

The Impact of English language education on Cambodian elementary school children: Perceptions of EFL teachers in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

This is a preliminary study on how the teaching of the English language is influencing Cambodian elementary children. A small-scale survey was conducted to investigate how the English language education is impacting (1) Cambodian elementary students' development of their first language, Khmer, and (2) the acquisition of the native culture by the children. It is also part of this study to examine (3) instances of globalization in the Cambodian society and culture. The participants of this study were 12 teachers, 11 Cambodian and one Irish, who were all teaching English in Cambodia. In the questionnaire presented to them, they were asked to state their perceptions. The results include the Cambodian teachers' concern that due to ELT elementary children's writing in Khmer is negatively affected; this might lead to a problem of the children's Khmer literacy. The teachers also felt ELT posed some threat to their children's cultural identity and they raised the issue of ELT creating and widening gaps among Cambodians.

KEYWORDS:

Cambodia, English Language Teaching (ELT), language, culture, identity, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

I. INTRODUCTION

This is an exploratory study to investigate how the teaching of the English language is influencing Cambodian elementary school children. In order to examine (1) the impact of ELT (English Language Teaching) on the development of the first language, Khmer, of the Cambodian elementary school children and (2) the acquisition of the native culture by the children, a small-scale survey was conducted in Cambodia in August of 2009. Since ELT is one of the major factors that promote globalization today, it is also part of this study to explore (3) instances of globalization in the Cambodian society and culture in order to gain additional contextual information.

The participants of this study were 12 teachers, 11 Cambodian and one Irish, who were all teaching English in Cambodia. In the questionnaire presented to them, they were asked to state their perceptions.

Almost 20 years ago, the futurists, Naisbitt and Aburdene (1990), forecasted the present state of the world and the function English serves in it:

The most important factor accelerating the development of a single global lifestyle is the proliferation of the English language. Language is a great agent of homogenization; it is the frequency on which the culture is transmitted. If English is gaining a lock on global language, the implications are clear: The culture of English-speaking countries will dominate. (p. 140)

It is rather surprising that globalization has been progressing in the direction they foresaw. It seems that what is happening in Cambodia could be partially explained by attributing to the phenomenon described in their forecast.

But what is the real impact of ELT on Cambodia and the children? An American political scientist, Huntington (1993), states that, “the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities.” If this is what is happening in Cambodia due to ELT, what are some of the results of this change and what relevance does this change in Cambodia have to the rest of the world? In particular, how is this change relevant to areas where English is not an official language but the teaching of the language is becoming more and more necessary due to the increased rate of globalization?

Cambodia, with its unique history, presents an excellent opportunity to study the impact of ELT on the children’s learning of their first language and culture. Cambodia could also present an opportunity to study instances of change due to globalization. It is the hope of the author that the results from this investigation will benefit not only the people of Cambodia, but people all over the world.

The literature reviewed in the following section covers such themes as English as a lingua franca (ELF), the current situation of the English language education in Cambodia, and ELT and identity of Cambodians. The description of the study and its results, accompanied by discussions, will follow and the final section will summarize the current study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The English language is a lingua franca of the world. English is used as “a medium of communication by people who do not speak the same first language” (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Richards (2003) describes:

Now that English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade, the media and pop culture, different motivations for learning it come into play. English is no longer viewed as the property of the English-speaking world but is an international commodity

sometimes referred to as *World English or English as an International Language*. (p. 2)

Although it has been called many things, the term “English as a lingua Franca” (ELF) is preferred here, following Seidlhofer’s (2005) definition of ELF “as a way of referring to communication in English between speakers with different first languages” (p. 339). This expression underscores the fact that ELF interactions mostly take place among non-native speakers of English.

Seidlhofer (2005) mentions that what is distinctive about ELF is that it is a means of communication among people who do not share a common language or a common culture, although “this does not preclude the participation of English native speakers in ELF interaction” (p. 339). Jenkins (2007) also advocates the use of the term ELF from the point of view of users’ identity.

