

Virtual social media communities and their effects on World Englishes

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Abstract

This paper investigates the impact of social media use and virtual communities on world Englishes. The term *world Englishes* refers to the different varieties of how English is communicated worldwide. Kachru (1985) described the language's spread in terms of three concentric circles: the *inner circle*, the *outer circle*, and the *expanding circle*. The inner circle comprises traditional bases of English where it serves as speakers' first language, such as in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. The *outer circle* refers to countries where English is an official second language, such as India and Kenya. The expanding circle includes countries where English is spoken as a foreign language or lingua franca, such as countries in Europe and the Middle East, as well as Japan. By exploring the varieties of English on social media, in this paper, the researcher examined how social media and digital communication affect these circles of world Englishes and how users position and use English. The researcher qualitatively analysed 15 X Spaces (former Twitter) following Mesthrie and Bhatt's (2008) method of analysing syntactic and morphological structures and then examining the pragmatics features and discourse. This included the following components: (a) the noun phrase (b) the verb phrase and (c) other function words. The results show that people are using new Englishes in virtual communities. There are many variations in language use in the structural features of the participants' language morphology, phrasal syntax, and pragmatics. The participants invented and used new language structures and understood them among each other. Based on this finding, in future studies, researchers could examine new Englishes in other virtual communities and their effects on people's identities and languages.

Keywords: world Englishes, virtual communities, social media, digital communication, discourse analysis

Introduction

The English language changes over the years, and its users directly and indirectly affect the language from many different perspectives. As Onysko and Siemund (2022) stated, "English in its myriad forms, uses and functions globally can be approached from multiple perspectives, such as linguistic descriptions on all levels of language, language policy, socio-critical analysis, language history, language teaching and many more." Because many people around the globe use English, these groups and how they use this language must be studied. The literature on the globalization of English as a widely used language has been growing (Crystal, 2003; Ives, 2009; Matsuda, 2012; Phillipson, 2004; Ruane, 2021). Sadeghpour and D'Angelo (2022) argued that most such studies have focused on world Englishes in the inner and outer circles without paying much attention to the expanding circle. As a result, many cultural and linguistic aspects must be explored (Sharifian & Sadeghpour, 2021). Rahal (2019) defined *world Englishes* as "forms of English that have been developed by non-native speakers. The plural form Englishes reflects the diversity of English today. This term is used to describe the different varieties of English in the multifarious sociolinguistic context." The understanding of different English varieties and the use of related terms, including *world Englishes* and *new Englishes*, emerged in the early 1980s as a result of colonialism's aftermath, and they have been studied as important subfields of linguistics, sociolinguistics, and historical linguistics (Seoane & Suárez-Gómez, 2016).

The concept of World Englishes

The term *World Englishes* has mostly been used in the literature to refer to differences in English language usage around the world. It can be understood to describe "the institutionalized second-language varieties of English spoken around the world," as Wolf and Polzenhagen (2009) suggested. The term *world Englishes* was introduced by Kachru (1985) in his study of how English is positioned and used in India, where he presented the theoretical framework for the concept of world Englishes. Kachru (1985) proposed a model of the English language using three concentric circles: the *inner circle*, the *outer circle*, and the *expanding circle*. The *inner circle* refers to English as a

native language in countries where it is used as people's first language and mother tongue. These countries include the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, and Australia. According to Kachru (1985), in the outer circle, English is used as a second language, mostly as a result of colonial history. The outer circle includes countries where English is an official language but not most people's mother tongue. Most of these countries are former colonies of the British Empire such as India, Malaysia, Tanzania, Singapore, Bangladesh, Ghana, and Kenya. The *expanding circle* refers to countries where English is not an official language but is, rather, a foreign language; these countries have no colonial history. In these countries, English may be used in schools and universities, in communication, and as a lingua franca. The expanding circle includes Europe, China, Russia, Japan, Korea, and the Middle East.

According to Kachru (1984), sociolinguistic, historical, and political contexts should be considered while studying different English varieties. Kachru (1984) argued that the *Englishes* concept refers to English pluralism and that the three circles reflect not only the language's spreading worldwide but also its social, cultural, and linguistic effects. He (1984, p. 26) stated that this notion emphasizes "the concept of pluralism, linguistic heterogeneity, cultural diversity and the different theoretical and methodological foundations for teaching and research in English." Moreover, Kachru (1996) argued that pluricentricity "is not merely demographic, it entails cultural, linguistic, and literary reincarnations of the English language" (p. 136).

