

Dreams and Realities:

Developing Countries and the English Language

Edited by Hywel Coleman

Paper 16

English language teaching in fragile states: Justifying action, promoting success and combating hegemony

by Danny Whitehead

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Introduction

These are challenging times for conscientious English language teaching (ELT) professionals working in fragile states.² Large cuts in funding have affected projects across the globe as donor priorities have been reorganised in light of changing geopolitical realities. From the left of the political spectrum have come louder accusations of covert linguistic imperialism (Horvath 1998, Phillipson 1992, 2009), or linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000); from the right has come increased pressure to pursue these very policies that the left decry (Pascoe-Watson 2008, Sharlet 2010: 78³).

In her introduction to the *TESOL Quarterly* special topic issue on language and identity, Norton (1997:425) reiterates a question that has been debated at length by educational researchers: 'Are TESOL⁴ educators perpetuating Western imperialism in different parts of the world?' (See also Edge 2003, 2006, Kachru 1990, Ngûgî 1986, Pennycook 1994 and Phillipson 1992.) This concern is particularly relevant in the context of a fragile state, where sensitivity to direct or indirect hegemonic⁵ influence is magnified due to the vulnerability of the state and its citizens.

The criticisms levelled by the academics above have particular relevance to the Peacekeeping English Project (PEP), which entails the teaching of English in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a fragile state vulnerable to external influence. DRC also has French as an existing official state language as a relic of its colonial history, which has its own hegemonic influence on the thought and behaviour of the subaltern⁶ in their relations with local elites or with Europe.

The Peacekeeping English Project – a military English⁷ project managed by the British Council on behalf of the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Department for International Development (DfID) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) –

commenced in DRC in March 2007. The project operates in support of the Institut Militaire des Langues Appliquées (IMLA) of the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC). The project has five goals, which are summarised in Box 1.

Box 1: Goals of Peacekeeping English Project in DRC

1. To facilitate the short-term rapid build up of a specific number/target of English language users to meet the country's regional and multinational obligations, or facilitate international contact for senior personnel.
2. To promote the development of a long-term sustainable host nation language-teaching infrastructure to eventually enable a self-sufficient strategy to meet that country's needs.
3. To assist with the provision of short- and long-term functional ELT for specific purposes e.g. conference participation, preparation for international assignments or work requirements, preparation for international exchanges and training courses, career development and promotion.
4. To promote greater co-operation, understanding, interoperability and dialogue between armed forces in the region.
5. To contribute, through exposure to UK values and ethos, to the improvement of the professionalism, standards and capabilities of the Armed Forces and public security agencies, particularly with regard to their respect for human rights, the rule of law and the primacy of a democratically elected executive. **(British Council 2008)**

PEP DRC has training sites in Kinshasa, Mbanza-Ngungu and Kananga. IMLA trains over 250 full-time learners every year and a further 120 part-time learners.

Of particular concern is whether the PEP project is what Althusser (1994) might describe as an 'ideological state apparatus', imposing (or infiltrating) culture and beliefs through coercive education. A Gramscian analysis would certainly suggest so, as Ives (2004) explains:

Language [in Gramsci's analysis] is spread predominantly not by government or state coercion, military or police action, but by speakers accepting the prestige and utility of new languages, phrases, or terms. (Ives 2004:7)

If the project has the potential to perpetuate post-colonial hegemony (and, in a Marxist analysis, if this is unavoidable⁸), efforts need to be made to minimise the hegemonic aspect, or even to act as a counter-hegemonic influence, taking into account the very specific local context of the English language in DRC.

Through a case study of PEP DRC, I will examine arguments over the justification for ELT projects in fragile states. In the next section of the chapter, I look at the language of justification in project planning and how, in the initial stages of project

planning, this language steers a project towards being a tool of external hegemony. The following section then reports on a longitudinal study conducted with teachers and learners from IMLA (working with PEP DRC) in 2009. The study investigates whether it is possible to support the development of complex learner identities and foster counter-hegemonic discourses and complex language identities through critical praxis⁹ in ELT. The study is informed by Gramsci's theories of language and hegemony and by post-colonial considerations of implementing ELT projects in fragile states.

The final section of the chapter draws conclusions, summarises recommendations for ELT practice in fragile states and indicates areas for further research.

English language teaching in fragile states

Let me start by exploring the justification (or, perhaps more accurately, by addressing the criticisms) of ELT projects in fragile states. I will try to address the fundamental objections to such projects and make recommendations for projects in similar contexts. I will also look briefly at operational aspects of PEP DRC, and, drawing on my experience as manager of the project¹⁰, I will make further suggestions for the successful management and implementation of an ELT project in a fragile state.

Beyond 'linguistic imperialism'

Several voices have described ELT and the global spread of English as integral components of Western imperialism in colonial and post-colonial times: Phillipson (1992) and Pennycook (1994) have detailed the British Council's formation in the 1930s as a disseminator of British propaganda and argued that its capacity in that respect has not diminished or changed with time. In 2007, the Russian FSB (the successor to the KGB) described the British Council as a 'nest of spies' (Harding 2008) and commentators such as Horvath (1998) still see the British Council (and the United States Information Service) as 'the vehicles whereby the British and American governments respectively exert pressure on foreign governments ... while at the same time providing a convenient front for MI5/CIA activities.' It is unfortunate that these views, grounded in the theory of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992), have become so widely and unquestioningly accepted that at a recent conference on applied linguistics a colleague was 'accused of being complicit in the bombing of Basra' for daring to support the role of English in development.¹¹ As linguistic imperialism has become part of the ELT profession's 'received wisdom', it has concurrently become more difficult to engage in balanced debate in support of English projects in fragile states.

Robert Phillipson's seminal text (1992) has provided (and continues to provide) a stimulating point of departure for the consideration of the role of ELT and the role of ELT projects in imposing or perpetuating Western capitalist hegemony. However, the theory sometimes understates the agency of speakers of other languages, who are not always passive recipients of imposed hegemony directed by the decision makers in the centre and their puppet elites in the periphery. This does a disservice to speakers of other languages and is not consistent with the complex realities of hybrid multilingualism evident in DRC and in other states, particularly states in

which English does not exist as a former colonial language where the residues of colonialism have greater potential for hegemonic influence. In many multilingual societies, English can be seen as adding to (or at least having the potential to add to) an already rich and complex linguistic mix and in which multilingual speakers create their own linguistically hybridised discourses¹². English is not a static, finished object; I would like to frame the current discussion within a conception of English as a fluid, living construct which is constantly being (re)invented by speakers and speech communities (Brutt-Griffler 2002).

I do not argue that ELT is always benign, or that there is no potential for hegemonic influence; I argue, rather, that any negative influences are not always the result of intentional imperialist policies from the centre (as the theory of linguistic imperialism posits). Care certainly needs to be given in planning and delivery of ELT projects in fragile states (see the next section in this chapter), and Phillipson's work has been (and continues to be) thought provoking and important in continuing to draw attention to inequality and hegemony in ELT.

Therefore, it is fair to ask why the theory of linguistic imperialism has been adopted by ELT practitioners, often without close enough analysis of its relevance to their situation, in contexts where its central tenets are less relevant. To answer that question, we might first look at ELT professionals operating in the field of development.

I sense that there is a general lack of pride in the ELT profession, especially within ELT in development and often for good reason. The abundance of unqualified native-speaker teachers (particularly in developing countries and fragile states, where the lack of competition from other qualified and experienced expatriate teachers lowers standards for recruitment¹³), the explosion of profit-focused private language academies which perpetuate the myth of the inherently superior native-speaker teacher and the profusion of 'back-packer' teachers devalues the profession in the eyes of the internal and external observer, leading to a sense of shame or embarrassment in admitting that one is an ELT professional. As Kennett (2002:235) says, ELT professionals 'avoid the "E" word, anything to avoid the condescension, when [they admit to being] English language teachers, to be told, "Oh, I did that once".' As a result, ELT professionals are more likely to accept criticism of their own industry; it confirms their worst fears and plays to their sense of embarrassment.

Added to this is the false correlation of the legally questionable foreign policies of the UK and the USA in recent history (reaching a peak under Tony Blair and George W. Bush, but not limited to that period) with the global spread of English. While the USA and UK are English-speaking nations, the concept of their owning the language, or of the language being inherently tied to British or American cultural values (if there are even such definable terms) is no longer valid. Criticism of UK and USA foreign policy (particularly in fragile states) should not be conflated with the issue of the spread of English. The result of this false association is that liberally minded ELT professionals, already lacking confidence in their industry, have been all too apt to adopt the incomplete – but forcefully argued – critical theory of linguistic imperialism.

In multilingual contexts that do not have English as a colonial language, such as DRC, a more relevant theoretical framework for analysing the role of English is Higgins' (2009) theory of multivocality. Drawing on Bakhtin, Higgins describes a complex multiplicity of language identity in multilingual societies in East Africa. Here, English is no longer a foreign or alien language, it is also a local language. It is not used simply as a tool of Western political, economic and cultural imperialism, but also – and concurrently – as a creative tool which has been appropriated locally to create new discourses (cf. Kachru 1990). Higgins' theory accepts the potential for negative hegemony when considered in the context of a fragile state, while acknowledging the latent power for the creation of new (and possibly counter-hegemonic) discourse through hybridisation; in its duality, it is richer and more realistically complex than other dichotomous narratives.

