

Sustainable Multilingualism conference, Kaunas 2017

Language challenges in global and regional integration

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Summary of the lecture

- **Three questions in the abstract**
- **The historical context**
- **Efforts in the Nordic countries to establish equitable sustainable multilingualism**
 - or bilingualism?
- **Ongoing challenges for maintaining linguistic vitality**
 - with critical schoolchildren, and academics who enjoy academic freedom?

Three choices for academics - Pierre Bourdieu

- the **expert** serving societal needs as these are understood by the politically and economically powerful, commissioned research
- the **professor** trapped in esoteric, erudite scholarly isolation
- the **scholar who intervenes in the political world** in the name of the values and truths achieved in and through autonomy and academic freedom.

By drawing on radical sociolinguistics, holistic language policy and planning, and critical pedagogy, we can be committed sociopolitically.

Pierre Bourdieu (2001) Quelles langues pour une Europe démocratique?

In view of the current dominance of English ...

“How can we counteract the **abuse of power** that is intrinsic to **linguistic hegemony**? (...) we need to reflect on this model so as to see if and how it is possible to go along with using English without the risk of being anglicised into its **conceptual structures**, without being **brainwashed** by its linguistic patterns.”

Avoid cultural and linguistic self-colonisation!

Question 1

Is the expansion of English adding to our linguistic repertoires, or is there currently a process of linguistic capital dispossession of national languages?

Linguistic capital accumulation

Additive language learning.

Foreign language learning is normally additive.

All languages **evolve, borrow** in interaction with other languages, lexically, conceptually, discourse and functional enlargement.

Expanding the linguistic repertoire of the *individual* and the *group* can be seen as linguistic capital accumulation.

Linguistic capital dispossession

- A dominant language **replacing** another language for specific functions.

- **Subtractive** language learning: language acquisition and use at the expense of other languages (typically mother tongues).

- Key **agents**, external and internal, for instigating and implementing the **structures and ideologies** (habitus) that cause dispossession can be identified:

 - glottophagie* (linguistic cannibalism – Calvet on France)

 - lingua tyrannosaura* (Swales on English in academia)

 - lingua frankensteinia* (Gandhi, Fanon, Ngũgĩ, RP)

Robert Phillipson

AMERICANIZZAZIONE E INGLESIZZAZIONE COME PROCESSI DI CONQUISTA MONDIALE

Liberi dai padroni della libertà

Aggiornamento italiano di
Giorgio Kadmo Pagano



Linguistic capital accumulation or dispossession?

An empirical question in any given context.

Answering it requires analysis of key characteristics of **linguistic imperialism** and of relevant data for clarifying the issue.

Examples

- less learning of foreign languages other than English (Denmark)
- replacement of ancestral languages by English (e.g. Singapore)
- English linguistic hegemony in the EU system (less French ++).

Conceptual clarification is needed in language policy work (e.g. avoiding plurisemic concepts like *domain loss*, *lingua franca*, *global*).

Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

texts in all languages enrich humanity

*Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt,
weiß nichts von seiner eigenen.*

**People who know no foreign languages
know nothing of their own.**

*Wer English kennt
braucht nichts von andere Sprachen.*

**Whoever knows English
has no need of other languages.**

British ‘academic’ cheer-leaders of English-medium teaching in European higher education

Jim Coleman in a survey article in *Language Teaching* 2006 claims that there is a consensus about the likelihood of global diglossia with English as **the exclusive language of science**: ‘*it seems inevitable that English, in some form, will definitely become **the** language of higher education*’ in Europe.

David Graddol and **David Crystal** tend to endorse an expansion of English uncritically on the basis of patchy and unreliable data.

German ex-Minister worried about covert language policy driven by market forces

Contrary to the wording affirmed in the Bologna Declaration, the reform of higher education serves the purpose of replacing the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe by an English linguistic monopoly.

Hans Joachim Meyer, 2011

EU influence on language policy

- **Bologna** process.
- **English** the **default EU in-house language**.
- **Commission website** language hierarchy.
- **DG Research** applications and their evaluation.
- **High Level** group on **the modernisation of higher education**, European Commission, June 2013, Recommendation 12, endorses English as *the* language of internationalisation, i.e. **the sole international *lingua academica***.

