Globish, World Englishes and a Suitcase: Embracing Language Diversities in Travel Experiences

Globish, World Englishes e Uma Mala: Abraçar a Diversidade Linguística nas Experiências de Viagem

Globish, World Englishes y Una Maleta: La Diversidad Lingüística en las Experiencias de Viaje

ABSTRACT

In the highly globalised world to which we all belong, contact among cultures, identities, and languages are all increasingly common. Indeed, this kind of contact has become inevitable, and is largely the result of travelling practices, which seem to be more intensive than ever before. English, as the lingua franca of today's world, is overwhelmingly the language that people rely on when they travel. They feel rather comfortable using it, and expect, at least to some extent, that it is through English that they will achieve success in communication in the easiest way. By highlighting the role of English in travel communication, this paper aims to shed light on the characteristics of language use in such contexts, as well as to explore the links between traveller English on the one hand and the phenomena of Globish and World Englishes on the other.

Keywords: language contacts; travelling; English; Globish; World Englishes.

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ARTIGO

RESUMO

No mundo altamente globalizado a que todos pertencemos, o contacto entre culturas, identidades e línguas é cada vez mais comum. Na verdade, este tipo de contacto tornou-se inevitável e resulta, em grande medida, das práticas de viagem, que parecem ser mais intensas do que nunca. O inglês, como língua franca do mundo atual, é a língua a que as pessoas recorrem quando viajam. Sentem-se bastante confortáveis a utilizá-lo e esperam, pelo menos em certa medida, que seja através do inglês que consigam ter sucesso na comunicação da forma mais fácil. Ao destacar o papel do inglês na comunicação em viagem, este artigo pretende lançar luz sobre as caraterísticas do uso da língua nestes contextos, bem como explorar as ligações entre o inglês dos viajantes, por um lado, e os fenómenos do Globish e do World English, por outro.

Palavras-chave: contactos linguísticos; viajar; inglês; Globish; World Englishes.

RESUMEN

En el mundo altamente globalizado al que todos pertenecemos, el contacto entre culturas, identidades y lenguas es cada vez más frecuente. De hecho, este tipo de contacto se ha vuelto inevitable, y es en gran medida el resultado de las prácticas viajeras, que parecen ser más intensas que nunca. El inglés, como ligua franca del mundo actual, es la lengua en la que más se confía cuando se viaja. La gente se siente cómoda utilizándola y espera, al menos hasta cierto punto, que sea a través del inglés como logre comunicarse de la manera más fácil. Al destacar el papel del inglés en la comunicación en los viajes, este artículo pretende arrojar luz sobre las características del uso de la lengua en tales contextos, así como explorar los vínculos entre el inglés de los viajeros, por un lado, y los fenómenos del Globish y los World Englishes, por otro.

Palabras clave: contactos lingüísticos; viajes; inglés; Globish; World Englishes.

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INTRODUCTION

Following the global upheaval that resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the world of travel and tourism appears to have returned to the levels it had achieved in previous years. People move around for a variety of reasons – holidays, education, business, to mention just a few – and also to experience different cultures, which are often characterised by the use of different languages. However, English continues to hold on to its status as a lingua franca, and as such is the medium of communication when such intercultural encounters take place, irrespective of the native languages of the participants. Depending on the context in which we find ourselves, the language situation will naturally vary. Thus, while we might opt for a more formal register in business meetings or educational settings, semi-formal or informal expressions can be expected when we communicate in the street, at airports, hotels, shopping malls and restaurants. Communication activated in the sphere of tourism and hospitality is commonly based on service-related exchanges, and as such does not necessarily require extensive or complex language patterns. Consequently, the English used for these purposes can often be modified and simplified, this for many reasons, including, but not limited to, making sure that interlocutors understand us properly, avoiding the tendency to go off-topic, and using language economically, that is, saying more in less time to speed up the communication flow. Still, no matter how hard we try, the language we use can hardly be deprived of the cultural nuances inherent to us and the culture of our origins. With the above-mentioned scenario in mind, this paper aims to explore the characteristics of the English language used by non-native speakers in the context of travel, and poses the following research questions:

RQ1. How pure or standard-defiant is traveller English?
RQ2. Is such language (which might be influenced by the notions of Globish and World Englishes) still sufficiently comprehensible?

1. TRAVEL AND COMMUNICATION CROSS PATHS

It has been some considerable time since travelling became popular, yet this popularity continues to increase. The introduction of travel agencies (the first one believed to have been established in 1758 in the UK[1]), railways, automobiles, and latterly commercial flights (the first as early as 1914[2]), all helped to facilitate international contact and intercultural communication. The role of the Internet has also been significant in the expansion of tourism, allowing us access to offers and instant booking. And when tourists embark on a journey to their chosen destination, the majority of the instructions they find will be in English, from restaurant menus, messages in shops, adverts,

[1] http://www.thomascook.com/ thomas-cook-history
[2] https://www.space.com/16657-worlds-first-commercial-airline-the-greatest-moments-in-flight.html

emergency procedures on flights/trains/buses, as well as those in hotels, plus many more; indeed, it could be argued that these, in a subtle and subconscious way, nudge us towards an ever-greater use of English once we need to communicate when abroad.