Afrocentricity and potential of English in DRC

Recent currents in Afrocentric thought provide encouragement for the use of English in Africa to counter hegemonic influence. Afrocentricity can be defined as:

... a view of the world that puts Africa at the centre of global concerns and idealises its role in human affairs ... to restore pride and confidence to black people in their own African heritage. (Mazrui 2004:95)

Mazrui acknowledges that Eurocentric hegemony makes it difficult for Africans to use the English language to create their own counter-hegemonic discourses. He continues:

The linguistic challenge and dilemma confronting the Afrocentrist, then, has been how to articulate a counter-hegemonic and anti-Eurocentric discourses [sic] in a language of 'internal' imperialism. (Mazrui 2004:99, emphasis added)

This accords with Gramscian analysis. Africans remain in a state of conditioned subalternity as their language identity is coerced by the power structures and latent imagery inherent in the post-colonial languages.

Mazrui and Gramsci acknowledge that there are possible options open to the subaltern to create counter-hegemonic discourse through the development of a counter-hegemonic foreign/additional language identity, which can be through English. As Mazrui states above, this is a 'linguistic challenge', not an impossibility and he describes a 'revolutionary potential' in English (Mazrui 2004:102). Gramsci also argues strongly that language allows the development of identity and that the subaltern is capable of creating his/her own language identity (or 'spontaneous grammar', see below) to create counter-hegemonic discourse. Mazrui (2004:104–107) further suggests that English could provide a bridge between Islamophobia and Swahiliphilia, leading to a more 'democratised Afrocentrism'.

Afrocentrism therefore provides a suitable theoretical and ideological grounding for further exploring the possibility of English being coerced by the subaltern for their own purposes to create counter-hegemonic discourse in fragile states. This needs to be further considered with regard to the linguistic milieu of DRC.

DRC has an existing triglossic linguistic structure. However, recent changes in language policy in Rwanda and the increasing importance of the Anglophone international minerals market are moving DRC swiftly towards a quadriglossic structure, in line with Batibo's (2006) model: the market for English language teaching products is booming, the demand for English teaching far outstripping supply and concurrently there is a decrease in the stature of French. It is worth reproducing Batibo's quadriglossic structure in tabulated form, which I have adapted for the DRC context ('H' and 'L' refer to high and low status):

Table 1: Quadriglossic language structure in DRC (adapted from Batibo 2006:137)

Status	Type of language
H1	Super-international language English
L1 / H2	Ex-colonial language French
H3 / L2	Indigenous lingua franca Lingala
L3	Indigenous languages Kicongo, Tshiluba, Ngbala, etc.

English is described here as a 'super-international language', used for global business and regional and international communication. French is seen as of lesser status, but still as a locally 'higher' language of official national institutions. The indigenous lingua franca is used for inter-ethnic linguistic group communication whilst the other indigenous languages are used within ethnic linguistic groups.

An important point to note here is that English (H1) is superior to French (H2) and Lingala (H3) but is not in the same power structure as the indigenous languages (L3). This indicates a clear potential for English to be used in conjunction with indigenous languages to overcome the hegemony of the ex-colonial language and the indigenous lingua-franca (Lingala) which was imposed by physical force, coordinated language policy and overt coercion under the Mobutu regime (1965-1996). English as a 'super-international language' can create counter-hegemonic discourses for indigenous speakers against the historically imposed Lingala and French language identities: it allows for the bypassing of traditional hegemonic languages and can work alongside – rather than against – these languages as they are not in competition for usage.

Theoretical underpinnings are an essential starting point in the design of ELT projects in fragile states. But they must also be supported by the right intent and by careful statements of purpose.

Intent and purpose

As noted above, Marx (1867) did not paint capitalists 'in a rosy light', but he also did not believe that individual capitalists were in themselves evil. It was more that under the capitalist economic system, inequality was (is) unavoidable. In the same way, we must acknowledge that in the current global political and economic system, an ELT project funded by the UK government and implemented by the British Council in a fragile state cannot avoid the potential for hegemony or cultural 'depositing' (Freire

1970). This hegemonic influence is not necessarily through coercion or design (as implied by linguistic imperialism) but through perceived prestige and attraction to English (as described by Tembe and Norton 2011, Chapter 6 this volume) which generates consent. Consent and coercion are not diametrically opposed concepts; promotion of English, whether with good intent or without, feeds the perceived value of English as a commodity.

In the next section I report on the principles which were developed to minimise that hegemonic influence and indeed to attempt to create counter-hegemonic discourses by encouraging complex multilingual identities with English through the implementation of PEP DRC. However, it is interesting at this point to address the issue of intent and goal in ELT projects in fragile states more closely.

Goals one to three of PEP DRC listed in Box 1 are neutral and perhaps consistent with what would be expected from any capacity-building project for ELT or ESP teachers in a government institution. Goal four, while rooted in the security context, is representative of the British Council's primary role as a cultural relations organisation – an organisation committed to ‘the building of engagement and trust between people of different cultures through the exchange of knowledge and ideas’ (Knagg 2010). Goal five is more interesting and warrants further attention:

5. *To contribute, through exposure to UK values and ethos, to the improvement of the professionalism, standards and capabilities of the Armed Forces and public security agencies, particularly with regard to their respect for human rights, the rule of law and the primacy of a democratically elected executive.*
(British Council 2008)

This raises three immediate questions. What are ‘UK values and ethos’? Is this a sound goal for an ELT project in a fragile state? And, more generally, why does the UK government support PEP DRC?

A short questionnaire was sent to project stakeholders to investigate these issues. Two questions were asked:

1. In your opinion, why does the UK finance and support the Peacekeeping English Project in DRC?
2. According to project goals, the Peacekeeping English Project exposes its stakeholders/participants/partners to ‘UK values’ and ‘UK ethos’. What do you understand by the terms ‘UK values’ and UK ‘ethos’?

In August 2010, the questionnaire was sent to nine UK-based senior stakeholders from the British Council, FCO, DfID and UK Ministry of Defence and to 40 trainees currently undertaking courses supported by PEP DRC.¹⁴ (Questionnaires were sent in French to trainees and answers were collated in French.¹⁵) Seven responses were received from the UK-based stakeholders with a further 32 from project trainees.

With regard to Question two, answers from UK-based stakeholders were very similar. All seven respondents associated ‘UK values and ethos’ with human rights, mentioning ‘tolerance and diversity’, ‘respect for universal human rights’, ‘human rights and the rule of law’ and ‘human rights and freedom of speech, thought

and movement'. Three respondents linked the concepts of 'UK values and ethos' with 'civilian management of uniformed services', 'subordination of military to the civilian' and 'the principle that the army is under civilian control'. The concept of democracy was also noted by a number of respondents: 'the embedding of democracy in [Congolese] training structures', 'democracy and the right to free and fair elections'.

However, Congolese training participants had very differing views of what UK ethos and values are. Responses included 'love', 'sharing' and 'peace'. Over 30 per cent of respondents saw 'political stability' (or a variant term relating to the stability of the state) as a symbol of the UK's values or ethos. Only one of the respondents mentioned 'democratic values', while – markedly – none of the respondents mentioned human rights as being a particular 'UK value or ethos'.

One cannot criticise the UK-based respondents for their focus on integrating issues such as human rights and the subordination of the military to civilian control, particularly in the context of continuing atrocities committed by the security forces in DRC. (For a defence of including such topics in English language training or other educational programmes, see Harwood and Hahn 1990, Snow et al. 1989 and Whitehead 2009.) However, what is interesting is that this is defined in the project goals as 'UK values and ethos' rather than universal values or rights – quite what makes these values specific to the UK is unclear. This is reflected in the trainees' responses which make not one association of universal human rights as a specifically UK concept, arguably because they too shared those values as a universal concept. In the project goals, the equating of human rights and specifically 'UK values and ethos' can be seen as paternalist, or indeed somewhat patronising, in the related assumption that because abuses are being committed in DRC, this means that respect for universal human rights is not a Congolese value. The inferred inferiority of the Congolese (and their lack of humanity or respect for basic human rights) in this assumption is also reflected in one response from a UK-based stakeholder, who stated that; 'Basically the project is there to improve the Congolese capability to govern themselves without murdering people [sic]'.

I am not suggesting that – perhaps with the exception of the last example above – the UK-based stakeholders believe that the citizens of DRC do not value universal human rights. However, the language usage in the project goals certainly implies this, which opens projects such as this to accusations of colonial paternalism and linguistic imperialism.

On the wider question of why the UK supports the PEP project in DRC (Question one), there was a great deal more agreement between UK-based respondents and Congolese project trainees. All of the UK-based stakeholders and over 90 per cent of the project participants stated that it was to enable the DRC to participate more effectively in peace support or peacekeeping operations, or to improve regional stability. Some critics might argue that the UK's aim here is to use African soldiers as proxies in international conflicts so as to avoid UK soldiers facing danger, but this ignores the realities of the situation. In DRC, this is not the case¹⁶. The conflict in the East of DRC is an African regional conflict; while it has its roots in colonialism and colonial mismanagement, it must be solved locally, by locals. The desire to take

ownership of the situation is reflected in DRC President Kabila's recent push for the withdrawal of international UN forces (under their acronym MONUC, or since July 2010 under the new mandate, MONUSCO) under a clear timetable. Functionally, English is a tool which supports peacekeeping and peace support operations; as the UK-based Ministry of Defence respondent confirms: 'On several occasions locals have lost their lives due to the inability to communicate with the United Nations Troops and also the FARDC have misunderstood joint orders with their UN partners.' English, as the language of the SADC (Southern African Development Community) peacekeeping forces and of international peacekeeping forces under the auspices of the UN, plays an integral role in improving the effectiveness of peacekeeping and peace support operations.