Largely unquestioned hegemonic processes. They are all instances of **linguicism.**

Linguicism, historical and present-day

From **state monolingualism** to **empires** (Spanish, French, British, etc) with scholarly advocates of *linguistic imperialism* (*Nebrija, Rivarol, Macaulay et al*) as a variant of *linguicism*.

“ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, regulate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language”

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas 1988 and 2000

Whether linguicism is in place in any given context – international, national, institutional – is an **empirical** question that needs documentation and analysis, with the use of **appropriate theoretical approaches** and concepts.

Linguistic imperialism

1. interlocks with *imperialism* in culture, education, media, communication, economy, politics, military
2. *exploitation*, injustice, inequality, and hierarchy
3. *structural*: material resources, infrastructure, ...
4. *ideological*: beliefs, attitudes, imagery
5. *hegemonic*: internalised as normal and 'natural'
6. *unequal rights* for speakers of different languages
7. *subtractive*, consolidating some languages at the expense of others
8. *a form of linguisticism* (cf. sexism, racism, classism)
9. *supply + demand*; push + pull.
10. contested and *resisted*.

Examples of linguistic imperialism

- Suppressing *regional languages* (Welsh, Kurdish, ...)
- *Colonial education* promoting European languages and neglecting local languages.
- *World Bank, British Council, Francophonie* policies funding European languages only in ‘Third World’, post-colonial countries.
- *Western models of education* being seen as universally relevant, as culturally and linguistically ‘neutral’.
- *Market forces* determining hierarchies of *EU languages*.
- *Monolingual native speakers* of English posing as experts on language learning.
- English as a ‘*lingua franca*’ being fraudulently marketed as ensuring equality in communication.

Question 2

What role do discourses of ‘global English’ and of English as a ‘lingua franca’ play?

Global English?

English as **product, process, and project**

- A **project** with identifiable agendas, agents?
- A **myth**, seen as a panacea or pandemic?

What are the **implications and consequences** of the expansion of English for other cultures and languages?

Amos Key junior, from Ontario (Huron or Iroquoian)

Need for an understanding of

- the forces behind changes in the global linguistic mosaic,
- the historical origins of the expansion of English,
- where we are heading, nationally and internationally.

Scholarship on global English?

- English was in the right place at the right time.
- The English language has already grown to be independent of any form of social control.

David Crystal, *English as a global language*

See my review of Crystal's book in *Applied Linguistics* 20:2, 288-299, 1999.

Macaulay

Graddol - British Council



Macaulay

1. Denigrate and stigmatize the *local*
2. Glorify *one's own* culture and language
3. *Rationalize* the asymmetrical relationship
4. Implement an apolitical *technocratic* mission
5. *Ignore* wider *economic* rationales and goals
6. Fail to address the context of *military* occupation

Graddol

1. Indian learning of English is inadequate
2. The UK has the solution to India's problem
3. We are here to 'help' solve your problem
4. Our focus is on declared specific issues, apolitical
1. The UK is not in it for the money
2. Global strategic interests are not referred to

Graddol myths

1. **A global language**
2. **The language of business**
3. **Universities shifting into English**
4. **Consensus on language learning**
5. **Early start**

Basic facts

1. **Statistically and sociolinguistically untrue.**
2. **Many languages are used.**
3. **Universities in Europe are adding English as an academic language.**
4. **No one method, and definitely not a monolingual one.**
5. **Massive evidence against an early start.**

Resistance to English linguistic imperialism

A Cambridge research project identified on Google Scholar 75,513 **scientific manuscripts on biodiversity conservation**.

-English 48,600 (64.4%)

-Spanish 9,520

-Portuguese 7,800

-simplified Chinese 4,540

-French 2,290

*Amano, Tatsuya, Juan P. GonzaÁlez-Varo, and William J. Sutherland (2016).
Languages Are Still a Major Barrier to Global Science. PLoS Biol 14(12):
e2000933. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.2000933.*

Add German, Japanese, Russian, Nordic languages, ...