Regarding this linguistic globalization, Cambodia is no exception. Cambodia shares the same economic and geopolitical concerns as the other countries within the Southeast Asia region, where there are two distinctive groups of countries in terms of the use of the English language: the “Outer Circle” and “the Expanding Circle” (Kachru, 1997), as Kachru and Nelson (2006) point out.

English plays a major role in many spheres of life in Southeast Asia, including those that involve academic, diplomatic, and economic pursuits. However, the Southeast Asian region presents a more diverse picture as compared to South Asia in that some parts of it have institutionalized Englishes (e.g., Singapore, the Philippines) [Outer Circle], whereas others fall into the Expanding Circle of English along with China, Japan and Korea ... (p. 181)

Cambodia is a part of the group classified as the “Expanding Circle,” where English is not spoken as an official or national language. It does not belong to the “Outer Circle,” where English is an official means of communication.

This naturally reflects the historical fact that Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam were colonized by France, while the others were colonies of other Western powers, except for Thailand, which has maintained its independence.

Cambodia has a unique history as well as a very distinctive, current situation. Khmer is the name of their native language and ethnic group. Cambodia was a kingdom in Southeast Asia, with its power peaking in the 11th century. At that time, Khmer controlled the entire valley of the Mekong River from the capital of Angkor. The Kingdom was defeated by Thai in the 12th and 14th centuries (Tully, 2006).

In the 1970s, Cambodia was under the Pol Pot dictatorship when thousands of civilians and intellectuals

were murdered. Eventually, school education ceased to be provided. The English language education was re-started only in 1989, when the country was released from the occupation by Vietnam (Vira 2002).

In the recent history of Cambodia, English has been a symbol and tool of modernization (Sodhy 2004). Clayton (2006, 2007) emphasizes the two international developments involving Cambodia as significant turning points for the English language use in this country. The two developments are (1) the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), which began operating in Cambodia at the beginning of the 1990s, and (2) Cambodia joining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1999. The two political events, which decisively led Cambodia to use English, were described by Clayton (2006) as follows:

In the early 1990s, the United Nations organized the Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) as a bilingual mission, though French was quickly relegated to secondary status in relation to English, the language more widely known by UNTAC personnel. (p. 208)

The United Nations' demand for English-Khmer bilinguals began a trajectory in the political realm that continues in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which Cambodia entered in 1999. English serves as the language of all communication in this organization dedicated to regional development, security, and stability, and Cambodians must know English to participate in the hundreds of meetings, conferences, and exchanges that ASEAN members attend each year. (pp. 208-209)

Today English has a special status in Cambodia. English is not only the most preferred foreign language, but people view English as a passport to a better job or to a scholarship from abroad. McLaren (2000) reports in his article in the *Japan Times* that "English is fast becoming a second language for a considerable number of Cambodians." As stated by a British teacher of English in Phnom Penh, McLaren reports that the English Language "boom" in the country is because "English-language learning in Cambodia is the 'key to prosperity.' ... Cambodians can see themselves having a better lifestyle if they have English education."

However, in Cambodia, the much-needed English language education does not begin until junior high school. Foreign language education begins at secondary school level (7th grade) in Cambodia and only a small portion of the primary school graduates go on to secondary schools.

While nearly 100% of the population attended primary school in 2004-2005, approximately 25% of primary school graduates continued their education to lower secondary schools, according to the

homepage of Cambodia's Ministry of Education. The enrollment ratio decreases even lower to 8% for upper secondary schools. (Igawa, 2008, p. 353)

Parents who can afford it send their children to English language schools after regular school hours are over. This is a popular practice among the urban "haves" of this rapidly polarizing society.

There is a paucity of research with respect to the impact of the English language education on the students of Cambodia, particularly the impact of English language education on elementary school children whose first language development and native culture acquisition are still underway.

This scarcity of significant information is one of the major reasons why the present study was conducted. It is our responsibility as educators and researchers of English as a lingua franca to make sure that the results of our professional activities not only help those in Cambodia, but those in the other parts of the world as well.