Some UK-based respondents also admitted that the project goals went beyond the stated ones related to improving the English language capacity of the FARDC. One UK-based stakeholder said that the UK has a number of goals, 'some direct and some non-direct'. These were described by another UK-based respondent as a need to better position the UK for influence, 'in contrast to France, which has been marketed better.' Another admitted that '[t]he DRC is of significant strategic importance to the UK as a source of minerals ... hence its stability is important to the UK's economy.' These responses indicate that UK interest plays a role in projects such as these; while they were more than outweighed by UK-based responses centring on encouraging regional stability to bring peace and alleviate poverty and suffering, this UK interest cannot be ignored. It is perhaps naïve to expect projects in fragile states to be motivated purely by altruism, or internationalism (and I am certain that stakeholders in fragile states are fully aware of the unspoken reasons underpinning certain projects), but broader intent related to strategic or commercial interest should be acknowledged, otherwise accusations of covert imperialist influence are justified. I would argue that these could be acknowledged clearly in project documents (under 'benefits to the partner' and 'benefits to the UK') without damaging relationships or undermining the projects themselves; codifying intent and objectives leads to greater openness between partners and lessens potential for covert hegemony and for donor competition (and, therefore, a greater chance of project success¹⁷).

Of final note is that a number of Congolese respondents also acknowledged the inherent hegemonic power of the project and identified hegemonic project outcomes which are unstated in the project goals. One Congolese respondent wrote 'the United Kingdom presents its culture and mentality as a just virtue and a model reference to follow for the rest of the world. All the powerful countries have done this to maintain authority for a long time'. Another respondent suggested that a goal of the project is 'so that our country can speak English even though it wasn't colonised by the English'. A further respondent stated that 'the UK supports the primacy of the English language across the world', while another pointedly noted that '[t]o study a language without knowing its culture is nonsense'. This awareness of the potential hegemony supports my contention that the theory of linguistic imperialism does not acknowledge the agency of speakers of other languages. These responses show full awareness of the potential hegemonic role of English, but demonstrate a willingness to engage with it on their own terms.

Structural problems: Measuring achievement and securing continued support

One of the primary weaknesses of PEP DRC was the structural agreement on funding. While the project was planned and agreed as a three-year project, funding for each consecutive year was only approved on a yearly basis. The approval for project continuation at best arrived in the last month of the financial year and on two occasions actually after the end of the financial year. This seriously constrained project activities, as the project had to operate in effect as three one-year projects rather than one three-year project, with little or no opportunity for long-term planning and with uncertainty every March as to whether the project would still be there in April.¹⁸ While PEP DRC was successful in securing annual funding to complete the project cycle (and to develop into a second three-year project 2010–2013), PEP projects in other countries were arbitrarily terminated early (in one case after just one year), with great damage to the relationship between the host country and the UK and to the local stakeholders (including learners and teachers).

I am of course aware that this is not a problem specific to ELT projects in development, but more a general reflection of the fact that development funding from governments is subject to swift-changing geo-political priorities. However, I strongly believe that ELT projects in development are easy targets and suffer disproportionately from funding cuts and early closure due to the following factors.

Firstly, the ELT in development sector is years behind other development sectors in terms of monitoring, evaluation and measuring impact. Coleman (2002) provides a detailed discussion of this problem and little has changed in the years since Coleman's study. PEP DRC was no different in this respect: no impact assessment was written into the project plan and no funds were allocated for this purpose. It is unfeasible to think that a development project in a fragile state outside the field of ELT would not have a dedicated period, of post-project impact assessment and have dedicated funds and human resources for this purpose. PEP DRC measured numbers – of trainees, of deployments on Peace support activities, of teacher training sessions, workshops, etc. – but numbers do not tell the story of impact.¹⁹ While it is much easier to count the number of teachers at a seminar than it is to measure behaviour change as a result of project activity, this is no excuse for not attempting the latter. The rest of the development sector is doing this and so should ELT professionals.

This perhaps explains a related problem, that of the relationship between ELT organisations, international organisations (such as the UN) and donors operating in fragile states (such as DfID). Despite DfID being a co-owner of PEP DRC, DfID staff failed to visit the project on any occasion during the project lifespan. This is indicative of a more general problem, that international organisations are paying little attention to ELT: for example, the international conference on Language, Education and the Millennium Development Goals, organised by UNESCO, UNICEF and SEAMEO in November 2010, had only one session concerned with ELT in development. Kennett (2002) has argued that the DfID 1997 White Paper signalled an end to support for English language training projects in fragile states, and, other than a few isolated exceptions²⁰, little has changed since then. This lack of interest from international organisations and donors is unsurprising given the lack of focus on measuring impact, monitoring and evaluation and the lack of research into ELT in development (Coleman 2010) which might justify further engagement.

I acknowledge above (as did the Congolese project participants in their responses to the questionnaire) the unavoidable potential for negative hegemonic impact of an ELT project in a fragile state. To address this, a longitudinal study was conducted as part of PEP DRC in 2009, which investigated whether critical praxis could encourage the development of complex language identities leading to learner-generated counter-hegemonic discourses. The following section reports on this study.

Towards critical praxis and counter-hegemonic discourses in post-colonial English language teaching

There is a growing recognition within ELT, catalysed by projects such as PEP DRC operating in fragile states, that greater sensitivity is needed to the potential of hegemonic influence through ELT projects. This has certainly been recognised by the British Council (Knagg 2010) and this recognition was the stimulus for the study outlined here.

Hegemony, language and identity in fragile states

Identity crisis catalysed by globalisation and the encroachment of powerful hegemonic alien cultures affects fragile states disproportionately. As a result, there is strong potential for the hegemonic depositing of alien beliefs through the teaching of English as an additional language. However, there is also the possibility for English to produce counter-hegemonic discourses in the quadriglossic linguistic structure of DRC. If spontaneous grammars (see below) can be encouraged in the classroom, through the medium of English as an additional language and the encouragement of immediate learner-ownership of the language through subversion, learners can create identities (and even their own 'language') counter-hegemonic to the colonial language identity and separate from an English language identity. This provides the theoretical underpinning to the design of the research study, which was conducted as a component of PEP DRC in 2009.

Language change, or a significant challenge to the language identity of its citizens, constitutes a significant external and internal challenge to the fragile state. This problem has become more pronounced with technological and socio-economic developments since the end of the colonial era:

identity has become an issue because the reference points for the self have become unstuck ... The contemporary understanding of the self is that of a social self framed in relations of difference rather than unity and coherence. Identity becomes a problem when the self is constituted in the recognition of difference rather than sameness. (Delanty 2003:135)

These themes are also taken up by Bendle (2002), who argues that, since the start of the 20th century, there has been increasing secularisation and a growing focus on self-fulfilment. He also argues that there have been advances in human rights and an eroding of national institutions of state and power. Globalisation has led to a loss of local and national economic controls and a growing cynicism in culture, encouraged by increasing flows of information and increasing public access to that information.

Bendle and Delanty are describing Western society, but their critique is also true of current happenings in fragile states in Africa and elsewhere. The hegemonic influence of Western culture and the economic and political norms forced on African societies by international organisations such as the UN, the IMF and the World Bank (or through conditionality in bilateral aid, see Moyo 2009) have led to a crisis of identity. The individual (as opposed to the group) has replaced traditional societal structures and this replacement of community by difference (dichotomous differences) has led to conflict within African identity (Malaba 2006, Ibhawegbele 2006). It is for this reason that consideration of language identity is critical in the implementation of ELT projects in fragile states.

Gramsci on language and hegemony

Gramsci's theories of language and hegemony provided a framework for developing the study. Gramsci described two grammars²¹ of hegemony: 'normative' grammar and 'spontaneous' grammar'.²² Normative grammar, Gramsci said, is 'the reciprocal monitoring, reciprocal teaching, reciprocal "censorship" ... to create a grammatical conformism, [and] to establish "norms" of correctness and incorrectness' (Gramsci 1985:180). Normative grammars are coerced by fear, or coerced subconsciously by hegemonic forces in society; they are often described as the way people 'should' talk. Spontaneous grammar, by comparison, is that which utilises maximum individualism and free-will in its construction. It is not dictated to by persuasion, coercion, historical pressure, nor is it limited by external structures.