What about **indigenous knowledge** and cosmology transmission?

Resistance to English linguistic imperialism

.... the English used as an international scientific language is **not a *lingua franca***, a non-language. English is a completely normal language with its **specific monolingual semantics**, like all other languages. [...] It is the bearer, like all other natural languages, of a particular vision of the world. As such it is **not universal and purely objective**, which is what real *lingua francas* were.

Jürgen Trabant, 2012

The ‘English as a Lingua Franca’ mission

Considerable number of denunciations of ELF’s **theoretical weaknesses and pedagogical irrelevance** (*Ian Mackenzie, Gibson Ferguson, Francois Grin, Martin Kayman, ...*).

Jennifer Jenkins: “**native speakers** are not necessarily excluded from ELF, but they **do not provide the norms of ELF communication.**”

John O'Regan 'English as a lingua franca: an immanent critique' , 2014 , *Applied Linguistics*

- **ELF misrepresents the role of *forms* of English, reifying and hypostatizing them in theoretically invalid ways that ignore key social variables and socio-political realities. It misrepresents the diversity of English in globalization. His immanent analysis clarifies this by drawing on a wealth of understanding of a large number of critical social theorists.**
- **Like Chomsky's denunciation of Skinnerian behaviorism in 1959, this is a defining moment for applied linguistics. The ELF movement deludes teachers of English with false promises of what is important to know about the use of English in the modern world by its diverse foreign and second language users.**
- **cf. English for Special Purposes, Business English as a Lingua Franca including Translation, English for Academic Purposes.**

Motschenbacher, Heiko 2013. *New perspectives on English as a European lingua franca*. Benjamins.

On the basis of a limited spoken language corpus, it generalises about communicative and linguistic traits, and concludes that ELF is detached from native English norms of language and Anglo-American cultural values. She cites ELF gurus: *Jenkins* ('international academic communication is today hardly ever native communication'), *Seidlhofer* (people can operate with their own 'common sense' criteria), and *Widdowson* ('the old conditions of relevance and appropriateness no longer apply'). This implies that ELF can do without any of the vocabulary, syntax, or phonology that has evolved in the UK, USA and elsewhere. It is also typical of ELF empirical studies that their examples are drawn exclusively from *speech*, the role of written English is ignored, but this does not deter ELF converts from drawing bold conclusions about the English *language*.

English a 'lingua franca' ?

- lingua **economica**?
corporate neoliberalism = americanisation
- lingua **emotiva**? *Hollywood, music*
- lingua **cultura**? *a subject in general education*
- lingua **bellica**? *Afghanistan, Iraq, arms trade*
- lingua **academica**? *publications, conferences, medium for content learning*
- lingua **divina**? *Christian missionaries +/- TESOL*
- lingua **frankensteinia**? *subtractive in specific domains*

lingua franca : pernicious, misleading, false

- A *pernicious, invidious* term if the language in question is a first language for some people but for others a foreign language.
- A *misleading* term if the language is supposed to be neutral and disconnected from culture.
- A *false* term for a language that is taught as a subject in general education.

Historical continuity: term for the language of

1) the Crusaders, Franks (from Arabic) and later used for limited commercial translations.

2) the crusade of global corporatisation, marketed as freedom, democracy (& human rights?).

Question 3

Can investment in the linguistic capital of several languages be made productive when in much of Europe there is a marked downgrading of the learning of foreign languages other than English, along with the continued neglect of many minority languages?

Why is this happening?

USA exceptionalism past and present

From *George Washington* 1783 & 1796 seeing the USA as ‘a **rising empire**’, to the *Washington Consensus* (neoliberalism)

‘The chief business of the American people is **business**’

President Calvin Coolidge 1925

‘The whole world should adopt the American system. The American system can survive in America only if it becomes **a world system**’

President Harry Truman 1947

‘Here’s my bottom line:

America must always lead on **the world stage.**’

President Barack Obama 2014

International languages

This term, a century ago, was used exclusively for Esperanto and other planned, constructed non-ethnic languages.