Two examples of available research on the impact of the English language education on Cambodian students are (1) Barratt-Pugh and Rohl (2001), who studied a Khmer-English bilingual program in a primary school in Western Australia, and (2) Skilton-Sylvester (2002), whose study focused on the participation of Cambodian women in the English language education, as well as the investment in adult English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) in the United States. Naturally, the reasons for these two studies being carried out are different from those of this study, which attempts to investigate the impact of ELT on Cambodian elementary school children in Cambodia with its changing socio-economic contexts.

III. THE STUDY

This is a preliminary study on how the teaching of the English language is influencing Cambodian elementary students. A small-scale survey was conducted to investigate how the English language education is impacting (1) Cambodian elementary students' development of their first language, Khmer, and (2) the acquisition of the native culture by the students. It is also part of this study to examine (3) instances of globalization in the Cambodian society and culture. The participants of this study were 12 teachers, 11 Cambodian and one Irish, who were all teaching English in Cambodia. In the questionnaire presented to them, they were asked to state their perceptions.

A. Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 12 teachers of English, six (6) male and six (6) female. All of the participants are either currently teaching or taught until recently in Cambodia. They were recommended by the ACE (Australian Centre for Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia), ACROSS (English teachers' organization for professional development, Osaka, Japan), and e-dream-s (international NPO chartered

by Osaka Prefecture, Japan). All of the participants agreed to take part in this study.

Of the 12 teachers, 11 are Cambodians and one (1) is an Irish national. The majority of the participants are teachers at ACE (Australian Centre for Education), either in Phnom Penh or in Siem Reap, while the others are employed at either the IFL (Institute of Foreign Languages) or CWF (Conversations With Foreigners). (TABLEs 1 & 2)

TABLE 1. Participants by Nationality & Sex

NATIONALITY		SEX	
		Male	Female
Cambodian	11	6	5
Irish	1		1
TOTAL	12	6	6

TABLE 2. Participants by Affiliation

ACE (1)	ACE (2)	CWF	IFC	TOTAL
9*	1	1	1*	11

Notes: ACE (1) = ACE in Phnom Penh, ACE (2) = ACE in Siem Reap, CWF = Conversations With Foreigners in Phnom Penh, IFC = Institute of Foreign Languages in Phnom Penh. The numbers with (*) include teachers, who until recently taught at the institutions, two at ACE (1) and one at IFC.

ACE (Australian Centre for Education) is one of the best English language schools in Cambodia, operating in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. It was founded in February 1992 by IDP, an Australian education organization, to cater to language training requirements proposed by the United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia (UNTAC)¹⁾. It is now providing English language lessons for embassies, NGOs, private companies, various UN agencies and other donors. In this study, the ACE schools at the two locations are referred to as ACE (1) and ACE (2), Phnom Penh and Siem Reap respectively.

CWF is a volunteer institution in Phnom Penh. It was founded with support from the Australian Government AusAid VIDA program in 2006 and has been providing affordable English courses to young Cambodian people. Their lessons are taught by foreign volunteers, who are mostly native speakers of English²⁾.

IFL is a part of the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), Cambodia's oldest and largest university,

1) <http://www.cambodia.idp.com/ace.aspx>

2) <http://www.volunteerincambodia.org/program.php>

located in the capital Phnom Penh ³⁾. IFL has language departments that include English, French, Japanese, and Korean.

Three of the participating teachers, two at ACE and one at IFC, were teaching in Cambodia until recently. They have received scholarships and are now studying at graduate schools in Japan and the United States.

One of the characteristics of the participants that were recorded in this study is age. As shown in TABLE 3, most of the participants are quite young. The average age is 26.7 years old, with the oldest teacher being 39 years old. Accordingly, the teaching experience of the participants is limited. The average years of teaching is 4.7 years, with the oldest teacher having the greatest amount of experience with 15 years.