Gramsci acknowledges that spontaneous grammars can (and perhaps ideally will) become normative given time as they will unify into one language. Ives (2004) explains Gramsci's ideal:

The goal is to achieve a common language, not a singular, dominant interpretation of everything ... this hegemonic (or counter-hegemonic) language must be unified enough, coherent enough, to yield effective resistance to capitalist hegemony (and its language). (Ives 2004:114)

It is important that Gramsci's support for the development of a revolutionary language is understood as organic and bottom-up. Gramsci is highly critical of the artificial imposition of a universal single language (as some argue ELT embodies) in his criticism of Esperanto.²³ As a language imposed for the benefit of commerce or leisure travel, Esperanto is described as a tool of bourgeois cosmopolitanism (Ives 2004:56), an attempt to impose a false consciousness on the subaltern. If English wishes to avoid the same drawbacks, it has to be accepted and appropriated organically, with the respect of the individual and the support of the fragile state's citizens.

Overview of the study

The goal of the study, which was approved prior to engagement by all local stakeholders, was to identify the development of textual identities and/or counter-hegemonic discourses in learner-produced texts; as such, this necessitated a qualitative approach to data collection. Following Appleby (2002), Belz (2002), Kramsch (1998, 2000, 2003) and Kramsch and Lam (1999), I decided to design a weekly instrument for encouraging written textual identity which could then be examined through discourse analysis.

'Class Y'²⁴ was chosen for the study. It comprised 14 learners (13 male, one female). On commencing this tranche of training, the learners had an average proficiency level of 2 on the STANAG 6001 proficiency scale.²⁵ The learners were all FARDC officers between the ranks of Second Lieutenant and full Colonel and had already completed 420 hours' language training through PEP during the period January to July 2009. Among the 14 learners, there were 11 different mother tongues: Buza, Kibembe, Kicongo, Kimongo, Kinande, Kingombe, Kiswahili, Lingala, Lokele, Mashi and Tshiluba. The programme commenced in August 2009 and lasted for seven weeks.

Principles for the learning environment

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy's research (1999) highlights the importance of the local non-native English-speaking teacher in developing counter-hegemonic discourses. Class Y would be taught by a Congolese teacher at IMLA, Major G. While the focused materials would be used just once per week, a series of principles was agreed for the other classroom sessions to ensure that the methodology and approach were complementary (Box 2). A workshop was held with Major G and other teachers from IMLA where the principles were agreed for Class Y's upcoming course; these were designed with reference to the theoretical principles outlined above.

Box 2: Classroom principles for the research period

1. Humanist methods

To minimise anxiety caused during struggles of identity, humanist methods would be used. These would include soothing music in class, a minimising of criticism or negative feedback, integration of creative right- and left-brain activities, poetry and art as texts and an increase in the amount of tasks which encouraged personal and emotional responses rather than closed, text-specific comprehension questions.

2. Acceptability of mother tongue in class

To stimulate multilingual hybridity, learners should be encouraged to view positively the facets of their existing indigenous language identity and not to see English as 'better', 'more powerful' or a threat. It was agreed to encourage the use of mother tongue in class (if learners thought that concepts could be better expressed in that way) and to encourage mother tongue usage to foster language mixing skills when communicating with learners with the same mother tongue, thereby creating a realistic communication act.

Box 2: Classroom principles for the research period (continued)

3. Mother tongue and L2 source texts

In order not to encourage the choice of one identity or another, but to encourage a complex interplay of intermingling identities (thereby working outside the English grammatical hegemonic framework and delegitimising it), it was agreed to use an equal mixture of authentic mother tongue and L2 texts (oral and written) as source materials for activities.

4. Afrocentrism

When the coursebook presented non-African role models, or non-African case studies, it was agreed that these would be supplemented with equivalent activities centred on Africans and African experiences. It is important to note that the Afrocentric materials would supplement, not replace, the other materials, thereby avoiding the creation of a binary, dichotomous, zero sum model.

Principles for the design of materials

Following the work of Krasmch (Krasmch 1998, 2000, 2003, Krasmch and Lam 1999) and Appleby (2002), it was indicated that the development of textual identities was a promising method of identity generation and a possible point of departure for learners in beginning to create spontaneous grammars and subvert English for counter-hegemonic discourses. The materials were designed specifically with the goal of stimulating written textual identities where possible. Harwood and Hahn's (1990) recommendations for handling sensitive issues were useful; these advocate that learner consent is necessary for challenging materials and that an open climate in the classroom is necessary. As many of the issues themselves provoke an emotional response, effort was made to include more right-brain activities and reflective tasks, following Tomlinson's (1998) development of 'access-self' materials. These more humanistic 'access-self' activities encourage reflection and reduce anxiety. The particular features of Tomlinson's guide which were followed in the creation of the materials were that tasks should be open ended, should engage the learners personally as human beings and should stimulate both left- and right-brain activities. In addition, it was intended that post-reading activities should first elicit holistic responses, that feedback should be provided through commentaries and suggested answers rather than an answer sheet, and that follow-up activities (possibly involving other learners) should be encouraged (Tomlinson 1998:322-323).

Overview of materials

Box 3 provides a brief explanation of the design and construction of the materials. The materials were delivered as part of a series of weekly sessions.

Data was gathered in the form of the learners' written responses to the materials in Weeks one to seven. An analysis of the texts revealed a number of major themes, which I describe below with illustrative extracts.

Box 3: Overview and rationale of materials (by week)

Week one

The materials in week one were designed to facilitate the development of identity and to aid motivation and hence learning, following Dörnyei's L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei 2005, 2009). Sheldon and Lyubomirsky's (2006) 'Best Possible Self' extensive writing project was the model for these materials: to encourage learners to begin visualisation and imaging of an ideal future self while also engaging the textual identity.

In addition, to activate learners' ideal selves, they were asked to describe a role model and then discuss the values and successes of these models. It was hoped that these role models would be local (or African) and therefore hold less hegemonic baggage than native speaker role models representing the existing hegemony. In this way, the materials also provided a certain diagnostic of existing external hegemonic influence.

Week two

The materials in week two were designed to allow learners to explore pathways to their ideal future self and to look at the role of English in achieving that goal. This was intended to support strong self-criticism so that learners could get a realistic sense of where they and their identity are now, identify how they might develop and encourage self-assessment exercises. Learners were encouraged to make a realistic, critical assessment of the positive and negative factors in their life at present.

Following the delivery of the week two session, frequent visualisation activities (warmers eliciting positive lexis for success, extensive writing about goals and aspirations, metaphor and poetry creation for positivity, etc.) were integrated into lesson plans.

Week three

Week three's focus was on learners' mother tongues and English. Using a number of Lingala proverbs as examples²⁶, learners were encouraged to explore issues of translation and grammar and to consider how grammar and language affects thought. This was intended to stimulate a recognition of the strength and power of their respective mother tongues and to challenge ideas of the dominance or inherent superiority of English or other colonial or alien languages, or languages of wider communication (such as Lingala or Kiswahili).

Week four

In considering subjectivity and discourse, it was recommended that teachers raise awareness of the embedded cultural hegemony of English to create counter-hegemonic discourse. Benesch (2006) provides an excellent example of raising critical awareness of hegemonic cultural deposits with media analysis activities. In developing classroom activities, she argues that the goal should be to encourage learner exploration for self-awareness through guided discovery, not instruction. The materials for week four therefore covered an analysis of the representation of Africa and Africans in UK newspapers and magazines and a

Box 3: Overview and rationale of materials (by week) (continued)

comparison with the representation of Africa and Africans in Congolese newspapers and magazines.

Week five

Week five materials were designed as an introduction to language mixing. Local, well known slogans for commercial products were used as examples of mixing English and Lingala or French and Lingala. A study of language mixing in popular music was made.²⁷ This was intended to open learners to the concept of language mixing and prepare them for their own generation of spontaneous grammars through language mixing.

Weeks six and seven

The materials for weeks six and seven recycled issues of representations in the media and in common culture, through the use of the text *The Complete MAUS* by Art Spiegelman (2003).²⁸ Learners were encouraged to investigate anthropomorphism and to create written and visual representations of groups of people relevant to themselves. Learners were also asked to engage in an open writing exercise on a challenging issue and to engage, if they wished, in free language mixing.

Self and Other and the relationship with the developed world

Pervading the learners' texts was a distinct sense of otherness when describing the developed world. This manifested itself in descriptions of Self closely identified with local or national community in opposition to the Other represented by the developed world. One learner described a strong desire 'to communicate with the other world' (week one, emphasis added).²⁹ Other learners stated:

Other people [non-Africans] aren't have the right news. (week four)

I would like them [non-Africans] to descend on terrain to touch the reality, to know how to behave of African. (week four)

The imagery in the second quote above is telling. The learner has appropriated a biblical motif, with non-Africans 'descending' – in effect coming down to the level of Africans from their heavenly place of abode. A different learner, marking Other with the clear reference to 'white man', equates the dominance of the Other (with greater travel opportunities and successful multinational corporations) with a superior intellect:

White men walk more and build many firm because of his good mind. (week four)

The idea that personal betterment can only come through experience overseas (in the terrain of the Other) is repeated in the majority of texts from weeks one and two, for example:

My feeling is to be abroad for working. The Job will allow me to have a living fair and permitted me to be a best officer.

I'd like to be a big chief in our army ... I need to go abroad for continuing that.