World Englishes models have also been suggested by other linguists, such as McArthur's (1987) circle of world English, called the *wheel model*, Górlach's (1990) distinct rings, and Modiano's (1999) model of English. All these models and frameworks describe different varieties of English and how the language has changed over time. Additionally, Schneider (2003) suggested a five-stage dynamic model to describe post-colonial Englishes. He described this model as spanning five characteristic stages: a *foundation*, *exonormative stabilization*, *nativization*, *endonormative stabilization*, and *differentiation*. Essentially, this model focuses on how historical events affect language structures and linguistic aspects in different varieties of English.

McArthur (1987) and Górlach (1990) also significantly contributed to the discourse surrounding world Englishes by introducing wheel models illustrating different English varieties and their interrelationships. McArthur's concentric wheel emphasizes intelligibility as a crucial factor, while Górlach (1990) further categorized varieties into distinct rings based on mutual comprehension. Yano's cylindrical model (Yano, 2001) added depth and contextualization, enriching the understanding of English varieties. Schneider's (2003) dynamic model introduced a temporal dimension, portraying Englishes' evolution in post-colonial contexts and the establishment of Indigenous linguistic norms.

Digital communication and language

The emergence of social media and digital communications has changed how people use English language in different platforms, such as X Spaces, Facebook posts and profiles, podcasts, TikTok videos, and live streams. Social media use affects people's lives in general, including their communication, education, and language (Amin et al., 2020; Karim et al., 2022; Rieger & Christoph, 2018; Roelofse, 2013). Since English is one of the most popular languages that people use in social media and is used as a global language, it is present in most web-based media. This ubiquity has many effects on how English is communicated in all of Kachru's (1985) circles. Moreover, social media use and digital communication not only affect the language but also positively influence English-language learning and teaching (Al Jahromi, 2020; Ayuningtyas, 2018). Most importantly, digital communication and social media exert linguistic and communicative effects on language since they "provide a number of notably different communicative dynamics and structures," as Seargeant and Tagg (2014) suggested; "so," they continued, "online social media are having a profound effect on the linguistic and communicative practices in which people engage, as well as the social groupings and networks they create" (Seargeant & Tagg, 2014, p. 2). Friedrich and Diniz de Figueiredo (2016) examined how internet use and digital communication shape and affect English by addressing Englishes' changing dynamics in the digital age. This analysis included discussing English and its current status as a global language, examining the key concepts in sociolinguistics studies—such as language changes, speech communities, gender construction, and code-switching—assessing how they are affected by digital communications, and analyzing world Englishes on social media. They concluded that world Englishes on social media and in digital communication will be central to future research and that more studies should be inspired by sociolinguistics in digital communication and world Englishes.

Most of the previous recent studies focused on social media affects on language learning without paying attention to its effects on the language itself. The present study will focus on examining the effects of social media communication on world Englishes and how people from different language backgrounds use English when they communicate with each other using X Spaces (former Twitter). This will include examining the language different forms and structural features, morphology, phrasal syntax and pragmatics.

Mesthrie and Bhatt's method

Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) focused on world Englishes' structure and different linguistics features, which are important topics in modern sociolinguistics due to English's globalization, as they stated. These researchers analyzed world Englishes' linguistic features according to four categories: structural features of morphology and phrasal syntax, cross-clausal syntax and syntactic theory, lexis and phonology, and, finally, pragmatics and discourse. Among the structural features of morphology and phrasal syntax, they examined new Englishes' main syntactic and morphological characteristics, including the noun phrase (articles, number, gender, possession, and pronouns), the verb phrase (tense aspect, modality, number, stative vs. non-stative verbs, forms of *be*, unstressed *do*, and novel verb forms), and other function words (prepositions, conjunctions, and *wh*- words). In the cross-clausal syntax and syntactic theory part of their research, Mesthrie and Bhatt analyzed the language by referring to word order, relative clauses, passives, comparisons, tag questions, answers to yes-or-no questions, adverb placement, and constructions. The lexis and phonology part of their work focused on phonetics and phonology aspects. In the pragmatics and discourse part, the authors examined the pragmatics of syntactic forms, the pragmatics of discourse particles, speech acts, discourse across cultures, the discourse context in New English literature, and style-shifting and code-switching. The goal of this method was to analyze all the existing varieties of English that people use around the world in different contexts (Abril & Hidalgo, 2022).