TABLE 3. Participants by Age & Years of Service

AGE GROUP	NO.	YEARS OF SERVICE	NO.
21 - 25	6	1 - 3	5
26 - 30	5	4 - 6	5
31 -	1	7 -	2
Total	12	Total	12
Average	26.7	Average	4.7

B. Questionnaire

In the questionnaire, the participants of this study were asked to state their perceptions of (1) the impact of the English language education on Cambodian elementary school children's first language acquisition and (2) the influence of the English language education on Cambodian elementary school children's native culture acquisition, as well as (3) the teachers' observations of changes in the Cambodian society and culture due to globalization.

The participants were asked to respond to the following three open-ended questions:

Question 1. What do you think is the impact of the English language education on the development of the native language by Cambodian children (e.g. elementary school children)?

Question 2. How do you think the English language education influences the acquisition of the native culture by Cambodian children (e.g. elementary school children)?

Question 3. What are some of the examples of influences of globalization on the Cambodian society

3) <http://www.rupp.edu.kh/ifl/ifl.php>

and culture?

The participating teachers received the questionnaire by e-mail at the beginning of August 2009. All of them, except for the three now residing outside of Cambodia, were interviewed by Japanese teachers of English who visited Cambodia as part of the delegation organized by e-dream-s to visit educational institutions in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap during the period from August 8th to 13th, 2009. The Japanese teachers served as research cooperators of this study and they conducted semi-structured interviews (e.g. Bernard, 1994) using the items in the questionnaire as the interview guide. These interviews were designed to supplement the information given. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the participants and were transcribed by the research cooperators.

The three participants who are now living outside Cambodia sent back their responses to the questionnaire by e-mail and were asked additional questions via e-mail by the author as needed.

C. Results & Discussion

1. Impact of ELT on Cambodian elementary students' first language development

There are a variety of responses to the first question asking the impact of ELT (English Language Teaching) on Cambodian elementary school children.

English education starts at the 7th grade (lower secondary school) in Cambodia and elementary school children do not study English as a school subject. Only 25 % of Cambodian elementary school graduates go on to lower secondary schools. In other words, three-fourths of Cambodia's students do not have a chance to learn English. However, at the same time, some parents can afford to send their children to English language schools, such as ACE. This creates a severe educational divide within the country. This divide runs directly parallel to an income gap because the communicative competence in English is a prerequisite for securing good jobs.

Three of the participating teachers say they do not see any impact of ELT on Cambodian children's development of the Khmer language. For example, one participant says:

Since English has not yet been made a compulsory subject for lower education, I personally cannot see much impact of this language on the Khmer language development. (No. C10: a female Cambodian teacher in her early 20s)

Similarly, an optimistic view is expressed by another female teacher:

I don't think there is big burden on the development of the native language, for children's brain is

very new and they can easily learn things, as long as they keep studying the native language along with English. [sic] (No. C11: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

However, two of the other teachers think that because of ELT, elementary school children are losing their interest in learning the Khmer language.

They focus on English lessons so they lose their interest about other subjects such as Khmer. They study more English but less Khmer. They are not trying hard to remember Khmer spelling and difficult words. (No. C04: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

Another teacher mentions, “People gradually thinking learning Khmer language in negative way... [sic]” (No. C03: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 20s).

In terms of areas of difficulty in learning the Khmer language, four participants point out that the students’ writing is affected. For example,

Young people care about wrong spelling in English while they don’t care about their own language. Young kids believe that it doesn’t make them worse to write Khmer incorrectly! [sic] (No. C08: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 20s)

On a more serious note, a male teacher in his late 30s laments, “They will be illiterate with Cambodian language” (No. C05: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 30s).

With the unique writing system of the Khmer language, which is quite different from English that uses alphabets, it seems that the influence of ELT on the writing of Cambodian children in their language is unsettling for many English teachers. Even the participants who are generally quite optimistic about the influence of ELT express a certain amount of concern.

