbooks affect the lifestyle of Iranian EFL learners, Mohseni and Karimi (2012) conducted a survey among high school students which its results can be fruitful in further research in this field. Introducing the concepts of English linguistic imperialism and hegemony, at the end the authors advised that English teachers raise awareness of their EFL learners at high school level regarding the global status of English, its varieties and especially its implications to power relations in the world.

Introducing the concept of linguistic imperialism and its linguistic and cultural effects, Pishghadam and Naji (2011) presented a novel approach known as *Applied ELT* as a kind of solution or in their words a panacea to linguistic imperialism. Taking a proactive stance towards the global spread of English, Applied ELT offers insights on how English classes can be directed towards fostering national and cultural identity and enhancing life qualities in learners.

Noting this fact that teaching English in an Iranian and Islamic culture poses complex questions for both teachers and learners, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012) in the first place reviewed the

colonial and postmodern views of English language teaching, then took a look beyond the current state of TEFL in Iran, which is marked by its continuing global tendency, and into the future with an emphasis on the importance of including the local specifications of the Iranian culture and religion. In their views, the West has made every effort to ensure that the English language in its pure British and American forms, along with their specific ideological, cultural, and attitudinal views, are kept as uncontaminated as possible by other localities. Since in their words, the continuing global tendency of TEFL in Iran makes the matters even worse, they provide and introduce a kind of approach, namely *Iranian TEFL*, as a successful assertion of Iranian local culture against the cultural and ideological domination of the West, which can be an antidote to the harshness of all marginalizations of Iranians have suffered for centuries.

In sum, reviewing these works indicates some significant and new issues. Firstly, as new attempts, they have taken a look beyond the current state of ELT in Iranian context and have not confined themselves to some purely pedagogical issues. Referring to cultural, ideological, political and religious aspects of the context, these works mostly intend to shed light on the cultural politics of English language, its role and function both locally and globally. Secondly, avoiding an extremist view to reject English as well as insisting on the importance of English and its instruction in the global context, in some of them, along with some theoretical considerations with respect to English language imperialism and hegemony, some notable practical suggestions and solutions have been offered and discussed.

### 3.2. ELT materials: nature & function

ELT materials have drawn Iranian critical ELT professionals' special attention to themselves. Reviewing the critical works in this area shows that the cultural and ideological contents of such materials are of great interest.

In Meshkot's (2002) words, one of the major issues in critical linguistics and language education is analyzing the ideological content of textbooks. In her PhD dissertation, she analyzed two sets of textbooks taught in language institutes in Iran. After extracting, defining and exemplifying their cultural values, she notes this fact that two of the most frequent and important values are hegemony of English and consumerism.



Keshavarz and AkbariMalek (2009), using critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework, examined three aspects of meaning namely social relations, subject positions and contents in the conversations of advanced parts of two series of common textbooks in Iranian English institutes to find out whether there is any discernable ideological orientations. Their findings indicate that both series tend to represent a particular discourse type more dominantly - the discourse of western economy and capitalism which in their words is the backbone of liberalism.

Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010) examined the ideological prompts present in the imported instructional English textbooks in Iran and the learners' attitudes towards English. Their study reveals that these textbooks tend to represent particular ideologies and cultural values and the most prevalent ideologies were hegemony of English, sexism and cultural stereotypes. In this survey, it also was found that institute teachers are aware of ideologies but they are not very much concerned with teaching or raising awareness about them.

Providing a global perspective of English, Sadeghi Beniss (2008), tries to introduce some aspects of ELT especially the center-produced materials as instruments of cultural aggression of the West against the other societies and cultures including the Iranian society and Islamic culture.

Zarei and Khalessi (2010) also note this fact that through globalization, English language expansion is gaining momentum more than ever before. One can hardly discover an education system worldwide where English language finds no prominent place as it is viewed a desirable asset and also the single most important avenue to professional career success. Nevertheless, the spread of English has recently raised concerns and mixed feelings of hope and fear. It is assumed that the unilateral propagation of the language is hegemonically sweeping aside all other cultures and languages. Thus, to unravel the cultural orientations of English textbooks, in their work, the authors provide a practical analysis of two series of books, i.e., Interchange Series which have come to be widely taught and learned across the globe and the secondary school English textbooks developed and used In Iran. In short, their work presents a quantitative and qualitative picture of the contents of the books, revealing in which direction they are culturally skewed.

Baleghizadeh and Motahed's (2010) study examines the ideological content of six internationally-used ELT textbooks, three British and three American. Applying the theory and procedures of critical discourse analysis (CDA), three aspects of the conversations in the

textbooks, i.e. content, relations, and positions were examined. Their findings suggest that while trying to teach English, there should be an attempt to raise the learners' cognizance about the link that English has with the global powers and social inequalities it brings about. And at the same time, they should receive help to articulate counter discourse, that is, to use English to express their own identities and values in their own ways to counter the dominant discourse of the west.