However, while the developed world was idealised as a place of escape and as a necessary place of transit for future success, there was also a recognition of the natural wealth of Africa and somewhat idealised pastoral ideals:

In Sub-Saharan there are a lot of wealth like for me, wildlife and mineral wealth. Africa is the ecological lung. The world to day have The problem with the ozone layer. Sub-Saharan Africa have one of the big party of the forest in the world and this forest could help the world fight against the climate matter. (week four)

After my military career, I will choose to live in the countryside, because I like farming and animal raising. (week one)

I will work in UN ... [then] I could organise society of fishery in Congo river. (week two)

In the texts, there is some recognition of globalisation and materialism and perhaps a recognition of the threat they pose for the natural environment in DRC.

Self, Community and Supercommunity³⁰

While learners' texts exhibited representations of self identity, this was grounded in a continuum of Self, Community and Supercommunity. Individual actions and aspirations were related directly to Community and to Supercommunity rather than being focused solely on individual progress or benefit; the actions of the Self were related to and interdependent upon the actions or future of all. This learner describes an ideal future self, but then related this immediately to Community and then to Supercommunity:

I will do many things in my country like to teach the children to become the best men and women to show them how to protect people and I will help my country to solve some problem when I will be sent somewhere as a responsible. (week two)

The next learner directly coalesces the future individual Self and the future Supercommunity:

My ideal future self is that my country DR Congo will participate effectively in the peacekeeping mission. (week one)

English as a means of accessing opportunities

There was a recognition in the learners' texts that English was a powerful global force and that developing a capacity in English would provide access to certain opportunities:

English is a International language and all transactions are used. (week three)

Using English is very interesting and can help us. (week three)

For many, this opportunity was the opportunity to travel and therefore to achieve the learning (and perceived success) that time overseas brings. One learner noted that the sole goal of language learning was to learn 'until to be able to use this language for to communicate with the other world' (week three), while, for others, travel was an important factor:

I think that through English I will have an opportunity to travel around the world.
(week three)

Through English I will have an opportunity to travel around the world. **(week three)**

A number of learners linked English ability to access to the fruits of globalisation and to success in business. There was an awareness that a knowledge of English would play a role in granting or preventing access to other specific fields:

Now with the problem of globalisation it is mandatory to learn English for to integrate the concert of nations. **(week three)**

Actually the use of the computer need the knowledge of English, too. A lot of bussiness in the today world need a good comprehension of the English.
(week three)

English is one of the language that many people in world use now for communication and business. So, is very important for me to make effort to learn and use it carefully. **(week three)**

In a small number of learners' texts, there could be sensed a degree of perceived threat from English:

English is dominant in the field of education. **(week three)**

All over the world people are now speaking English even in french countries.
(week three)

The use of the word 'dominant' may suggest a certain menace while the second quote's phrasing of 'even in french countries' indicates that the writer perhaps finds this a little unbelievable, maybe even shocking, for one living in a former Belgian colony where French, the colonially imposed language of wider communication, has previously been so important. In week five, one learner described a personal response to translating proverbs from their mother tongue into English, expressing a personal loss of integral worth:

My feeling was the risk of losing the proverb value.

In these data extracts, it is possible to detect some sense of threat (most clearly in the last example in the use of the word 'risk'). While it is impossible to extrapolate the reasons for this given the limited data set and scale of the research, it may be valid to suggest that one possible reason could be that the learner felt threatened through the negative impact on mother tongue semantic meaning (and, by extrapolation, on their own identity) that the translation into English caused.

Mother tongue and English

Learner responses indicated a developing awareness of linguistic difference and a nascent understanding of the interplay of language and thought. Learners stated:

The grammar and structure of English and my first language are very different.
(week three)

These [different grammars] result in different ways of thinking because the structure of African languages is different with European or American.

(week three)

I think these result in different of thinking. (week three)

Learners demonstrated an awareness of the difficulty of semantic translation and a growing awareness of the richness of their own mother tongue. They described a tangible sense of acknowledging a changing reality when changing languages:

When we translate literally, the meaning of the sentence or expression changes automatically. The translation don't keep the sens the same sens of the local language. (week three)

It was difficult to translate ... when I was translating the meaning now I was thinking about the reality and idea. (week three)

There was also evidence of learners linking language and identity. For one learner, translating from mother tongue into English stimulated feelings of a self displaced from a native speech community:

I know this at my language and the signification of them ... I feel nostalgic, I think about my village. (week three)

The translation exercise brought the conflict within identity (or between identities) to consciousness; the learner was able to identify competing language identities and relate them to past and present life paths.

Political consciousness and response to globalisation

In a number of texts, the learners displayed a strong political consciousness. One learner stated that:

other parts of the world see that the government can have many problems. And they [the government] prefer to hide some realities. (week four)

The texts also gave evidence of a developing political consciousness in a recognition of false perceptions of Africa from outside the continent and the role of the media in perpetuating these perceptions. This is highlighted in this excerpt:

The Sub-Saharan Africa is not only where the people are suffering. The are some people who are in the best life like in the Europe. (week four)

They [non-African media] usually shown Sub-African countries as part of world that is under-developed or a part of world that is very potentially rich but in which people live poorly. This way of seeing Sub-Africa, let people who live in developed countries to qualify Sub-Africans non intelligent, lazy people and people who can't be developed without be assisted by developed countries. (week four)

Learners also identified the force of the media and its effects on their life in DRC as well as advertisers' usage of the perceived value or superiority of English in marketing:

The media influence many things in the life for the people. (week five)

The company used this mixture of English and Lingala for marking on attention on this. (week five)

One learner also identified a potential feeling of threat felt by the Other – the developed world – when faced with the media-fed and selective images of Africa; after analysing the content of several editions of the UK *Sunday Times* newspaper, the learner stated:

They [the readers] may also be threatened [by] the witchcraft oaths. (week five)

Learners showed a consciousness of the effects of globalisation and the demands that it placed upon them as members of a Community and Supercommunity. In addition to the examples above, a theme that was present in many learner texts was that of a resistance to globalisation, highlighted in one learner's description of 'the problem of globalisation' (week three, emphasis added). While bringing possibilities for personal, Community and Supercommunity development, globalisation was not seen as a benevolent and inherently positive force: it was a problem which must be tamed. In a striking metaphor, one learner described the 'problem' of 'integrat(ing) the concert of nations' (week three). Here, globalisation is seen as a difficult process of co-ordinating competing and disparate melodies and notes to achieve a musical harmony.

Silence in the political consciousness

In contrast to the political consciousness in learners' texts detailed above, there was a distinct silence on military and political issues surrounding the then ongoing conflicts in the East and Northeast of DRC. This was manifested in an inaccurate scaling of lesser conflicts within the continent against conflicts in DRC and – in a number of learners' texts – as an expressed (but incorrect) conviction that the conflict in DRC had already ended, that it was a past event:

South Africa was one of the country where were the worst situations as act of killing and so on. (week one)

my native country is in the East of DRC where were many troubles some years ago. (week one)

when we were during the bad situation of war. (week four)

This is particularly interesting given the period during which the texts were created, which was a period of escalated conflict: joint military operations by DRC and Rwanda, supported by MONUC, in Eastern DRC against the FDLR³¹ peaked in the period of research; Laurent Nkunda was deposed as head of the CNDP³² and arrested by Rwandan authorities; and new and bloody conflicts erupted along the DRC's borders with Uganda and Central African Republic (respectively due to incursions by the LRA³³ and inter-tribal conflict).

This silence – or, perhaps, more than silence, an unwillingness to admit to the past and current state of one's Community and Supercommunity – indicates a defence mechanism in the self. Hopkins et al. (1990:312) describe respondent self-deception

in research as an attempt to ‘maintain a sense of personal worth’ and this could be an example of such an action in progress.

Christian faith and anti-Semitism

A number of learners’ texts expressed a strong Christian faith in the responses to the materials.³⁴ One learner appropriated the biblical story of the Good Samaritan when describing his/her role model; another, when describing the pathway to the ideal self, stated simply; ‘I’ll pray God and ask him to protect me’ (Week 2). Other examples in the learners’ texts were:

First of all, if I see my Vision I think depend on the God. (week one)

The best role model in life is first of all following the Christ language. (week one)

In certain cases this prevented the learner from engaging with the materials or from completing the activity:

I’m the one who has been created by God. I don’t know what I can write in this question [asked to describe an ideal future self]: there is only the God who knows what he’ll do for me. (week one)

It’s very tough for me to watch this video according to my position as a ‘God man’. (week five)

My religion don’t permit me to listen for this music. (week five)

This strong expression of Christian faith was matched with an equally strong voicing of anti-Semitic feelings when responding to the materials in week six (stimulated by Spiegelman 2003):

mice represent jewish people because they work like mice. Jewish people never show their real face. They can be doing something but showing other thing different. You’ll think they’re friendly but enemies. (week six)

they [Jewish people] want to kill you, you don’t know because they look for to be your friend after that they accomplish his mission for killing you. (week six)

Mice is hypocritical animal like Jewish people. (week six)

This anti-Semitic sentiment was most surprising. There is no real Jewish community of note in DRC. While DRC was a known place for European Jews to reside before the creation of Israel in 1948, there was little or no attempt to convert the local population and the Jewish population of DRC is now estimated at less than one thousand (Rorison 2008). There is only one remaining synagogue in DRC, in Lubumbashi, in the far Southeast of the country. It can only be assumed, therefore that these sentiments have been appropriated from the numerous expatriate Christian preachers and missionaries who regularly visit DRC (or have missions in the provinces) as it is difficult to believe that any anti-Semitism which may have existed pre-1948 (of which there is no evidence) would have fossilised in local identities to the extent that it was still a strong aspect of religious identity in 2009–2010.

