

Chapter 8 – Extra activity 1

The following activity can be used as an introductory or closing task, and is designed to complement the content of Chapter 8 in Galloway and Rose's (2015) book Introducing Global Englishes (Oxon., UK: Routledge).

The portrayal of English in popular textbooks

Many popular ELT textbooks portray the native English speaker as the 'ideal' speaker and the target interlocutor. Furthermore, in countries around the world, many bookstores are full of titles that perpetuate this myth.

For example, in Japan, many book titles emphasize the need to 'overcome' Japanese-style English, e.g.:

- *Farewell to Japanese English* (Hisama, 1995)
- *Common Mistakes of Japanese English Speakers* (Kobayashi, 1998)
- *A Native English Speaker Would Say it This Way* (Williamson and Katsuki, 2005)
- *How Your English Sounds to Native Speakers* (Thayne and Koike, 2008).

Many of these focus on pronunciation and pragmatic 'errors' that are seen to be 'unnatural' to native English speakers. One introduction states:

This book aims to transform your 'JapEng' into 'native speaker English' by correcting those grammatically correct but ambiguous phrases and bookish expressions that sometimes sound negative to native speakers of English.
(Tada and Vogt, 2004, p. iii)

Others encourage students to spend time memorizing expressions such as, 'I got it for free' not 'I got it service' (Kobayashi, 1998, p. 46), 'My sister works in an office' not 'My sister is an office lady' (Kobayashi, 1998, p. 8), and 'I go to my office every day' not 'I go to my company every day' (Kobayashi, 1998: 148).

Discussion questions

1. What is your reaction to these book titles? Do you know of any examples from other contexts?
2. What impression of English do these books give to readers?
3. To what extent do you think the example phrases above would cause a miscommunication? What do you think about the following examples:
 - *he is high tension* ('he is excitable')
 - *doraibaa* ('screwdriver')
 - *raibu-hausu* ('live house')
 - *baaten* ('bartender')?

4. To what extent should native English speakers also learn how to accommodate to non-native English speakers (perhaps through a book called 'How Your English Sounds to Non-native English Speakers')?