A drastic reduction in tourism was seen in a variety of ways during the Covid-19 period, and this extended to more than a year following the pandemic. Nevertheless, estimates about the growth of tourism made prior to the crisis, which suggested that the number of international trips taken globally could rise to 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO, cited in McMullen, 2017), still stand some chance of being realistic.

Jack, Pipps and Barrientos Arriaga (2020) note that this rise in tourism around the world enables the growth of multilingual, international meetings, that is, an increase in opportunities for people to communicate internationally and hence to use all the languages they have at their disposal (p. 535).

When abroad, we might simply want to order food, buy souvenirs, or ask (or complain) about the services at a hotel, and are thus likely to opt for the first language patterns that come to mind. However, the beliefs and stereotypes that are part of our cultural backpack (Varner, 2001, as cited in Schutte, 2009) necessarily accompany us, and can interfere with even these simple verbal exchanges. Hence, no matter how straightforward our needs and intentions are, the messages we convey in a foreign language should take culture into account, since communication here is a 'sociocultural event' (Murphy, 1985). Indeed, travel can also have an effect on the way we behave in general, given that the contacts we make are likely to be new and outside our everyday experience (Allport, 1954).

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) does recognise the language of tourism, including some field-specific, specialized terms; we can also talk about tourism discourse (Frisch, 2012) as seen in communication within this industry, plus the phenomenon of tourist talk, which describes the language used between hosts and guests (Cohen and Cooper 1986, for example, discuss tourist and foreigner talk, looking at the simplified patterns we use as hosts when we assume that our guests do not have sufficiently solid skills in a foreign language).

Contact with people from other cultures happens no matter whether or not we are frequent travellers, in that life in the 21st century is characterised by such contacts (Brislin, 2001). These might sometimes be loaded with stereotypes, prejudices, and even discriminatory behaviour. Looking more specifically at the world of tourism, contacts we make here often appear to be somewhat superficial, and as such they seem not to require a sophisticated level of language (Davies, 2000, p. 70).

This situation began decades ago, and in many ways is the story of how the power of the English language across the globe continues to grow. Indeed, English has become inevitable in a wide variety of contexts and is used for a great many purposes, in both formal and informal registers. The growing vigour of globalisation, the increasing availability of means of transport, the

pervasiveness of our consumerist world, to mention but a few, have all leant weight to the prevalence of English, and the fact that people expect this language to be used wherever they go today comes as no surprise. Although the UNWTO lists 6 official languages[3] – Chinese, Spanish, English, French, Arabic and Russian – with plurilingualism as one of the UN's pillars, it is undeniable that English has gained supremacy among these as a lingua franca.

2. ENGLISHISATION OF THE WORLD OR FOREIGNISATION OF ENGLISH

Both Latin and French, at certain points in history, enjoyed the role of a lingua franca, indeed, significant and long-lasting ones. However, the rise of English, with the constant growth that we witness in it today, has served as a bridge between people of all the cultures across the world (and is also the core tool for communication within the EU, Modiano, 2024, p. 204, known as a pan-European lingua franca, EU 2023). Apart from socio-economic reasons, researchers from various fields of study have tried to account for its spread, and have noted, among other issues, its flexibility, openness, relatively simple grammar rules, very rich vocabulary with many loanwords that people around the world can relate to, as well as its cosmopolitan nature (Alizada, 2021, p. 8).

Whenever the concept of EFL is addressed, it is common for people to think of either the UK or US variant of the language, these usually being the ones promoted in schools and education at all levels. Their dominance is often attributed to the media, and to popular culture available globally – music, TV shows, films, social media, etc. – which typically (although not exclusively) use one of these two variants. Back in 1985, Kachru quoted Crystal, who that same year estimated that there were "four non-native speakers of English for every native speaker of the language" (p. 137). Englishisation has been happening for decades and is seen everywhere; indeed, when we look at language-related fields of research, we can hardly talk about language acquisition, translation, language transfer, calques or any other phenomena without comparing some situation with what pertains to English.

Native-speakerism is another phenomenon that has arisen around the world and among the speakers of many languages; it gives primacy to those who are the native speakers of a language over those who are non-native speakers (Llurda and Calvet-Terré, 2022, p. 3), and is a frequently-occurring issue when the language in question is English. Pre-eminence has long been given to those speakers who use either the UK or US variant of English as their native language, over those using it as their foreign language, especially when the field of language teaching is concerned. Despite the fact that diversity, language diversity included, is generally seen as a positive value, both formally and informally, native-speakerism can still observed today, for example in Germany, Poland and Spain (Modiano, 2024, p. 205).