Methodology

In this study, the researcher sought to determine whether using social media and digital communication, specifically in virtual communities, affects world Englishes. The main research question is to find out if social media communities X Spaces specifically affect world Englishes forms and structures or not. The purpose is to analyze X Spaces communities to study if there are any effects or changes in using English.

By employing text analysis, the researcher qualitatively analyzed 15 X Spaces as authentic examples of virtual communities on social media. This study's target text was the spoken text type, which sometimes entails spontaneous conversation. The data were collected from X Spaces directly and recorded by the researcher then analyzed qualitatively. The 15 X Spaces were chosen randomly from the X Spaces feed and the participants are from different language backgrounds. They are discussing different topics using English language in their discussion. The participants and hosts of these spaces from different countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Nigeria, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, South Africa, the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Austria, France, Chile, and Uruguay. During the discourse analysis process, the researcher applied Mesthrie and Bhatt's (2008) analytical method, starting with the structural features of morphology and phrasal syntax and then examining the pragmatics features and discourse.

This analysis examined (a) noun phrases (articles, number, gender, possession, and pronouns), (b) verb phrases (tense, modality, number, stative vs. non-stative verbs, forms of *be*, unstressed *do*, and novel verb forms), and (c) other function words (prepositions, conjunctions, and *wh*- words). The pragmatics and discourse analyzing process included the pragmatics of syntactic forms, the pragmatics of discourse particles, speech acts, discourse across cultures, discourse contexts in the literature, and style-shifting and code-switching.

Referring to ethics of internet research, in this present study the researcher focused on the language produced and the discourse not on the subjects themselves without asking for informed consent to be in natural setting and don't affect reliability of the results (Bassett & O'Riordan, 2002). The researcher keeps the participants users and information anonymous and employed Chua's (2022) "anonymization" method in discourse analysis for online platforms. This method focused on using the data without actively seeking participants' consent while safeguarding their confidentiality by anonymizing them.

Structural features of World Englishes' morphology and phrasal syntax

This section presents the main syntactic and morphological characteristics of world Englishes in the analyzed X Spaces.

The noun phrase

This subsection analyzes articles, number, gender, possession, and pronouns.

Articles. By analyzing X Spaces former Twitter, the researcher found that participants tended to use articles in other ways than the standard native language. For example, the indefinite article could be deleted, as in Example 1.

(1) I'm hungry I just had banana for lunch today.

Article insertion was also evident, as in the following examples.

(2) We had a nice weather this Tuesday.

(3) I like to listen to a music, you know.

Some participants used definite and indefinite articles interchangeably, as in Example 4.

(4) Kylie is a most beautiful celebrity for me.

The researcher noticed that participants used the definite article with generic nouns, as in the following example.

(5) The fruit is good for you, try it.

Some participants used the definite article with possessive pronouns, as in Example 6.

(6) This idea is the mine, how about the yours ?

The researcher also observed the replacement of an indefinite article with the word *one*, as Example 7 shows.

(7) Well, how about if you try to write one journal [meaning: *a journal*]

While analyzing the Spaces, the researcher found examples of some functions that Filppula (1999) mentioned as non-standard usages of the definite article, such as the following passages.

(a) Using plural count nouns with a generic reference

(8) Do you purchase the old books?

(b) Using non-count abstract nouns and concrete mass nouns

(9) You know, we don't have the transportation.

(c) Using quantifying expressions involving *most*, *both*, and *all*

(10) Imagine, the half of them didn't attend the class.

(11) Yeah, when I told the boss, the both of them left the group.

(d) Using names of languages

(12) Well, I'm planning to learn the Chinese, but let me master the English first.

(e) Using physical sensations or states and the names of diseases and ailments

(13) Yeah, you're right. I felt something like the coronavirus last week.

(f) Using terms for parts of the day, week, or year and the names of festive days or seasons

(14) They like to do their homework at the night, kids, you know.

(15) Well, do you have the Thanksgiving in your country?

Number. Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) argued that the marking of noun phrases in world Englishes varies, and some such variation was found in the current study, including the following: (a) the disuse of the plural -s when expected in the superstrate, as in examples 16 and 17; (b) the regularization of zero plurals and other exceptions, as in examples 18 and 19; and (c) the treatment of mass nouns as count nouns, as in examples 20 and 21.

(16) You know, one of the kid told me that.

(17) Yes, those book I told you about.