Anthropomorphic representations

The materials in week six asked learners to consider a grouping of people which was important to the learner and to draw an appropriate animal representation of that group considering the certain characteristics of different animals (following Spiegelman 2003). Table 2 summarises the learners' responses.

Table 2: Learners' responses to week six materials

Group	Animal	Explanation
Congolese people	Snake	'Snake will better represents Congolese people. Although they are very kind and express hospitality to anyone, they become very hostile and angry when attacked or provoked. They keep calm only when their enemies or perpetrators are killed or kick out.'
FARDC	Leopard	'because they are very strong'
	Cat	'very clever and wicked like a lion'
MONUC	Mice	'you can live with them and you never know what they're doing'
	Cat	'protect ... peace'
	Cat	'protect ... peace'
	Cat	No explanation provided

Several of these representations deserve comment. In describing Congolese people as snakes, the learner's comment indicates a perceived threat. It is interesting to note that this learner has thus already considered responses to (an anticipated, perhaps expected) future threat.

The descriptions of the FARDC are also of note. The leopard became the national symbol of DRC after Mobutu proclaimed 'The Leopard' to be his own nickname, printed the image of the animal on national symbols (including all banknotes) and nicknamed the ever-popular Congolese national football team 'Les Leopards'. It remains a frequent symbol for the armed forces, appearing on many regimental crests.

Even more interesting is the choice of the cat for the FARDC, with the comment that the cat is 'wicked like a lion'. The FARDC have a very poor reputation; indeed, many believe that they are equally as responsible for the rape and murder of Congolese civilians as other negative forces (International Alert 2005, IRIN 2007, Kristof 2008). A FARDC officer openly calling the FARDC 'wicked' is quite a criticism, even more so when considered in relation to the possible horizontal intertextuality (q.v. Kristeva 1986) of the learners' immediately preceding lesson studying Spiegelman (2003) in which cats represent German Nazis.

Finally, the explanation for representing MONUC as mice also warrants comment. Relations between MONUC and the government of DRC – in particular between MONUC and the FARDC – were constantly strained. There is a general perception among the Congolese that MONUC failed to adequately support the FARDC in operations against negative forces in the East, while from MONUC came criticism that the FARDC continued (and continues) to conduct operations under unit commanders who face extant warrants to appear before the International Criminal

Court on charges of crimes against humanity. A statement from a FARDC officer that ‘you never know what they [MONUC] are doing’ highlights the mutual mistrust and lack of respect. These feelings are rarely expressed openly. FARDC officers are discouraged from making open criticism as there is a general (if grudging) understanding that in many areas MONUC was the sole provider of security for civilians. However, the learner’s statement here indicates that he or she was comfortable to express these sentiments through anthropomorphic metaphor, albeit through English rather than their mother tongue. This can be seen as a seed of counter-hegemonic discourse.

Language mixing and emerging spontaneous grammars

The written responses to week six materials provided evidence, through learners’ language mixing, of the development of complex language identities and emergent spontaneous grammars. Box 4 is an example of this; the learner’s original text is provided, together with accompanying translation of the French and Lingala phrases. Here Captain A describes the difficulties of living in Kinshasa, explaining the problem of getting goods from the villages into the cities with poor roads; a lack of food getting to Kinshasa results in fewer farmers growing crops for sale, which results in high prices. These high prices for staple foods push people towards theft or, in some cases, prostitution. Captain A calls for employment, better salaries and better infrastructure.

Box 4: Captain A’s written response (week six)

Translation key

Standard text: originally written in English
Underlined text: originally written in Lingala
Italic text: originally written in French

Original text	Text with English translation
Living in Kinshasa as in my language says <u>okemaka, okemaka</u> , do your best, <u>soki te!</u> <u>O kokufa</u> . <i>Tellement vie ezali pasi, vie eva mbazi na plan eco</i> [?], <i>vie eyali mbazi dans tout les plans, politique, economique and social.</i>	Living in Kinshasa as in my language says <u>do your best</u> , do your best, <u>do your best!</u> <u>Otherwise you die</u> . Because <u>life is tough</u> , <u>life is hard in</u> plan eco [? ³⁵], <u>life is hard in all aspects</u> , <i>politics economics and social.</i>
A country needs <i>de ces petits points mais caustaud pour que ezala developpe</i> , <u>ba nzela ya bien</u> and transportations if not <u>pasi nde eko envahir mboka</u> . If the difficulties are in Kinshasa it is about those points, <i>interieur nde ezali ko</i> provide <u>ville ya</u> Kinshasa with food, <i>na interieur</i> the roads <u>ekufa</u> , no cars, they are <i>diminue productions ya bilanga, ndenge nini difficile</i> <u>ndengo yala na mboka?</u>	A country needs <i>those small points but rough for that</i> to be developed, <u>the roads of good</u> and transportations if not <u>hard will invade country</u> . If the difficulties are in Kinshasa it is about those points, <i>village is be to provide town of Kinshasa with food, at village</i> the roads <u>died</u> , no cars, they are <i>less productions of plantation, how come difficulty be in the country?</i>
In Kinshasa, the transportations <u>kwanga, likemba</u> if you aren’t <u>makasi</u> you will stay at <u>arret</u> longtime, no money to pay car, <u>misala ezali kasi maigre salary, nde origine ya moyibi na misala</u> that’s why they say <u>‘mbongo muke, small job’</u> .	In Kinshasa, the transportations <u>cassava leaves, plantain</u> if you aren’t <u>strong</u> you will stay at <u>stop</u> longtime, no money to pay car, <u>work is yes little salary, then origin of theft at work</u> that’s why they say <u>‘little money, small job’</u> .

<p>Bana ebele they don't study, <u>minerval pasi</u>, <u>baboti baza maniolo</u>, at home if the mother cooks food, they talk with her daughters <u>biloko yango wana somba kwanga</u>, that girl where she can get <u>l'argent d'acheter дума?</u> <i>A partir de ca, <u>muana mwasi</u> goes out ask <u>mbongo</u> a paye guys and men ask her sex.</i></p>	<p>Children lots they don't study, <u>school fee</u>, <u>hard, family is problem</u>, at home if the mother cooks food, they talk with her daughters <u>food over there buy cassava leaves</u>, that girl where she can get <u>money to buy food?</u> <i>From that, child girl goes out ask <u>money</u> to pay guys and men ask her sex.</i></p>
<p>That's the difficulties <u>regnant ici à Kinshasa</u>. <u>Oyo biso demandons na</u> ours chiefs, <u>misala</u> and good salaries. <i>Et puis <u>naba interieur</u> they build roads, pour permettre <u>ba evacuations ya ba produits vivieres</u>.</i></p>	<p>That's the difficulties <u>rule here in Kinshasa</u>. <u>This us demands</u> of ours chiefs, <u>work</u> and good salaries. <i>And then at <u>villages</u> they build roads, to allow <u>the shipping of products for life</u>.</i></p>

There is a pattern to Captain A's language mixing which appears to go beyond simple language games. Lingala is used when describing nature, food and ideas related to home and belonging, in words such as 'plantation', 'cassava leaves', 'plantain', 'children', 'food' and 'country'. Lingala is also used for shared life problems experienced by all in the learner's community: 'school fee is hard', 'family is problem', 'do your best. Otherwise you die'.

English, however, is used when describing problems associated with modernity and more contemporary individual woes: 'no money to pay car', 'men ask her [for] sex'. French appears to be used for concepts of officialdom and for political or administrative strata: 'village', 'town', 'money to pay guys', 'shipping', 'all aspects, politics economics and social'.

The mixing of languages was subconscious as the choice of language was spontaneous, without conscious prior planning. I would argue that the choice of language for the different sections is subconscious, but that it is not random; the learner is demonstrating through this text a microcosm or a cross-section of the complex intermingling of their language identities, demonstrating a rich linguistic resource and a skilful deployment of this resource. Encouraging the learner to explore this openly has led to the creation of an individual spontaneous grammar rooted in the learner's individual associations and emotions towards each language.³⁶

The study raised a number of interesting points, which I discuss below.

Complex textual identities

The critical praxis employed during the research period through humanist teaching principles and the design of materials based on critical pedagogy allowed learners to develop complex textual identities which were reflected in the texts created in response to classroom materials.

The learners' sense of Self and Other, brought about through an Afrocentric consciousness, seemed to be demonstrated, as was a complex, multidimensional conception of the individual as a key agent in Community and Supercommunity. The use of repeated extensive writing exercises to nurture these facets of learner identity proved successful (albeit on a limited scale): open and personal writing opportunities acted as a mirror for learners to engage in self-reflection and to further enrich the interplay of their language identities.

Of particular value was Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei 2009), which provided a foundation for the learners' exploration of identity and catalysed the development of textual identities. This was also fully in tune with Gramsci's claim that 'the starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is' (Gramsci 1971:323).