[3] https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-02-21/Chinese-becomes-an-official-language-of-the-UNWTO-Y3u391Cr9C/index.html

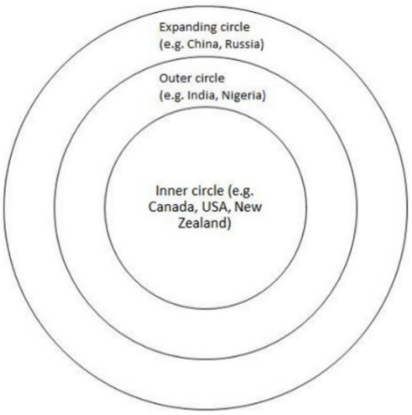
The question as to what kind of English we need in intercultural encounters is not a new one, and has been posed by practitioners, travellers, linguistics, as well as researchers from other fields for decades. Language purists might advocate the use of ‘proper’ standard language here, where all the relevant language norms (pertaining to all language layers) are complied with:

> A major challenge for globalization of English is the maintenance of culturally determined varieties of world Englishes in the face of pressures to achieve viable international communication (Bamgbose, 2008, p. 359).

Conveying certain kinds of information, that is, expressing everyday thoughts pertaining to food, travel, directions, shopping, accommodation, etc., might not require all the richness that a natural language offers. For this reason, the phenomenon of Globish (also known as decaffeinated English or a world dialect) was identified as a potentially useful intercultural communication tool here. With no more than around 1500 words, and stripped of metaphorical language and complex grammatical constructions, Globish (McCrum, 2010) has been used to simplify international encounters. While it is not able to satisfy the expressive needs of scientific or academic settings, it can be used as a means of survival in everyday communication in a foreign language.

It is not only Globish that comes into play in the context of intercultural contact. Different Englishes that exist around the world also have their roles, making the situation even more interesting and linguistically diverse. As Kachru (1985) observed, geography should be taken into account, as well and the proximity between countries where English is spoken as a native language and those where it is used as a second or foreign language. Kachru went on to introduce the notion of the concentric circles of English, which have remained in use ever since. If we acknowledge and accept this model as a means of understanding “diverse sociocultural contexts and diverse uses of the language in culturally distinct international contexts” (p. 6), we can see how the use of various kinds of English contributes to an inclusive global society. Yet it also raises a number of questions. The model, using three circles, definitely sheds new light on the status on different varieties of English, these influenced by regional languages and cultures around the world. It paved the way for embracing, or least seeing, the notions of diversity, code-switching, code-mixing, multilingualism, multiculturalism more clearly and from new perspectives (Bolton & Jenks, 2022, p. 497).

Figure 1 – Three concentric circles



Source: Kachru, 1985

On the issue of the status of world Englishes, Widdowson noted that:

> The very adaptations which make the language suited to local communal requirement disqualify it from service as a global means of communication. (Widdowson, 1997, pp. 31-32).

In addition to that, Bamgbose (1997, p. 205) argued that Global English should also evolve, keeping up to date and continuing to meet the needs of the constantly evolving society to which we all belong.

One interesting question that arises, and for which there is thus far no definitive answer, is whether Global English (aka Globish) can take on a more comprehensive role and allow for some elements of other World Englishes to be absorbed into it, or whether this would only result in confusion. Knowing more about different English variants (hybrid languages, as some might say) would definitely broaden our horizons, and might even become part of our EFL curricula on a global scale, in the sense that World Englishes not only provide us with different expressions from those we are familiar with, or indeed offer new ways how to pronounce certain words, but also give us a broader picture of the communities and cultures that use them. This is only intensified by the fact that much of communication conducted in English on a day-to-day basis involves non-native speakers (NNS), i.e., language learners (Graddol, 2010).

In the circles we are aware of across the globe, languages tend to be mixed, what we know as polylingualism, metrolingualism, translanguaging, inter alia (Hopkyns, Zoghbor & Hassall, 2021, p. 177). We know that language contacts are inevitable and result in language transfer at various linguistic levels; in addition, we also know that such contact can be either direct or indirect, and that it can sometimes be impactful but at other times very subtle.