... with the over popularity of English, many kids start to take the learning of their native language for granted, resulting in the inability of writing Khmer language correctly. (No. C10: a female Cambodian teacher in her early 20s)

Other problem areas identified by the participating teachers include grammar: “... children may have difficulty or confusion over some grammatical structures, for the English and Khmer grammars are very different at some points” (No. C10). In addition, the loan words in the Khmer language are also a source of concern:

Students are confusing which words are loans word or authentic Khmer words. Sometimes they

misunderstand the word like 'Card' as a Cambodian word, which in contrary is totally an English word [sic]. (No. C09: a male teacher in his late 20s)

One of the teachers mentions that due to the influence of ELT, Cambodian children are unable to use different words to describe the same behavior when referring to people of differing age and/or status: "... English language uses the same word "EAT" for all status of people regardless young or old, while Cambodian has different words to say to different age or seniority" (No. C08: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 20s).

Four participants mentioned that elementary students often use English words when communicating in the Khmer. For example, one teacher stated that, "Even when they speak Khmer, they sometimes use English words instead of describing in Khmer" [sic] (No. C04). Another teacher explains a slightly more advanced situation:

When they learn English, they would like to practice. In their family, they use English language to contact with their mom and their parents in English in these generations [sic] (No. C06: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s).

In spite of all these influences of ELT on Cambodian elementary students' learning of their first language, from the viewpoint of the participating English teachers, their observations and opinions could be summarized by the following comment:

Personally, despite the bad impacts, I still think that learning English is very important for Cambodian students because our country is still developing and we need English to communicate in many sectors including tourism, business and education (No. C10).

Quite arguably, this is also a part of the reasons why they chose to teach English in this country.

What follows is a list of influences of ELT on Cambodian elementary school children's first language development as perceived by the participating English teachers (TABLE 4).

TABLE 4. Influences of ELT on Cambodian Elementary School Children's First Language Development as Perceived by the Participating English Teachers

#	INFLUENCE	NO. OF ENTRIES
1	No significant influence	3
2	To use English in Khmer conversation	4
3	To lose interest in studying the Khmer language	2
4	Negative influences on their Khmer writing: spelling, words, etc.	2
5	To concentrate too much on English study	2
6	To see the Khmer language in a negative way	1
7	To forget the Khmer language	1
8	Students become more active in the classroom	1
9	Confusion over Khmer grammar	1
10	Confusion over Khmer and loan words	1
11	To lose ability to use Khmer words with the same meaning depending on who they are talking to	1

2. Influences of ELT on Cambodian elementary students' acquisition of the native culture

As to the influence of ELT on elementary students' acquisition of the Khmer culture, only one teacher mentions that there is no significant impact. However, the same teacher also points out that due to westernization and ELT in Cambodia, young children say "Hello" or "Hi" instead of practicing the traditional Khmer ways of greeting by putting their palms together.

Another example of Cambodian culture is that they have 5 ways of greetings. They put the two palms together. The positions of their palms vary according to who they greet ... young people now don't know the greetings or they know it but they don't do it ... young people are losing the custom because of Western culture, in which they just say "Hello." It could be because they are so complicated. Just saying "Hi" is easy. It's not only because of western culture and there are many causes for young people's behavior [sic]. (No. C01: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

This change from the traditional greeting method to the English way of saying "Hello" or "Hi" seems quite symbolic; two more teachers mention the same phenomenon. More general observations on elementary students' behavior are reported to the same effect: "Yes, partly English culture affects to our culture. Younger ones, they are trying to do western ... way they act, way they learn, way they. They like western people [sic]" (No. C06: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s, from interview transcript).

Referring to similar situations, another teacher states her view on the relationship between language and

culture:

Learning a language means to learn about the culture of the language at the same time, for language and culture are something attached together. Thus, learning English at elementary schools can affect the students' understanding of their own culture, for example the way they express themselves, the way they talk, act, think, behave and so on and so forth [sic]. (No. C11: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

This is somewhat reminiscent of what Brown (1980) mentioned in regard to learning to communicate in a new language:

Becoming bilingual is a way of life. Every bone and fiber of your being is affected in some way as you struggle to reach beyond the confines of your first language and into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting (p. 1).