In sum, reviewing these works indicate that to create counter-hegemonic materials, some practical implications and hints for local materials writers have been suggested. The following practical aspects are known as the most essential ones:

- (a) **Using global issues:** To be truly effective, ELT materials should be provided in a way to develop language skills along with learners' awareness of social issues. To achieve this goal, today that learners of English want to become effective users of this language want to become effective users of this language in the global context, integrating global issues, as a missing link in mainstream ELT materials, needs to be fostered. Avoiding some harmless topics such as travel, shopping, festivals, holidays, etc. common in mainstream ELT materials, which, in Akbari's (2008) words, leave little room for social transformation and awareness raising, this critical approach, maintains that provoking topics including world peace, inequality, poverty, environmental conservation can provide suitable content for language instruction. In this regard, the hints provided by Iranian critical applied linguists including Akbari (2008), Rashidi and Safari (2011), Aghagolzadeh and Davari (2012), Erfani (2012), etc. can be revealing.
- (b) **Integrating local topics:** In addition to global issues, this critical trend insists that local issues and real-life concerns, as the ones which are mostly disregarded in commercially-produced textbooks, must be integrated in ELT materials. In this regard, Gray (2002) notes this undeniable fact that most of the current Center-produced ELT materials are thematically and culturally inclusive and inappropriate. According to Akbari (2008), critical pedagogy takes the local as its point of departure and local here includes the overall actual experiences and needs of learners. In his view, commercially produced coursebooks, which form the backbone of instruction in many mainstream language

teaching contexts, lack the required sensitivity to be able to address such concerns and disregard the localness of learning and learning needs. The hints provided by especially Akbari (2008) as well as Aghagolzadeh and Davari (2012), Sadeghi (2008), etc. can be applicable for local ELT materials.

- (c) **Source culture as an asset:** Concerning the global spread of English and the changes which English have been faced with, bringing source culture as the starting point, as Akbari (2008) notes, has an added value of empowering learners by making them critically aware and respectful of their own culture and preventing the development of a sense of inferiority which might result from a total reliance on the target culture. Reviewing the mainstream ELT textbooks shows that, as Gray (2000) writes, the target culture seems to uphold the Center values and living standards, leading to the perception that the target culture is superior to the student's. Avoiding the cultural hegemony of this language in the mainstream ELT materials, integrating source culture in the local ELT materials might be introduced as an alternative approach. In this regard, resorting to Akbari (2008) might be informative. In his terms, the main justification for language learners has been that the successful communication would not be possible without the learners' familiarity with the cultural norms of English speakers, but due to the scope of English usage both communicatively and geographically, most of the communication carried out in English is between non-native speakers of English with distinct cultural identities. So, he concludes that there is little need in such a context for the Anglo-American culture, since neither party is a native with whom the other interlocutor is going to identify.

In all, resorting to the above-mentioned hints in ELT materials development can furnish the learners with this joint goal: social development along with language development. In such a situation, the local ELT materials can provide the sources which are in sharp contrast with the Center-oriented and sanitized ELT materials.

### 3.3. Critical pedagogy in ELT:

Criticizing the mainstream pedagogies including the current approaches and widespread methods, Sadeghi (2005) believes that they often fail to link language with local socio-cultural, political and linguistic context and neglect students' needs, objectives and interests. Thus, like some researchers, she suggests that critical pedagogy should be the vital essence of teaching. In her words, through critical pedagogy, learners do not remain passive recipients of knowledge, not exposed uncritically to ideas imposed from the dominant culture and understand themselves, their needs, objectives and interests. In her words, conventional language classrooms do not have a transformational effect on learners, because they do not address underlying and systemic societal issues such as social inequity, discrimination, violence and poverty. Insisting on increasing critical consciousness among learners, Sadeghi maintains that resorting to critical pedagogy can help students see issues in critical ways that promote their participation and sensitivity to issues.

In a groundbreaking paper, Akbari (2008) provides the features and implications of critical pedagogy in ELT. In his words, critical pedagogy as an attitude to language teaching relates the classroom context to the wider social context and aims at social transformation through education. He believes that the application of critical pedagogy for L2 classrooms can result in the improvement of the lives of those who are normally not considered in ELT discussions. In his opinion, the decentralization of decision making in terms of content, teaching methodology, and testing is of crucial importance in the implementation of critical pedagogy. In his paper, issues such as making use of learners' first language as a source to be utilized, including more of students' real-life concerns, making learners aware of issues faced by marginalized groups, and basing your teaching on students' local culture are of main focus.

Momenian and Shirazizadeh (2009) in an argumentative paper argues for bringing students' native language, their own culture, daily experiences and problems to implement the basic tenets of CP into the classroom to give more voice to the students in the learning process and make it more meaningful and motivating for them. As a marriage between CP and writing, their paper offers has some implications for language teachers and local materials writers.

Davari et al (2011), noting this issue that despite the practical implications of CP, most of the research has been limited to its theoretical and conceptual dimensions, studied the Iranian ELT community's attitudes to some practical implications of CP in ELT. Their findings show that critical pedagogy in theory is going to find a position among Iranian ELT professionals.