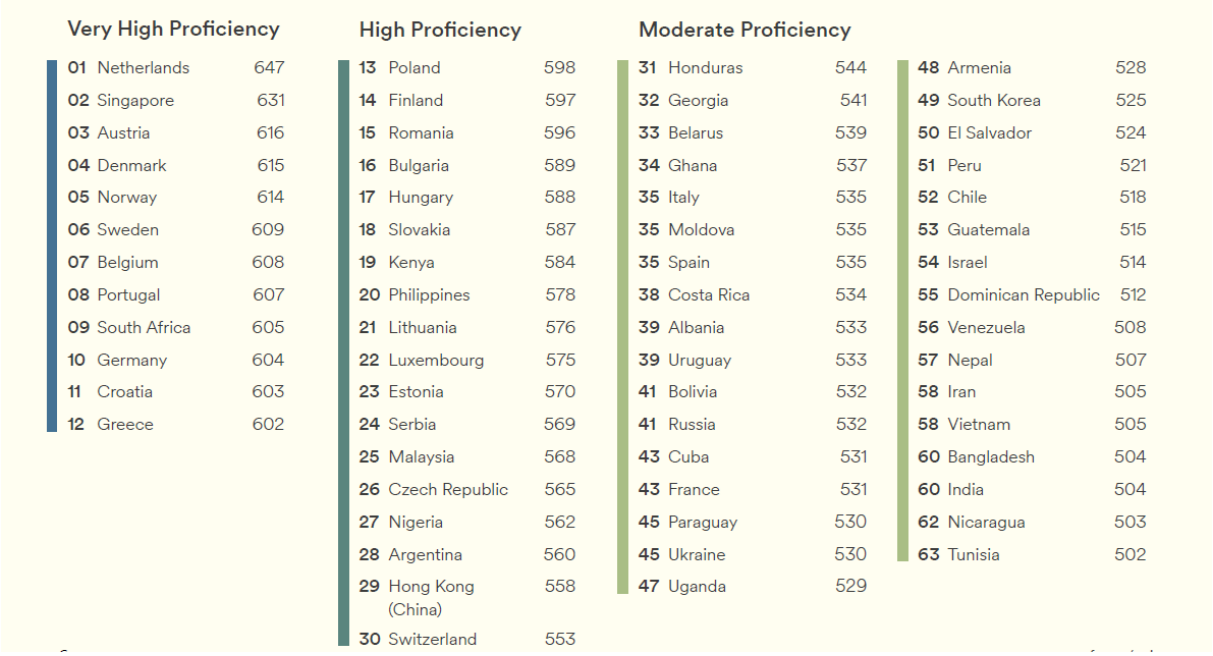
In Europe, it has been estimated that >1% of the population are native speakers of English, which underlines to the need for English as a means of supporting communication in international

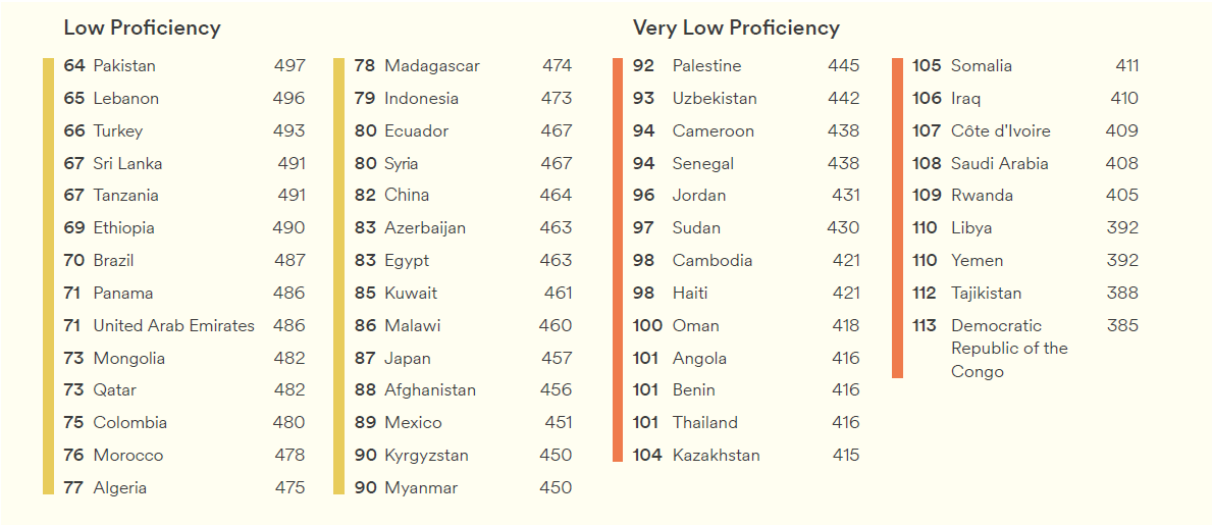
exchanges (Modiano, 2024). Naturally, the status of English is not identical across all countries around the world, and it is also worth noting that in the post-Brexit era views about communication in English seem to have shifted, as also have ELT practices, this shift possibly moving them more towards Europeanisation, unification and globalisation (Modiano, 2024, p. 211).

In France, for instance, where resistance to English has been prominent for decades, progress has been noted, though largely in educational settings, while its use with the goal of communication is still limited to intercultural encounters (Deneire & Forlot, 2024). Turning to the United Arab Emirates, apart from Arabic and English (widely-used), some 100 other languages are currently in use (Hopkyns, Zoghbor, & Hassall, 2021, p. 153). Meanwhile, in Spain it has been noted that there exists insufficient motivation for English language learning among Spanish speakers compared to the rest of the EU (Llurda & Mocanu, 2024, pp. 318, 329).