The English language education provides students with opportunities to be exposed to the culture of English-speaking countries. But at the same time, ELT serves as a gateway to the world of information and technology, as one of the teachers observes:

... to many of them, English provides the means to new technology, such as video games and internet chatting, and as a result, they seem to spend much time with English and gaming and forget their social life with family and friends and of course their education. (No. C09: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 20s)

Another example of ELT's impact on Cambodian children's learning the Khmer culture is that children are becoming more open-minded and are no longer shy. One teacher states, "They think they can do anything without being restricted by old Khmer culture" (a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s). The same teacher adds, "On the other hand, they are losing patience."

On a more serious note, one of the male teachers deplores the impact of ELT on children's learning of Cambodian culture: "They will lose their identity" (No. C05: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 30s). Similarly, the other participant maintains:

Khmer culture is very nice. It's actually great. But, if young Cambodians, if they just want to do like western ones, you have a problem because they lose their identity [sic]. (No. C06: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

The influences of ELT on the acquisition of the Khmer culture by Cambodian elementary students, as perceived by the participating English teachers, are summarized as follows:

TABLE 5. Influences of ELT on Cambodian Elementary School Children’s Acquisition of the Khmer Culture as Perceived by the Participating English Teachers

#	INFLUENCE	NO. OF ENTRIES
1	No significant influence	1
2	Not to practice Khmer greetings	2
3	To change their behavior – westernized	2
4	To lose their Cambodian identity	2
5	To say “Hi”, “Hello” - Western style	1
6	The way they express themselves is affected	1
7	To be more open-minded, more free	1
8	To lose patience	1
9	To lose Khmer nuances – e.g. “eat”	1
10	To become familiar with westernized lifestyles through textbooks - fast food	1
11	To use much of their time dealing with high-tech devices & games and less time in real life with family and friends	1
12	To put higher value on English culture - because of job opportunities	1

3. Examples of influences of globalization on the Cambodian society and culture

In terms of examples of the influence of globalization on the society and culture, the majority of the participating teachers mention similar tendencies. Additionally, most of the teachers portray the changes in a somewhat negative light.

Four participants mention “fast food”: “Fast food is becoming popular and popular now in Cambodia” (No. C09: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 20s). They also mention “pizza”, “hamburgers”, “spaghetti” and other similar examples.

Similarly, participating teachers mentioned “Western-style fashion”, “karaoke”, and “Western movies and videos”. Also, many of the teachers say that celebrating Western cultural events such as Christmas and St. Valentine’s Day is becoming popular in Cambodia. One female teacher complains about “the inputting of cake-cutting ceremonies into the traditional Cambodian wedding ceremonies, which I think damages the beauty of the traditional culture [sic]” (No. C10: a female Cambodian teacher in her early 20s).

The introduction of advanced technological merchandise is also included in the examples of

“globalization” by two participating teachers; “motor bikes, computers, mobile phones and other technological items” (No. C12: a female Irish teacher in her early 30s). Naturally, the spread of the Internet was also included in the examples.

One of the participants mentions that it is good to read English newspapers and to listen to English radio programs such as VOA:

The newspapers published in Cambodia are sometimes biased. I read English newspapers, listen to VOA and get better information through English. I think it's an example of globalization in Cambodian society. (No. C02: a male Cambodian teacher in his early 20s)

Another participant says that the popularity of English in Cambodia is an example of globalization influence:

... when compared to other neighbors, Thailand or Vietnam, I think Cambodian people speak English a lot more than Thai or Vietnamese. In Vietnam, they keep using their own language, not English. For example, taxi drivers or tuk tuk drivers [in Cambodia] can speak basic English to communicate [sic]. (No. C06: a female Cambodian teacher in her late 20s)

Many participants report changes in Cambodian society as a result of globalization. For example, two teachers point out that the average family size is becoming smaller in Cambodia: “My grandparents' generation had ten to twelve children, my parents' generation had five to six, and my generation has two or three children. The family size is getting smaller” (No. C02).