(18) And yead some of childerns usually do that.

(19) You know as womans we have to do so.

(20) All furnitures we like are expensive.

(21) Yeah, and we can't find some informations we need to complete it.

Gender. In this study, the researcher found that some participants did not distinguish between *he*, *she*, and *it*.

(22) And yeah he likes it [talking about a girl].

(23) My husband is not here, she is trying to find a job, you know.

(24) She likes to read a lot of books [referring to her brother].

(25) She wears them [also referring to her brother].

Possession. During the analysis, the study found that the possessive -s was not often used, as in the following examples.

(26) And then I got a job in the kid section.

(27) You know my kid bedroom is too small that's why.

(28) No, I usually use my husband car.

The researcher also noticed that some participants did not apply the regular possessive order, as in the following examples.

(29) The car is for my husband of me.

(30) Yeah, all the kids for mine.

(31) I like to eat fruit of our farm.

Pronouns. Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) reported some innovations in second-person plural pronouns. For example, the pronoun paradigm can be regularized via the formation of specific second-person plural and pronoun deletion. In the current study, the researcher observed the following examples.

- (32) Yous don't like it [emphasizing the meaning *you don't like it*].
- (33) Yeah, you know I should then read [omission] the book [meaning *read him*].
- (34) O is not my choice my doctor to me to eat it [meaning *it is not . . .*].
- (35) And yeah, O should give him what he wants, or he'll cry all day [meaning *we should . . .*].

Verb phrases

In this section, the researcher analyze tense, modality, number, stative vs. non-stative verb, forms of *be*, unstressed *do*, and novel verb forms.

Tense. The analysis of the studied conversations showed that some changes in basic English tenses (the present, past, and future) occurred. For example, the researcher observed an overlap between the present and future, as in the following examples.

- (36) I talk about it tomorrow.
- (37) How about your school and you be in the same school next year?
- (38) Let me know if you go this night.

Furthermore, past-tense suffixes were omitted in some contexts by zero, as in the following examples.

- (39) We work there for ten years.
- (40) Yeah, you know, I find my kids play this game last night.
- (41) Yes, imagine we travel last year in the quarantine period.

Modality. The researcher found that speakers used modules in different ways than native standard English. For example, *can* and *be able* were used in the same sentence, as in the following examples.

- (42) Yes, they can be able to play football.
- (43) And call me you know I can be able to go with you.

Furthermore, participants missed using the module *would* or deleted it.

- (44) I rather eat healthy food.
- (45) I like to play with them.
- (46) [omission] you go with me [meaning *would you go with me?*]?

When analyzing the content, the researcher found that some participants used *may* instead of *could*, as in the following examples.

- (47) May you hear me and then respond.
- (48) You know I don't get it; may you please explain it to me.
- (49) Yeah, I like to do it, may he organize it for us?

Number. The analysis of the sample discussion revealed that participants misused number in the present tense—that is, the -s ending that marks the third person—as in the following sentences.

- (50) She talk to me.
- (51) George listen to the music.
- (52) My kid hear me.
- (53) He go to the market.

In contrast, some of the participants used -s endings for plural verbs.

- (54) All kids likes it.
- (55) Many people around there doesn't eat healthy.
- (56) I think football players plays with love, that's why!
- (57) You know when you tells them the truth they will not believe you.
- (58) I think they helps their friend in homework.

Some of the participants used different endings in the same sentence.

- (59) You know . . . kids eats fruit and play soccer after that.
- (60) I close my eyes and opens the window.
- (61) They like shopping and they goes to the mall every weekend.

(62) I love and likes to watch TV; you don't believe it.

Stative vs. non-stative verbs. Through the analysis, the researcher found no clear difference between stative and action dynamic verbs. The participants used many non-action verbs in progressive and continuous tenses with *be* plus a verb and *-ing*, as in the following examples.

- (63) We are owning two cars.
- (64) And yeah, she was sounding sad and we asked her about them.
- (65) You know in that time kids are needing a lot of care.
- (66) My younger daughter these days is disliking reading books.
- (67) And you know I am loving watching movies in my free time and eating popcorn.
- (68) When I ate it I was tasting some sugar even though there was no sugar added.

Makalela (2004) and Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) argued that some reasons reinforce the use of stative verbs in the progressive tense. One example they mentioned is McDonald's worldwide advertisement using the phrase "I'm loving it," which the company trademarked in 2005.