The illustration below confirms these observations and also indicates success in terms of proficiency in English among language learners around the world:

Figure 2 – The world's ranking of countries and regions according to English skills





Low Proficiency						Very Low Proficiency					
64	Pakistan	497	78	Madagascar	474	92	Palestine	445	105	Somalia	411
65	Lebanon	496	79	Indonesia	473	93	Uzbekistan	442	106	Iraq	410
66	Turkey	493	80	Ecuador	467	94	Cameroon	438	107	Côte d'Ivoire	409
67	Sri Lanka	491	80	Syria	467	94	Senegal	438	108	Saudi Arabia	408
67	Tanzania	491	82	China	464	96	Jordan	431	109	Rwanda	405
69	Ethiopia	490	83	Azerbaijan	463	97	Sudan	430	110	Libya	392
70	Brazil	487	83	Egypt	463	98	Cambodia	421	110	Yemen	392
71	Panama	486	85	Kuwait	461	98	Haiti	421	112	Tajikistan	388
71	United Arab Emirates	486	86	Malawi	460	100	Oman	418	113	Democratic Republic of the Congo	385
73	Mongolia	482	87	Japan	457	101	Angola	416			
73	Qatar	482	88	Afghanistan	456	101	Benin	416			
75	Colombia	480	89	Mexico	451	101	Thailand	416			
76	Morocco	478	90	Kyrgyzstan	450	104	Kazakhstan	415			
77	Algeria	475	90	Myanmar	450						

Source: EF English Proficiency Index Report, 2023

The above figure, it could be said, presents linguistically inconsistent and at some points surprising data. Namely, it can be seen that the language group that dominates in a specific country (e.g. Germanic, Slavic, Romance languages) does not significantly influence the level of English language proficiency in those places. Thus, the list of countries with very high proficiency levels includes places whose native languages come from a wide array of language branches: Germany-German, the Netherlands-Dutch, from the Germanic languages, Portugal-Portuguese, from the Ibero-Romance group, Croatia-Croatian, from the Slavic language group, etc. This confirms that the expanding circle countries and their speakers can achieve very high proficiency levels.

It is undoubtedly the case that the language learners from all the countries listed travel, meet other cultures, and interact with them. Intercultural encounters can occur in different environments, both those of a more formal nature, and less formal ones. When we consider the specific characteristics of travel, despite the fact that language use here does occupy some of the space traditionally understand as ESP, communication in a foreign language usually has relatively functional ends, such as obtaining and sharing basic information. In such situations, language economy, making our messages shorter, more convenient or relying on patterns that immediately come to mind, are all common strategies.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As noted above, our research questions are:

RQ1. How pure or standard-defiant is traveller English?

RQ2. Is such language (which might be influenced by the notions of Globish and World Englishes) still sufficiently comprehensible?

To answer these, we have explored the language used to convey a number of messages of particular relevance for those who travel. A set of 104 lexical items collected during trips made around Europe in 2022 and 2023 has thus been investigated. These instances of language are drawn from local tourism office websites and social media platforms, and from their printed materials (brochures, leaflets), as well as from popular tourist attraction sites and entertainment areas in various European countries: Italy, Spain, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Slovakia, Portugal, France, Austria, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, Estonia, and Romania. Using Kachru's (1985) classification, each of these countries can be said to belong to the expanding circle of English, meaning that English is taught and learned and as a foreign language.

The corpus comprises items collected on a day-to-day basis by the authors when in the role of normal tourists seeking some sort of basic information, such as what to visit in a specific area, how to reach a destination, where to find good food, where to go shopping, and how to explore traditional events, etc. While searching for this information, the language available at airports, bus stops, around the city, as well as in local tourism offices and information available in the vicinity of tourist attractions was all observed.

Decisions as to what items were selected were motivated by availability, that is, the fact that regular tourists, when in such places, would be likely to see many of these language patters. Of particular interest are the linguistic characteristics of these items, that is, whether they can in fact be understood by the intended readership, despite any deviations from the standard English language that people around the globe are taught in both formal and informal education. The collection process resulted in a total of 104 lexical items, from which 46 involved linguistic issues such as unexpected/inaccurate lexical choices, as well as inaccuracies in grammar and spelling. These have been classified and examined, with specific regard to their consistency/inconsistency to the expected/standard English language forms, and in terms of their comprehensibility.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The corpus of items illustrating various types of potential language inconsistencies and inaccuracies has led to the identification of:

1. False friends
2. Unexpected lexical choices and imprecise language combinations
3. Misuse of language arising from homophones
4. Grammatical and orthographic (spelling) inaccuracies