Corresponding to this phenomenon are two other changes in Cambodian society: “More working women” and “Fewer arranged marriages”. Similarly, participating teachers mention other effects of globalization such as a “more comfortable and free life style”, a “busier life style”, “more entrepreneurship in society”, “more group leadership as opposed to dictatorship”, “more female leaders”, and “more school subjects.”

One female teacher criticizes one of the trends: “The existence of the pre-marital sexual relationship among youngsters, which is strongly forbidden in Cambodian culture” (No. C10). Other participants expressed a similar sentiment.

As a result of these changes, teachers mention both positive and negative impacts. As for the positive aspects of globalization, they list changes such as “more independence,” “able to see a bigger picture,” and “[to] learn about other cultures and be able to communicate with others in the world” (No. C05: a male Cambodian teacher in his late 30).

As to the negative effects of globalization, two teachers point to the growing “generation gap” between the rapidly-globalizing youth and the slow-moving parents and elders. One of the participants said:

There have been several worrying influences of globalization on Cambodian society and culture; some children who are over-foreignized/westernized tend to overact and devalue their own culture. For example, some of them disrespect the parents and the elder relatives or acquaintances. (No. C10)

Observing the effects of globalization on the major cities of Cambodia, one participant notices a widening gap between rural and urban areas: Globalization is “Creating a huge gap between people in rural areas and people in urban areas” (No. C12).

**TABLE 6. Influences of Globalization on Cambodian Society and Culture(1):
Things & Events Introduced**

#	EXAMPLE	NO. OF ENTRIES
1	Fast Food	4
2	Westernized Fashion	3
3	Celebrating St. Valentine's Day	2
4	Celebrating Christmas	2
5	American Movies & Videos	2
6	Westernized wedding ceremonies - Cake-cutting	1
7	Western customs	1
8	Karaoke	1
9	Internet	1
10	Western technological products - bikes, computers, cell phones	1
11	Western News sources: English newspaper, VOA	1

**TABLE 7. Influences of Globalization on Cambodian Society and Culture (2):
Changes in the Society**

#	EXAMPLE	NO. OF ENTRIES
1	Smaller Family-size	2
2	Lifestyle with more comfort & freedom	2
3	Speaking English - more than other Southeast Asian nations	2
4	Creating necessity for English education	2
5	Fewer arranged marriages	1
6	More working women	1
7	More entrepreneurship	1
8	More group leadership	1
9	More female leaders	1
10	Increase in premarital sex	1
11	Lifestyle – busier	1
12	Young people becoming more independent	1
13	Young people seeing the bigger picture	1
14	Learning more about the world	1
15	More school subjects being studied	1

**TABLE 8. Influences of Globalization on Cambodian Society and Culture (3):
Problems Caused by Globalization**

#	EXAMPLE	NO. OF ENTRIES
1	Too much westernization – loss of identity	2
2	Creating a generation gap	2
3	Widening the gap between urban and rural life	1

The participants' perceptions of the influences of globalization can be categorized as follows: (1) Things & Events Introduced by Globalization, (2) Changes in Society due to Globalization, and (3) Problems Created by Globalization.

D. Summary

Using the questionnaire and interview, this study investigated the perceptions of English teachers in regard to their view of the influence of ELT on the ability of Cambodian elementary school children to learn their first language and as well as their culture. In addition, the study also asked the participants to list examples of changes in Cambodian society and culture due to globalization.

As to the first question, the influence of ELT on the students' learning of their first language, Khmer, the

teachers' responses included "No significant influence," "To use English in Khmer conversation," "To lose interest in studying the Khmer language," "Negative influences on their Khmer writing: spelling, words, etc.," "To concentrate too much on English study," and "To see the Khmer language in a negative way." Although some teachers mention ELT exerts "No significant influence," there are opinions expressing concern – ELT might negatively impact the students' learning of Khmer, particularly the writing because the Khmer writing system is so different from that of English. It could be argued that writing in any language is the most significant part of literacy and that it must be learned through formal education. Refer to Cummins (1991) for the discussion of this type of language capability, "CALP" (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency).