Forms of "be"

The following subsections analyze on the auxiliary *be* as one of the most important and most-used auxiliaries in the English language. The discussion is based on the different types of *be* suggested by Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008): the copular *be*, the habitual *be*, the passive *be*, and the existential *be* versus *get*.

The copular "be"

Crystal (2008, p. 116) explained the concept of a copula as "a term used in grammatical description to refer to a linking verb, i.e. a verb which has little independent meaning, and whose main function is to relate other elements of clause structure, especially subject and complement. In English, the main copular (or copulative) verb is *be*."

The analysis revealed the deletion of copulae, as in the following examples.

- (69) My [omission] fruits very tasty.
- (70) You know, the cars [omission] expensive.
- (71) When [omission] speak to people you notice their talents.

The habitual "be"

According to Merriam-Webster, the habitual *be* is "a common feature of African American English in which the uninflected verb form *be* that is, just plain *be* as opposed to forms of *be* like *is* or *being*—is used to indicate that something occurs frequently or habitually." It is also known as the *invariant be* and the *aspectual be*.

The researcher observed some examples of participants' using the habitual *be*.

- (72) I be drinking a lot of water daily.
- (73) The shopping mall be crazy in the weekend.
- (74) And you know the kids be annoying you, and you can't complete your work.
- (75) Well, even when I'm with my family I be lonely.

The passive "be"

Passive be deletion refers to deleting *be* when the verb occurs in either a stem or passive form, as Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) stated. The analysis showed this deletion in the following sentences.

- (76) I guess when you want to eat healthy with kids, this must [omission] a challenge.
- (77) You know the expensive cars 0 mostly bought by youth.
- (78) When I talk to my kids about it. They know it 0 created by their grandfather.

The existential "be" versus "get"

The existential *be* refers to there is, there are, there was, there were, there has been, there have been, there had been, etc. The analysis revealed that it was sometimes deleted or replaced with *get*, as in the following examples.

- (79) I went to the shopping mall and got many shoppers.
- (80) Well, got a lot of question of how I can eat healthy.
- (81) You know [omission] many of people over there.
- (82) And yes, when I bought the car. 0 a lot of questions about it.

Unstressed "do"

Some participants did not use *do* when asking questions.

- (83) My daughter told you that?

- (84) Yeah, I know, they gave you this impression?
- (85) He said that?
- (86) They told you they are not eating healthy?

The researcher also found examples of using *do* to mark the past tense, such as the following examples.

- (87) I did tell you before about our diet.
- (88) And yeah, they did eat healthy.
- (89) You know, they did like sports and cars.
- (90) The kids did say it a lot.
- (91) I did talk about it before.

Novel verb forms

Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) reported different innovations when using new compound verbs in world Englishes, such as *by-heart*, *look-after*, and *back-answer*. Through the analysis, the researcher found that the participants in the current study used new compound verbs, as the following examples show.

- (92) You know my husband likes to family-sit.
- (93) The kids play-worked a lot.
- (94) And yeah, when I music-listen I feel relax.

Moreover, they changed parts of speech by using *on* and *off* as verbs, which Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) also observed, and the participants used other words as verbs, such as *up* and *down*, as in the following examples.

- (95) You know when I want them to sleep I off the TV.
- (96) When I told her, she said I can up it to you.
- (97) I always tell them, you can down it when you finish eating.
- (98) You know, they on the devices even when they don't need them.

The participants also used phrasal and prepositional verbs in ways different than standard English. Platt et al. (1984) presented different ways of using verb categorization in world Englishes, and the researcher has added examples from the analysis for each way in the following passages.

(a) Phrasal verbs used without a particle (examples: *show* for *show off*, *calm* for *calm down*, and *go* for *go over*)

- (99) She wants to make impression. You know she tries to show.
- (100) I said calm and listen to what I'm saying.
- (101) They are not sure that's why they go again.

(b) Phrasal verbs used with a different particle than standard English (examples: *wake on* for *wake up*, *wait on* for *wait for*, *back off* for *back down*, and *drop in* for *drop by*)

- (102) I usually ask him to wake on his young brother.
- (103) You know, we wait on for long time to get it.
- (104) And yeah, don't worry you can just back off it.
- (105) I asked her to drop in at any time.

(c) Non-phrasal verbs used with a particle (examples: *say on* for *say*, *continue on* for *continue*, and *discover out* for *discover*)

- (106) Yeah, he can say on whatever he wants.
- (107) I tell her to continue on eating her healthy food.
- (108) You know, he discovers out a way to stop car engine sound.