- False friends

False friends constitute a perennial issue in the context of language contact. A number of classifications of false friends have appeared over the previous decades (among them Chamizo, 1999 and Trup, 1998), and the difference between chance similarities and semantic false friends is commonly mentioned. While the former involves words which are similar in two languages, but which have no genuine etymological overlap, the latter refer to those words with shared etymological origins, but where the meanings in the two languages have diverged over time. The concept of a false friend of particular interest to us here, that is, words that look or sound similar in English and a different, native language but which differ significantly in meaning. This can be a slippery slope for non-native speakers. Indeed, several clear examples of false friends have been noted from the data collected in the present study, but also marginal and subtle ones. For instance, in the announcement "Your luggage and **personal effects** (instead of items, belongings, influenced by the Italian **effetti personali**) are safe in an area under video surveillance" (found at a Rome airport), the phrase **personal effects** can be understood as a stylistic false friend, and it is evident that for many travellers the overall meaning of the message is somewhat ambiguous. This is a classic scenario where linguistic nuances and the context of use in English might not translate seamlessly into another language. Here **personal effects** is by no means incorrect, in that such an expression does indeed exist in English, with the same meaning; the issue, rather, is that **personal effects** in English is a highly marked usage, perhaps almost an archaism, and might well not be understood by most speakers of English as a foreign language, other than for those whose native language happens to have a comparable term. The phrase **personal belongings** would be more universally understood for speakers of any foreign language.

Another example from the corpus illustrates the impact of Spanish on the choice of the English word. The promotional material of a well-known Spanish brewer contains the word **especial** as in "Our **especial** beer" or "**Especial** toasted beer", and this might cause confusion in that it is a false friend when interpreted by English speakers. In Spanish, the word **especial** denotes something unique, extraordinary or of particularly high quality. Therefore, in a Spanish context the word is used to refer to a beer that is perhaps craft, premium or otherwise distinct from others; the term in Spanish also denotes a particular classification of beer, again, something which does not translate into English. So, a native English speaker (or other language learners) might consider the word **especial** as misspelling or awkward choice of the word.

- Unexpected lexical choices and imprecise language combinations

Apart from relying on what sounds familiar to them, thus activating certain false friends, non-native speakers can also see/hear other lexical similarities where they do not actually exist, resulting in strange language choices, some of which are listed below:

Table 1 – Examples of inaccurate lexical combinations

Context	Source	Inaccuracies identified
*The inventive French then began to use the **protein** of eggs which were abandoned in the fortress, while remaining yolks had to be used somewhere else.*	Promotional brochure (Lithuania)	protein (*macronutrient*) vs white (*clear part of an egg*)
*Please take care of your **values**!*	Warning sign (France)	values (*moral principles*) vs valuables (precious items)
*Let's pleasantly **destroy yourself** in the Slovak Karst in one day.*	Tourism website (Slovakia)	destroy vs spoil
*Very important: don't forget your **sun cream**!*	Tourism website (Germany)	sun cream vs sunscreen
*Automatic ticket **sales***	Signboard at the railway station (Spain)	sales vs machine
*Take advantage of the unique **face** treatments!*	Wellness & Spa Resort (Poland)	face vs facial
*Some airport restaurant **points** have high chairs available.*	Information on the airport website (Portugal)	points vs areas
*Just listen to your heart and **pick** a destination!*	Airline website (Latvia)	pick vs choose
*Open from 10am to 2.45pm (**without** Mondays).*	Entrance at the museum (Poland)	without vs except
*Visiting the complex of the castle and sacred buildings is certainly the **duty** of any visitor!*	Tourism website (Turkey)	a duty vs a must
*We believe our guests should be able to choose how they **vacation**.*	Wellness & Spa Resort (Poland)	Though *vacation* can be used as a verb, many of those relying on the UK English variant can expect the collocation *spend their vocation*
*How **many times** do you have a chance to see up to 4 exceptional places practically at once?*	Tourism website (Slovakia)	how many times vs how often
*Who are we **seeing** at?*	Tourism website (Latvia)	looking
*Visit flea and **home producers** market*	Promotional brochure (Latvia)	home vs local producers'

*Here you can find **specialty** cocktails, as well as popular Spritz cocktails and easy mixers*	Tourism website (Poland)	special vs specialty

Aside from these items, some other examples are also of interest, given the lack of coherence between the intended message and the common English language combinations used. Such instances might also be categorised broadly along with those in Table 1. The first example, a sign in a regional park in Spain, reads “Please, do not **abandon** the path”, which sounds both too formal and too dramatic. A more appropriate English version might be “Please do not go off the established path” or a positively framed message “Please, stay on the established path”. The second instance of the wrong word choice is the misuse of the correlative conjunction **both** in the following warning sign (in a Spanish company) on how to use a face mask: “Make sure it covers **both** your nose, mouth, and chin”. The conjunction **both** is normally used in the English language to join two elements together, not the three in this message, hence rendering it grammatically incorrect. A further example, found on a tourism website (Turkey) contains advice on tipping: “It is **custom** to tip for the table services you received”, which could be changed by simply adding an indefinite article, “It is **a custom** to tip for the table services you received” or by switching to an adjective, “It is **customary** to tip for the table services you received”. Sometimes it is not a single word but the whole phrase or collocation that is misused by non-native English speakers, as in the following description from Poland: “city’s **environmental jewels**”. While **jewels** can metaphorically describe something valuable and precious, its combination with **environmental** is somewhat unusual. Native English speakers (or other language learners) are more likely to refer to the concept by using such collocations as **natural treasures**, **natural assets**, **natural gem**, etc.