Learners' texts in week six demonstrated a noticeably greater complexity in spontaneous grammar. The value of writing for this process would seem to fit with an Expressivist view of writing, as theorised by Elbow (1998) and Murray (1985). While the Expressivist approach to writing has been much criticised (Faigley 1986, North 1987, Hyland 2002:23-24) for a romanticised view of the writing process and for lacking a clear quality assessment mechanism, when situated within Gramscian theory and critical praxis, these criticisms become obsolete: the writing process is an expression of self-exploration. Furthermore, questions of quality or 'good' writing are here based on the degree of self-reflection or identity development. They are therefore self-ascribed by the learner as author and assessor, rather than enforced by external validating bodies in comparison to alien standards in textual models or in standards of accuracy.

Politicised learners and counter-hegemonic discourses

The learners demonstrated a political consciousness in their responses. This was manifest in their reactions to globalisation (and slight aversion in some learner responses to Western values surrounding the pursuit of wealth). These were quite critical, rooted in Community values and a clear Afrocentrism and recognised the dominant power and role of English in the learners' own development and in the wider world. It should be noted that learners did not fully reject Western or European concepts; learners showed a complex hybridity of thought in their acceptance and critique of alien values (cf. Higgins 2009). This highlights the importance for teachers, particularly in fragile states (but not excluding those operating in developed countries), to use critical praxis and to encourage critical engagement in order to help learners protect their own Selves in the face of globalisation's erosion (or assimilation) of subaltern identity.

The research period was just seven weeks. For more developed counter-hegemonic discourses to emerge one would need a much longer period with the learners. However, even during this short period, there was evidence of some counter-hegemonic discourse in learners' negative reactions to globalisation, their critical appraisals of the local and international media and their criticisms of authority and accepted hegemonic forces in their lives (FARDC, MONUC, etc.). That a large part of these counter-hegemonic discourses were stimulated through metaphor (anthropomorphism) and humanist 'right-brain' activities such as art, is indicative of the relevance of Gramsci's calls for the use of imagery and metaphor in identity development.

The spontaneous grammars exhibited in the learners' written responses in week six are themselves strong evidence of emergent counter-hegemonic discourse. The learners subverted not just English but also their own local languages, to take ownership of their expression, thereby resisting the hegemony of thought inherent in the imported colonial (and post-colonial) languages. Eleven of the 14 learners

elected to write critical assessments of DRC, Kinshasa, or the FARDC in their texts, suggesting that the use of spontaneous grammar encouraged learners to challenge the hegemony of the status quo. This would support Brutt-Griffler and Samimy's findings (1999), which demonstrated greater learner comfort in addressing issues which threaten the Self in a second language rather than in the mother tongue. This comfort was due to distancing and to differing concepts of Other when taking on a different language identity.

Conclusions, recommendations and further research

I believe that there is a strong case for the teaching and learning of English in fragile states as a valuable component of mother tongue-based multilingual education.³⁷ As set out in the section on ELT in fragile states, there are well-grounded theoretical underpinnings for this; if these are followed, there is the potential for learners to create powerful counter-hegemonic dialogues.

However, ELT professionals need to take greater steps to ensure professionalism in the ELT industry particularly in (but not limited to) fragile states. This should include the recognition of English in Development as a specific branch of ELT, focusing on developing local Englishes and encouraging appropriation over acculturation, with the corresponding pursuit of a body of research in the field. International ELT bodies (such as the British Council, TESOL and multinational private sector language teaching centres) together with language teaching institutions in fragile states should insist on professional qualifications and experience when recruiting teachers, so that standards can be maintained and they should lobby governments to make such qualifications prerequisites for visas for expatriate teachers.

To further contribute towards this focus on professionalism, ELT projects and operations in fragile states must make monitoring and evaluation a key component of planning and implementation (as does the rest of the development sector), or remain on the sidelines of development efforts and be most vulnerable to cuts when funding decisions are reassessed. This will require a shift towards qualitative assessment of impact, and a recognition that quantitative measurement of participant numbers, numbers of trainings conducted, etc., is not a real measurement of impact at all. In addition, more research needs to be undertaken to examine the role of ELT in development, its risks and benefits. If ELT is to be recognised as a valuable component in the development of fragile states, practitioners need to start gathering data to measure its impact.

With greater professionalism and a more explicit regard to theory, ELT professionals operating in fragile states will be better placed to counter accusations of linguistic imperialism on theoretical and practical grounds. This has the potential to lead to a cycle of improvement, with professionalism leading to confidence, acceptance and research, feeding back into professionalism and so on. At the moment, research and progress are being hindered by the lack of professionalism and the widespread negativity towards English in fragile states based upon the critique of linguistic imperialism.

The same section above also indicates that ELT project designers and managers must be more sensitive to the language in which their goals are expressed.

They must avoid arrogant or presumptive paternalist assumptions of superiority through the association of UK (or Western) values with universal human rights (and the corollary disassociation of these universal rights with non-Western project recipients), or any assumptions of the superiority of English (or the superiority of capitalism and the developed world over the subaltern in fragile states), or of English being some kind of magic salve for poverty, under-development or other related problems. Furthermore, goals must be defined clearly and completely; project participants and other local stakeholders are not so naïve as not to realise that donor and lender organisations have over-arching strategic goals (and not so passive as to simply accept the hegemonic influences). Not codifying these goals in project documents opens projects to accusations of covert imperialism.

While the scale of research in this study has been limited, there is great potential for further research into the development of spontaneous grammars for counter-hegemonic discourse through the methods and approaches described.

The research study reported in the section ‘Towards critical praxis ...’ suggests that critical praxis in ELT, informed by Gramsci’s theories of language and hegemony, can lead to the emergence of counter-hegemonic discourses. It also makes reference to the particular potential of these discourses in a fragile state. A number of recommendations for ELT in fragile states relating to classroom practice can be drawn from the study.³⁸

Firstly, ELT practitioners should make critical praxis an integral part of the delivery of language education. In shifting the focus to appropriation and subversion of the language, English can be made to act as an empowering tool for learners – not as a replacement for their mother tongue, but in tandem with their mother tongue and other languages as a component of complex multivocality.

Secondly, ownership of the teaching and learning process should rest with local stakeholders rather than with foreign ‘experts’. One corollary of this is that local teachers should be the default choice for project delivery rather than expatriate teachers. Another corollary is that materials should be locally designed and piloted; alien imported materials are likely to reflect inappropriate cultural biases.

In the delivery of ELT courses, it can be recognised that extensive writing activities which develop textual identity are a useful tool in learner development, particularly in language identity development. Such activities should not be seen as less useful than extensive speaking activities, as is often the case; the ‘communicative’ approach has led in many cases to a revaluing of the spoken over the written and an imbalanced focus on speaking and spoken fluency over writing.

The study also indicates that language mixing activities have a strong potential for creating spontaneous grammars and counter-hegemonic discourses, particularly following critical experiences, or in response to challenging issues. These activities should be integrated into existing syllabi, with a concurrent focus on the importance of code-switching.

The same section also highlights the idea that learners’ political consciousnesses are an integral part of their identity and should be respected and explored during

the delivery of a language teaching programme. Learners are political beings, just as classrooms are political spaces. Choosing to ignore the political, or to try to shut the political out of the classroom is not only impossible, but is itself a political choice which perpetuates the problem. Sensitive, well-planned activities which allow learners to explore the political through the additional language identity assist the development of empowering counter-hegemonic dialogues.

Finally, learners' mother tongues should be recognised as a rich source of material for exploration in the classroom and should not be treated as a hindrance or interference to the learning of second languages. As noted above, English should be seen as a valuable part of mother tongue-based multilingual education and a recognition and exploration of the mother tongue in the English language classroom addresses the prestige gap between mother tongue and English and aids the development of pride in the mother tongue.

The scale of the research study was limited both in its duration (seven weeks) and in the size of its sample. The positive results achieved in this study indicate that it would be beneficial to replicate the study over a longer term – perhaps investigating learners' changing identities through a year-long, or multi-year programme. It would also be interesting to replicate the study in an English-speaking environment (perhaps with learners from fragile states who are now living in the UK, USA, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, etc.) to compare the effects on learners.

In addition, I feel that there is great potential for further investigating Gramscian theory with relation to ELT, particularly in fragile states or in the field of ELT in development. This study has looked at a number of Gramsci's key concepts, but there remains a wealth of Gramsci's writing on education, consent, hegemony and language policy which it would be fruitful and challenging to investigate in other ELT contexts.

Finally, the evidence of the emergence of spontaneous grammars in learners' writing through language mixing is another area which calls for further research and investigation. This would be particularly interesting in studies which looked at developing and recording examples of spoken spontaneous grammar.

Notes

1. I would like to thank the staff and learners at IMLA, Kinshasa, whose work and whose development catalysed the ideas for this chapter. It was an honour and a pleasure to have joined them on their journeys of development and to have spent a rich and rewarding two years learning from them and learning with them. I would like to thank Hywel Coleman for his support and guidance and his encouragement and motivation. Thanks also to Helen Noble and Tania Lundu for their feedback and input into instrument design, for conducting data collection for the section on English language teaching in fragile states and for assistance with translation into/from Congolese languages. Final thanks go to Paul Woods at the British Council, Steve Terry at Sheffield Hallam University and Lt Col Tim Woodman of the UK Army, for their inspiration and encouragement.