According to Aghagolzadeh and Davari (2012), as ELT programs become more prevalent throughout the world, the cultural, political, social and ideological implications of this activity are more often debated and such considerations seem more relevant in societies that are culturally, politically, socially and ideologically are different from the Center and certainly the Iranian society as an Expanding Circle country is not an exception to this rule. In the paper, The authors strongly believe that strengthening critical thinking in learners, empowering the learners to make them agents of transformation in local and global arenas, unmasking the underlying values and ideologies of the mainstream ELT, and especially reducing the cultural and social implications of English involves rethinking the nature and status of ELT as well as resorting to CP as an alternative and effective approach in ELT.

Rashidi and Safari (2011) notes that despite the increase in the number of publications in the field of critical L2 pedagogy, remarkably little has been done on materials development in CP. Thus, in their paper, the authors offered a model for ELT materials development, based on the major tenets of critical pedagogy, which is mostly sensitive to the particularities of the local context and to the learners' problems and concerns. Their model seems to be helpful for local materials writers and language teachers in developing and critically evaluating ELT materials as well as for learners to be more critical consumers of information.

Last but not least, in an attempt, Ghaffar Samar and Davari (2011), introducing two opposing camps of thought in the field of ELT, tried to reveal and investigate the attitudes of Iranian ELT professionals towards four important categories including a) ELT methods, b) ELT materials and curriculum development, c) native vs. nonnative teachers, standards and variations and d) English, ELT and culture. Their findings and especially the pedagogical implications of their study as a large-scale study on the topic can be revealing.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In ongoing processes of globalization, the increasing spread of English especially through ELT, as the most systematic tool of English spread in every corner of the world, has raised many controversial questions especially for those active in the field of applied linguistics. In this field, the emergence of a prominent intellectual shift has led to viewing English and ELT through different paradigms which are in contrast with the mainstream paradigms which mostly have seen English spread as an intriguing topic and have limited ELT to purely pedagogical issues. While the proponents of the mainstream ELT pedagogy introduce the globalization of ELT norms and practices as an inevitable, neutral and natural phenomenon, the newly-established intellectual shift sees such a globalization as a non-neutral and hegemonic process which has been mostly expanded through the policies of the core countries.

As noted, the debates and arguments around the topic have turned it to a serious and significant issue which has led to forming two opposing camps of thought in the field of applied linguistics: the critical applied linguists problematizing the English spread and the mainstream ELT pedagogy and the followers of the mainstream ELT or those who approve such a spread, see English a tool for global understanding and advocate the mainstream ELT pedagogy.

In fact, on the one hand, the rise, presence, and spread of English and on the other hand, the importance of hotly-debated issues on the topic have entered serious studies and debates in different academic and scientific settings in many societies and undoubtedly the Iranian academic setting is not an exception to this rule.

Reviewing these critically and ethically oriented works, it can be concluded that in this new discourse, pass all doubt, the spread of English is not known as a natural and neutral phenomenon and ELT principles and tenets are not taken-for-granted. In sum, although the field of ELT in terms of textbooks and curriculum development, journals, teacher training programs and especially private institutes' management has been dominated by the mainstream ELT trend, the advent of this new generation of critical ELT professionals and applied linguists is going to affect the current situation. In other words, while the discourse of the mainstream ELT has been mostly legitimated and reinforced by the ELT community, this new growing critical ELT trend is going to challenge it. These works indeed indicate a growing awareness among applied linguists

and ELT professionals, even though such a critical awareness still constitutes only a minority, it is much hoped that this trend in the following years redefines and reformulates the goals and scope of ELT in Iran and affects any effort regarding ELT planning and policy.

A word of caution should be in order here. First of all, looking at the current changing situation of Iranian society reveals that the lack of any applicable and justifiable language in education policy is totally visible. Achieving such an important goal involves being informed of the attitudes and perceptions as well as the needs and interests of the main stakeholders, namely teachers, learners, language planners, material developers, etc.

Secondly, a neglected issue seen in the critical literature is this fact that how Persian language is being impacted by the predominance of academic English. In other words, the threat of being marginalized as a language of culture and science is probable under the impact of international privileged English. In this case, findings of Rapatahana and Bunce (2012) in some similar Periphery countries seem noticeable. In fact, the authors have attempted to remind language planners and the teachers around the world not to let it rob English language learners of their first languages and cultural identities. Documenting the findings from a number of countries throughout Asia Pacific, Africa and Latin America including Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Colombia and so forth, this work tries to highlight and promote multilingualism as a source, the maintenance of linguistic diversity and development of and respect for linguistic human rights worldwide through the dissemination of theoretical and empirical research. Certainly the Iranian society cannot be an exception to this rule and the necessity of studying the role and function of English in this context in which English is mostly known as the language of the enemies (see, Borjian, 2013) is felt necessary. While works including Davari (2013) and Borjian (2013) might be introduced as fruitful starting points, the lack of more theoretical and empirical studies regarding this increasingly important issue seems obvious.

Last but not least, not disputing the importance of English in a globalizing world, the writers strongly maintain that what is demanded is, in Canagarajah's (1999) words, a "third way" that avoids the traditional extremes of rejecting English outright for its linguistic imperialism or accepting its wholesale for its benefits.

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