Misuse of language arising from homophones

Another, albeit minor, group of examples of the potential misuse of English for travel includes homophones – words that sound alike but have different meanings. The following instructions were found at a Lithuanian holiday resort: “Do NOT use the first-aid kit without **stuff** attention”, and contain the incorrect word **stuff** (materials or things) instead of **staff** (employees, personnel), which in this context makes no sense. Similar cases include “Pancakes without **meet**” (seen on a restaurant menu in Austria), “Please do not **feet** the cats inside the yard of the outdoor church area” (a sign at the entrance to a local church in Cyprus), and “Salads & **Paste**” (a local bistro bar in Spain). Such language mistakes could also arise from a lack of confidence about to orthographic rules of English, which will be discussed further below.

- Grammatical and orthographic (spelling) inaccuracies

Some grammatical and spelling irregularities have also been noted; the English spelling system is commonly seen by non-native speakers as quite complex and inconsistent, and can result in English language learners activating some of the rules pertaining to their mother tongues. In the field of grammar, some common mistakes are also found in the non-native usage of English, including, but not limited to, the use of -s/es ending in the Present Simple Tense, agreement between the auxiliary verb to do and full verbs in the same tense, correctly conjugated irregular verbs, etc. Some cases found in the present corpus are illustrated in the table below:

Table 2 – Examples of grammatical and spelling-related inaccuracies

Context	Source
*Keys of **internazionalization***	Promotional material (Spain)
english, Englisch	Underground, menu (Romania)
*Toast with ham and **chees***	Restaurant menu (Italy)
*Personalities of the **signatorie***	Historical monument (Lithuania)
*Our modern Bungalows were designed for extended stays so you can take full **advantag** of our Water Park experience.*	Wellness & Spa Resort (Poland)
*Boarding only, **Turist** buses*	Bust stop sign (Greece, Corfu)
*Company was founded in **november** 1957 and ended in **january** 2005 due to bankruptcy.*	Promotional material (Latvia)
*Today **thursday** 25 **july** we are open from 10 to 17*	Tourism website (Italy)
*Our main task is to promote and establish <…> as the perfect **meetings and events destination** in Northern Europe by assisting meeting and event organizers to find the most suitable local suppliers in the region.*	Tourism website (Estonia)
*If the barrier **do not open**, please move out the car and call help phone*	Airport car park (Lithuania)
*Dear clients, used dishes please take away **yourselfs,** thanks.*	Holiday resort (Lithuania)
***There is available to clients the allergen list of our products**. Ask our staff.*	Airport café (Spain)
***It's** not many musicians who start writing songs at the age of nine*	In-flight magazine (Latvia)
In the sauna is recommended up to 12 people at a time.	Spa resort (Lithuania)

Also situated on the premises is the Botanical Museum	Tourism website (Poland)
In the Wellness & SPA zone ***swimsuit, flip-flops and a towel or a bathrobe applies****.*	Wellness & Spa Resort (Poland)

The examples given illustrate the main challenges regarding misspelling, capitalisation, the use of the possessive case, agreement, word order in the sentence, etc. Such language patterns seen in World Englishes in tourism texts reveal some recurring spelling-related patterns, including the omissions or additions of letters, which might indicate an association with the writer's native spelling system, as in the cases **internazionalization**, **chees**, **signatorie**, **advantage**, **Turist** buses.

Another common issue involves capitalisation, which varies by language. For instance, in English proper nouns, such as the names of the week, months, languages and nationalities, are always capitalised, while in other languages these conventions differ. Thus we have seen example like "Today **thursday** 25 **july"**, "Company was founded in **november** 1957 and ended in **january** 2005 due to bankruptcy", **english**, **Englisch**.

In an era characterised by digitalisation and an ocean of applications at our fingertips, it appears that not even native speakers pay much attention to spelling, not least because we all tend to rely on these tools, irrespective of the purpose for which we use language. In addition to this, cross-linguistic differences between the native languages of the countries explored here and English should not be overlooked; although they all belong to the group of languages which use the Roman alphabet, some striking differences are noted, these stemming primarily from the fact that English, unlike many of the languages native to the territories where the messages in the corpus were found, is characterised by opaque orthography (Ziegler & Goswami, 2006). Despite all the spelling-related mistakes found, some of which might not at first sight be noted, even by native speakers simply seeking information rather than engaged in linguistic analysis, all the intended messages in the collected language material attained their communicative goals, provoking no misinterpretation or misunderstanding.