2. The Crisis States Research Centre defines a fragile state as ‘a state significantly susceptible to crisis in one or more of its sub-systems. It is a state that is particularly vulnerable to internal and external shocks and domestic and international conflicts.’ (CSRC 2006)
3. It is worth highlighting the (then) UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s claim, quoted in Pascoe-Watson’s unashamedly triumphalist article *PM Brown’s English Invasion (2008)*: ‘We will take up with vigour the bold task of making our language the world’s common language of choice.’ Also of note is Sharlet’s (2010: 78) exposure of an English language school in Lebanon funded by US Republican Party congressmen and senators. An alumnus of the school notes that ‘The families of Syr are thinking our children are going to the [language school] just to learn the English language ... [b]ut there are a lot of secrets ... [i]t’s for changing minds and getting students to study in the US and maybe come back [with] different ideas about Muslims and Jesus. To change our culture and our religion.’
4. TESOL: teaching English to speakers of other languages.
5. Gramsci did much to develop our current understanding of the term ‘hegemony’, yet nowhere in his writings does he codify succinctly what he took the term to mean; rather, the understanding of hegemony that has become associated with Gramsci is an aggregate of his entire writing on the subject. In this chapter, hegemony is taken to mean the organisation of consent and its relation to coercion in unequal power relationships, whether that consent is in the interests of the subaltern or not.
6. Gramsci used the term ‘subaltern’ in the military sense of a non-commissioned officer or soldier (perhaps to avoid censorship while writing in prison). In this chapter, I use the term subaltern as expanded by Spivak (1992): the subaltern is not simply the dominated, or the oppressed (e.g. the working classes); the subaltern is wholly disempowered and is positioned outside the power structures and therefore ‘inaudible’, or without voice to change the system from within (for example, the subjects of colonialism in Africa, Asia and the Americas).
7. The teaching of English to security forces (here described in shorthand as ‘military English’) is also one of contention. Edge (2003:704), for example, argues that military English teachers (in Iraq and Afghanistan) are ‘working to facilitate the policies that the tanks were sent to impose.’ However, this chapter takes the view that teaching English to security forces is justified when implemented sensitively and with peace support and mutual security through internationalism as its objectives. See Woods (2006) and Whitehead (2010a) for a more detailed defence of this position.
8. As Marx (1867) argues, capitalism’s problems are not caused by the flawed, selfish or somehow ‘evil’ intentions of individual capitalists per se; rather, regardless of intent, the nature of the relationships inherent in the capitalist structure inevitably and unavoidably lead to inequality, neglect and suffering for the proletariat. In the same way, could the promotion of ELT, funded by the UK government and in the current geo-political climate, not be hegemonic, given

the relationships inherent in the structure of donor–educator–recipient and in the structures of power within the globalised economy? This is discussed in greater detail in the sub-section on ‘Intent and purpose’.

9. ‘Critical praxis’ in this chapter is taken to mean praxis which recognises the power of English, but seeks to subvert it or use it for the creation of new identities and counter hegemonic discourses; this definition draws on Auerbach (1995) and Appleby (2002).
10. I was the Project Manager of PEP DRC from February 2008 to June 2010.
11. Personal email, 14 September 2010.
12. See also Hailemariam et al. (2011, Chapter 11 this volume) and Tembe and Norton (2011, Chapter 6 this volume).
13. An experienced manager working for a highly respected international chain of ELT schools in a fragile state admits that while company policy dictates that expatriate teachers need at minimum a CELTA-equivalent qualification and experience, in reality this policy is routinely ignored: ‘Actually [our schools] can recruit who they damn well like, especially if they can use the excuse of operational necessity – we don’t tell people this though.’ (Personal email, 14 September 2010)
14. I am extremely grateful to my colleagues Helen Noble and Tania Lundu for their feedback and assistance with the design of the instrument and with the data collection.
15. Responses of Congolese participants are provided in English. As I translated these myself, I accept any responsibility for problems in translation.
16. Another interesting question raised is why the FARDC should learn English rather than international forces learning French or Lingala. There are two responses to this: 1) international forces typically work on six-month rotating deployments and it makes more sense in terms of efficiency to train the local forces who remain constant than to retrain international forces every six months with the new deployments. 2) Improving the English language ability of the FARDC is also envisaged to prepare them to be deployed on other peacekeeping operations outside DRC in the future, supporting internationalism.
17. One of the greatest hindrances to success of PEP DRC was the suspicion of another European partner at GESM (the central officer training facility for the Armed Forces) and that partner’s attempts to undermine the project. Clearly stated, open goals may have been more successful at addressing this than post-hoc liaison. Interesting suggestions for addressing donor competition in fragile states are Carvalho (2006) and Leader and Colenso (2005).
18. Based on the British financial year running from April to March.
19. There was a call for ‘scorecard’ reporting of statements from stakeholders, but

this falls well short either of effective monitoring and evaluation or of impact assessment.

20. The DfID-funded 'English in Action' project in Bangladesh (Seargeant and Erling 2011, Chapter 12 this volume) is a rare exception to this statement, but projects such as this are far less common than they were in the 1990s.
21. For Gramsci, language was not a fixed, static item. It was a living concept, constantly evolving and changing. Therefore, Gramsci saw grammar (or at least normative grammar) as a 'snapshot' (Helsloot 1989) of the current rules and norms which have been agreed as standard or enforceable by the speech community. Language and grammar retained traces of their evolution and are therefore similar to historical documents showing (and packaging) cultural influences through the language's development.
22. Gramsci also refers to this as 'immanent' grammar. While the implications of the association of immanence are of great interest and broaden the understanding of the term, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a full discussion. (However, see Ives 2004:90-101.) The term 'spontaneous grammar' will be used exclusively in this chapter, as the associations with free will are more relevant to the themes discussed.
23. It could also be argued that, for this reason, Gramsci would be critical of the development of English as an international language (or as a local language, cf. Higgins 2009). It is for this reason that I have attempted to make reference to Gramsci's writing at all stages of the project design.
24. Due to sensitivities regarding the direct reporting of FARDC personnel activity and also to ensure participant anonymity, all class designations, teacher names and learner names have been changed.
25. STANAG 6001 is the six-level language proficiency scale used by NATO. A STANAG 6001 score of two is roughly equivalent to the Threshold Level of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Threshold Level is the level at which learners '[c]an understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans' (Council of Europe 2010:5). For further information on STANAG 6001, see www.dlIELC.org/bilc
26. While Lingala was not the mother tongue of all of the participants, all were fluent in it as a language of wider communication.
27. The song used was *Chaise Électrique* by Fally Ipupa and Olivia (2009, **Boss Playa Productions, DR Congo**).
28. The graphic narrative MAUS by Art Spiegelman, first published in two volumes in 1986 and 1991, is a biography of Spiegelman's father's experience of

the Holocaust described in flashback from the present day. It was awarded a Pulitzer Prize Special Award in 1992. In MAUS, Spiegelman uses animals to represent different people: Jews are represented as mice, Nazis are represented as cats, while other nationalities and groups are represented as other animals. Characters from a single group or nationality are drawn with identical features, highlighting the insanity of identifying people by racial, ethnic religious or other characteristics. The section chosen for classroom activities depicts Spiegelman's father's early experience as a Polish soldier, where he faces combat for the first time, kills for the first time and is captured as a prisoner of war by the Nazis.

29. Rather than create individual aliases for individual learners – and because the texts are being considered as representative of the group as a whole rather than as distinct individuals – extracts are not attributed to individual learners but instead are marked for the week of research in which the text from which they are taken was created.
30. I use the terms Community and Supercommunity to avoid the embedded ideas of hierarchical strata in the local/national/international terms of identification. Here, I use Supercommunity not as an agglomeration of differing individual communities and I use Community not as an agglomeration of individuals. Rather, the terms Supercommunity (which could be represented as a community of Communities) and Community (a community of individuals) themselves represent distinct identities which are not opposed to each other, nor to the individual, but which exist concurrently in a complex interplay to create identity.
31. FDLR (Forces Démocratiques de Liberation du Rwanda): a guerrilla organisation of former genocidaires who fled Rwanda after the 1994 massacres and have since been operating from Congolese territory.
32. CNDP (Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple): a renegade faction of the FARDC operating in Eastern DRC which refused to recognise the authority of Kinshasa (amalgamated into the FARDC following the arrest of Nkunda).
33. LRA (Lord's Resistance Army): a rebel Ugandan guerrilla group.
34. It is impossible to estimate accurately the spread of Christianity in DRC as many communities (particularly rural communities) blend animism with Christian dogma. However, recent estimates (Rorison 2008) are that over 90 per cent of the population is either Catholic, Protestant or other Christian (including followers of other native Congolese Christian beliefs such as Kimbanguism and the pseudo-anarchist Matsouanism).
35. I have been unable to interpret the words 'plan eco' in the learner's text, as they appear to be French or English, but I cannot determine their meaning.
36. This is just one example taken from the research. See Whitehead (2010a) for the full study with further examples and more detailed analysis.
37. For further discussion of the role of English in multilingual education in fragile states, see Whitehead (2010b).

38. Examples of materials developed for PEP DRC can be found in Whitehead (2010a). More detailed ideas for classroom activities stemming from these principles are in Whitehead (2010b).

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ISBN 978-086355-659-3

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