The second question concerns Cambodian children's native culture acquisition and how it is impacted by ELT. The teachers' responses include observations such as "No significant influence," "Not to practice Khmer-style greetings," "To change behavior – westernized," "To lose their Cambodian identity," "To say 'Hi', 'Hello' - western style," and "The way they express themselves is affected." While the responses to the first question are mainly concerned with the literacy development of Cambodian students, the responses to the second question concentrate on the changes in behavior concerning the Cambodian children, namely, greetings. As a whole, the teachers seem to admit that a certain degree of westernization is inevitable, possibly drawing from their own experiences. However, they appear to agree that too much westernization with respect to the children's behavior is a serious problem – a threat to the Cambodian identity. For the discussion of the relationship between language and identity, see e.g. Jenkins (2007) and Norton (1997).

The final question has to do with the globalization and its affect on the Cambodian society and culture, in general. As to the foreign things and customs introduced to Cambodia, the teachers' responses include "Fast food," "Westernized fashion," "Celebrating St. Valentine's Day and Christmas," "American movies & videos," and "To westernize wedding receptions: Cake-cutting." In a devout Buddhist society, the growing popularity of Christian festivals and customs must be quite shocking.

In terms of changes in society and culture brought about by globalization, the teachers list "Smaller family-size," "A lifestyle with more comfort & freedom," "Speaking English a lot more than other Southeast Asian nations," "Creating the necessity for English education," "Fewer arranged marriages," and "More working women." Since the changes in society and culture have been occurring more quickly and pervasively in Cambodia than in other surrounding areas, the teachers seem worried not only about the types of changes, but also by the speed and magnitude of the changes.

As to the problems created by globalization in Cambodian society and culture, the teachers' concerns include "Too much westernization – loss of identity," "Creating a generation gap," and "Widening the gap

between urban and rural life.” Again, the teachers expressed their worries about too much westernization, which may lead to a loss of their Cambodian identity. They also are worried about the gaps created by globalization – generation gaps and regional gaps. It is possible that ELT is accelerating the creation and widening of these gaps, particularly the gap between cities and rural areas where the availability of the English language education differs greatly.

McKay (2002) states that there are three negative effects with respect to the spread of English around the world: (1) the threat to existing languages, (2) the influence on cultural identity, and (3) the association of the language with an economic elite. McKay also mentions that the most realistic effect is the third one, which is certainly the reality in Cambodia. The regional gap can also be translated into an income gap in Cambodian society. McKay further explains:

Indeed, to me, one of the major concerns that must be raised is the growing relationship between English proficiency and economic resources. In many countries around the world, English is being learned only by those who can afford instruction in it. Not being able to afford such instruction can close many doors, particularly with regard to accessing higher education. (p. 24)

It is also the hope of the author that this study will benefit the ELT practitioners and researchers who are making an effort to reduce the gaps in the society and to diminish the effects of the existing gaps.

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英語教育のカンボジア人小学生に及ぼす影響 —EFL英語教員に対する意識調査による—

井 川 好 二

本稿は、カンボジアの小学生に、英語教育がどのような影響を及ぼしているのかを研究するための予備調査の報告である。小規模アンケート調査を実施し、英語教育がカンボジア人小学生の、(1) 母国語修得に与える影響、(2) 自国の文化修得に与える影響、および (3) 広くカンボジア社会・文化一般におけるグローバル化の影響例を調査した。調査協力者は、カンボジアで英語を教える11名のカンボジア人英語教員および1名のアイルランド人英語教員の計12名。上記3点に関する意識、意見を自由記述形式で回答を得た。結果として、英語教育が母国語修得に及ぼす影響として、多くの協力者が、母国語を書く力の育成に支障が見られるとする。文化修得の面では、カンボジア人としてのアイデンティティ形成に問題ありとの指摘があり、カンボジア社会一般では、英語教育により地域間格差、世代間格差などの広がりが見られるとの見方が多い。

キーワード：カンボジア、英語教育、国際共通語（Lingua Franca）としての英語、言語教育、文化、アイデンティティ、外国語としての英語

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