(d) Prepositional verbs used without a preposition (examples: *hold* for *hold on* and *end* for *end up*)

- (109) She can hold for a second.
- (110) Yes, they end saying we don't know that you want us to play outside.

(e) Prepositional verbs used with a different preposition (examples: *believe on* for *believe in*, *look into* for *look for*, *lead on* for *lead to*, and *beg over* for *beg for*)

- (111) My family believe on exercises but not on eating healthy.
- (112) And yes, they look onto new car.
- (113) I told them that the road leads on the forest.
- (114) We beg over the documents; we need them to complete the registration process.

- (f) Non-prepositional verbs used with a preposition (examples: *create on* for *create* and *explain out* for *explain*)
(115) They created on new project after he told them the first one was not accepted.
(116) I told her to explain out everything.

Other function words

The following subsections analyze how the participants used prepositions, conjunctions, and *wh*- words in world Englishes.

Prepositions. The researcher noticed the use of prepositions in new forms and ways not found in standard English. Some of them were mentioned in the previous section. For example:

- (117) And you know the kids like to play at the park.
(118) I asked him about who is in the phone, but he did not tell me.
(119) Yeah, you can believe it we have been waiting on a line for hour.

Some participants deleted the preposition from their sentences.

- (120) You know she likes to go [omission] school.
(121) We used to live [omission] New Zealand.
(122) Eating healthy should work will [omission] them.
(123) Yeah, when they sleep, they dream [omission] scary things.
(124) They usually go[omission] park without telling me.

The participants sometimes used prepositions at the beginning of their sentences, as in the following examples.

- (125) At school they are.
(126) Yes, she said to the shopping mall they are going.
(127) You know, about the homework they are taking.
(128) I told you in the park the kids are playing.

Also, the researcher found some examples of what Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) called as *double prepositions*, as in the following example.

- (129) I go to at my boy school.
(130) You know I'm concerned about in his health.

Conjunctions

Correlative "so". The analysis showed that some participants tended to use *so* as a correlative conjunction at the beginning of each clause, as in the following examples.

- (131) So, you know I like it, so I buy it.
(132) Yeah, so when they found the playground, so we chose to sit there.
(133) So, I love to cook, so I bought a lot of books to learn.
(134) Yes, I told them so to be healthy, so you should eat healthy food.

Conjunction balance. The participants sometimes used relations in each clause.

- (135) Although I told them a lot about healthy food, but they keep eating unhealthy I'm tired.
(136) Though they were angry, but they enjoy playing football.
(137) It is funny though I told you a lot, but you still asking about them.

Double conjunctions. The researcher noticed the use of some double conjunctions in the same clause.

- (138) And yeah, because why I told you a lot about the kids.
(139) If at all they speak about sports, I'll share my thoughts.
(140) Yeah, supposing if I want to learn Japanese instead of Chinese, which easier you think.

Clause-final conjunctions. Some participants used conjunctions as final words in their clauses to convey different meanings, as in the following examples.

- (141) You know they are a lot, but.
(142) And yeah, I don't love all celebrities, too.
(143) I love sports, but.
(144) You know, the kids love playing in the playground, therefore.

Wh- words. Some participants used new varieties of *wh*- words, as in the following examples.

- (145) For what are you going [meaning *why are you going?*]?

- (146) What thing are you doing [meaning *what are you doing?*]?
(147) What do are they playing [meaning *what are they playing?*]?
(148) What for are the kids coming [meaning *why are they coming?*]?

Pragmatics and discourse

The current section focuses on how world Englishes could recreate new forms that might be affected by different cultures and societies and have cultural meaning. For example, according to Algeo (1988), tag questions perform five pragmatic functions in English: the *informational tag* uses a rising pitch to request information; the *confirmatory tag* uses a falling pitch to request agreement from others; the *punctuation tag* expresses emphasis; the *peremptory tag* ends a discussion; and the *aggressive tag* uses a low tone.

The researcher noticed the frequent use of *isn't it* as a tag question, as in the following examples.

- (1) We are playing cards, isn't it?
- (2) You are taking to me, isn't it?
- (3) You said you like eating healthy, isn't it?
- (4) And yeah, we are going there, isn't it?
- (5) They should have told me before, isn't it?