Apart from spelling-related inconsistencies, those pertaining to word order or agreement, that is, grammar-based errors, have also been identified. For example, the patterns "**In the sauna is recommended up to 12 people at a time, There is available to clients the allergen list of our products**, In the Wellness & SPA zone **swimsuit**, **flip-flops and a towel or a bathrobe applies**" all appear to lack the expected SVO word order. As such they might reflect mere calque-based translation (i.e. word-for-word renderings); furthermore, instances such as "If the barrier **do not open"**, "Dear clients, used dishes please take away **yourselfs**, thanks", "**It's** not many musicians who start writing songs at the age of nine" all show some lack of harmony with grammatical purity, like inaccurate plural pronoun forms, inaccurate auxiliary verb, etc.

No matter whether the inconsistencies described above belong to the fields of collocations, spelling, or grammatical rules, they all portray some of the common mistakes that can be found along the path of English language learning (an issue explored in detail in Fitikides, 2002). Their existence is not rare, since the processes of foreign language learning can be complex and confusing, until learners manage to find adequate mental space to store knowledge of their mother tongue and that of the foreign language/-s without much confusion. These common errors commonly result from cross-linguistic interference, and have been examined in numerous studies focussing on how this type of interference affects pronunciation, syntax, orthography, etc. (as in: Cárdenas-Hagan et al., 2007; Hoshino & Kroll, 2008; Blumenfeld and Marian, 2007). The mistakes broadly classified as grammatical, showing irregularities with regard to verb form, word order, plural, etc., and those at the crossroad of semantics and syntax, exhibiting inaccurate language combinations, might be regarded as more severe than mere spelling errors. However, the encyclopaedic knowledge of the world that we as recipients possess, has not prevented adequate interpretation here either.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In the highly intertwined, globalised world to which we belong, cultural and linguistic contact is a common, indeed never-ending, phenomenon. While intercultural contacts, taking place in different places, for different purposes and at different times, often occur in English, they still tend to portray some of the attributes characterising the cultures involved, that is, the communicators who represent those cultures.

The English we know today has been exposed to countless languages over the course of its development and is still being experiencing endless contact with the languages surrounding it, be it in a direct or indirect way, via all those language learners out there, who add their own nuances to the language they use. In some cases, the English we opt to use will be significantly simplified (resembling Globish), to facilitate the flow of communication, whereas on other occasions it will be strongly influenced by our native languages. However, the main goal will usually be the same: to convey the intended message. This becomes very significant while we travel, as the messages here commonly serve the purposes of offering, instructing, guiding, asking, complaining, etc.

This paper has explored a series of language patterns produced in countries where English is used as a foreign language, that is, those territories belonging to the expanding circle. The patterns have been collected in typical travel situations; they all belong to the sphere of tourism and hospitality (airports, restaurants, stations, museums, etc.), and are all aimed at addressing tourists, who might come from anywhere in the world. In answering the initial research questions, we can claim that:

A1: The English used does not depict the pure, standard variants, harmonised with all language prescribed rules; on the contrary, some inconsistencies have been noted at various

language levels – semantic, orthographic, pragmatic, syntactic – and the examples provided above have all shown evidence of language modification;

A2: Despite all the inconsistencies found, the messages, at least when it comes to the material explored here, did manage to reach their target audience and convey the intended meaning. It can be argued that, to this end, the context and an array of accompanying factors played a significant role in facilitating successful interpretation.

The findings reported here are in line with the view of Widdowson, at least to some degree, who claims that users from the outer and expanding circles can make mistakes that defy the rules of standard linguistics, as in advices and evidences (Widdowson, 2019, p. 315). Despite this, however, it cannot be said that they violate the Cooperative Principle, since the patterns they produce usually result in smooth and successful interaction, i.e., comprehension. In this regard, it is also worth noting that the language patterns observed above come from a spectrum of countries which belong to the expanding circle of English (where the languages are taught and learned as foreign languages) and exhibit different levels of English language proficiency, according to the EF English Proficiency Index Report from 2023; while some of them show very high proficiency level, like Portugal, Germany, Greece, whereas others, like Turkey, show a rather low proficiency level; common language mistakes, often influenced by the native language/-s, are everywhere.

For more detailed insights into this issue, a fuller picture and more analysis would be needed, encompassing different circles and making correlations between them. Then again, even the illustrated sample described here has pointed to the richness of language that surrounds us, in spite of some linguistic inconsistencies that might appear along the way. Although this paper does not advocate the use of improper or incomprehensible language, it underlines that we should always bear in mind that outer (as well as expanding) circle speakers of English exploit their creativity from both the English and other language/-s repertoires that they have at their disposal (Widdowson, 2019, p. 312).

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