The tag question *isn't it* is called an *undifferentiated tag question*. It signals important social meaning. Furthermore, these kinds of undifferentiated tags play important pragmatic roles, such as in expressing cultural politeness when they have positive politeness functions (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). In the previous examples, tag questions applied the politeness principle of non-imposition, which might have been caused by the speakers' cultures.

Discussion

As the findings revealed, the participants in the current study keep using new forms of world Englishes. For example, they used articles in other ways than the standard native language and they also used new ways of marking noun phrases.

As AlShurfa et al. (2022) confirmed that substrate- superstrate interaction affects many syntactic characteristics of Englishes which happened in the current study when participants from different background languages used English to communicate in X Spaces. As suggested by Al Jahromi's (2020) study social media has been perceived to have impact on interlocutors' lexical variation, writing style, reading skills, and communication skills. The present study findings suggest that participants used some changes in basic English tenses, used modules in different ways than native standard English, misused number in the present tense, and used many non-action verbs in progressive and continuous tenses. Amin et al. (2020) concluded that social media platforms affect Language and create new forms, which referred to as world Englishes in current study, they stated that these social media could divert language students to deception, unscholarly and ungrammatical contents, obscenities, and generic collaborations.

The study found that participants used the definite article with generic nouns and used plural count nouns with a generic reference. The participants also changed parts of speech by using *on* and *off* as verbs and they used phrasal and prepositional verbs in ways different than standard English.

Ruane's (2021) suggested that the heightened global mobility is leading to enhanced global sensitivities which will create more critical dispositions and changes in English usage. The participants in current study found to use innovations when using new compound verbs in world Englishes such as family-sit, play-worked and music-listen. These new forms are interesting thing to be noticed and happened. Karim et al., (2022) suggested that language students learn new things and gather new knowledge using social media and according to their result, social media plays an important role, and it helps to improve language skills. In the present study some participants used new varieties of *wh-* words such as *For what* and *What for* to mean *why*, *What thing* and *What do* to mean *what are*.

Further, there is frequent use of *isn't it* as a tag question which happened as a result of cultural affect as presented in the findings section and it showed how world Englishes might recreate new forms affected by different cultures and societies and might have cultural meaning. Sharifian and Sadeghpour (2021) argued that world Englishes should be studied from specific perspectives of cultural linguistics to examine and understand how English language is used in different communities around the world to express their world views and perspectives and represent their cultural conceptions. The findings of the present study revealed that using undifferentiated tags play important pragmatic roles, such as in expressing cultural politeness when participants have positive politeness functions. In tag questions examples they used the politeness principle of non-imposition, which caused by the participants cultures.

Conclusion

This study's findings revealed many variations in language use in the structural features of the participants' language morphology, phrasal syntax, and pragmatics. The participants invented and used new language structures and understood them among each other, as the researcher found during their discussion. These features included the overlap between the present and future tenses and the use of non-action verbs in a progressive tense with *be* plus a verb with *-ing*. They also used the *-s* ending for plural verbs, and they sometimes used it variably in the same sentence. Some participants did not value gendered pronouns, so they did not perceive a difference between *he*, *she*, and *it*. Variables in the use of articles, number, possessions, and other pronouns were also apparent, such as deletion, duplication, and even the invention of new forms. This result was also supported by the findings of other studies on world English speakers' omission of objects, subjects, and pronouns, their repetition of these elements, or their irregular use of these elements in standard English (AlShurfa et al., 2022; Elyas et al., 2021). Moreover, there is overlap in the use of some language structures, some forms of *be*, phrasal and prepositional verbs, and conjunctions. Interestingly, the participants invented new varieties of *wh*- words, phrasal verbs, compound verbs, tag questions, and parts of speech. They used double and clause-final conjunctions, the correlative *so*, prepositions at the beginnings of sentences, passive *be* deletion, and the deletion of the copular *be*.

In future studies, researchers could examine the details of such new invented structures, words, and language and how they might affect people's identities, languages, and cultures. Based on the present study results and because attitudes found to effect on how people think of world Englishes, as Patria's (2021) study concluded, studies on how world Englishes could affect people's identities, languages, and cultures in virtual communities are needed. Collins (2022) explored grammatical variation across world Englishes, gathering data from a global web-based English corpus. Future studies might make use of such a corpus-based approach to examine world Englishes' effects on people. Future research could also maximize their insights by examining new Englishes in other virtual communities to observe their effects on people since, as Ishikawa (2016) concluded, the world Englishes paradigm is important to appreciate the use of English.

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