‘The use of English as a world language’

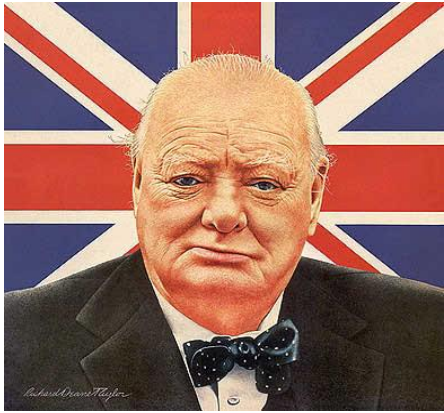
In 1934 the Carnegie Foundation sponsored a US/UK conference in New York.

Agreement on the goal of *‘spreading English “as a world language” on a basis of UK-US collaboration’*.

This led to US funding of activities on both sides of the Atlantic in the 1930s and again in the 1950s with

- the creation of the **English Language Teaching profession/industry**, and departments of **applied linguistics**,
- TESOL, IATEFL**, initially national, now ‘global’,
- Proficiency exams**: Cambridge, TOEFL, IELTS, etc.

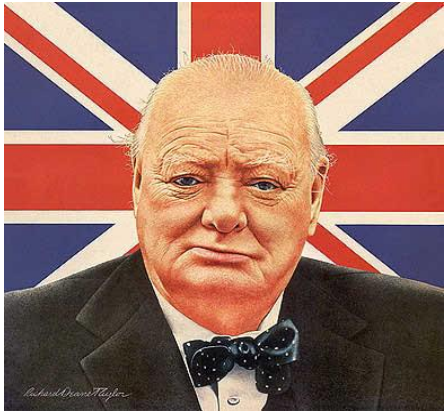
Winston Churchill's understanding of globalization, 1942



The power to control language offers far better prizes than taking away people's provinces or lands or grinding them down in exploitation. The empires of the future are the **empires of the mind.**

Harvard University, 6
September 1943

Winston Churchill at Harvard, 1943



This gift of a **common tongue** is a priceless inheritance, and it may well some day become the foundation of a **common citizenship**. I like to think of British and Americans moving about freely over each other's wide estates with hardly a sense of being foreigners to one another. But I do not see why we should not try to **spread our common language even more widely throughout the globe** and, without seeking **selfish advantage** over any, possess ourselves of this invaluable amenity and **birthright**.

Churchills's five themes, 1943

- **UK/US unity**
- **military collaboration**
- **plans for global peace-keeping**
- **US/UK global dominance**
- **global English**

- **Roosevelt, 1942**

‘We have profited by our past mistakes. This time we shall know how to make full use of victory <...> conquer its allies in a more enlightened manner ’.

‘the cause of freedom across the world’

**The Margaret Thatcher Center For Freedom
at the Heritage Foundation in Washington DC
has as its main goal**

**to ensure that the US and UK
can ‘lead and change the world’**

www.thatchercenter.org

Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, David Cameron, Theresa May...

Bush I, Clinton, Bush II, Obama, Trump ...

Churchill in Copenhagen 1950 (1)

The first duty of a university is to teach **wisdom**, not to train, and to confirm **character** and not impart **technicalities**. We want a lot of engineers in the modern world, but we do not want a world of engineers. We want some scientists, but we must make sure **that science is our servant and not our master...** No amount of technical knowledge can replace the comprehension **of the humanities or the study of history and philosophy.**

Churchill in Copenhagen 1950 (2)

The advantages of the nineteenth century, the literary age, have been largely put aside by this terrible twentieth century with all its confusion, exhaustion, and bewilderment of mankind. This is a time when a firm grip on all the essential verities and values of **humanity and civilization should be the central care of the universities of Europe and the world.**

post-Churchill world

- ‘engineers’ → economists committed to neoliberalism
 - global and local inequalities (the 99%)
- EU policies
- NATO globalised, English as a *lingua bellica*
- academic freedom constrained
- Massive US and UK efforts to expand English worldwide, to promote linguistic imperialism
- linguicism at micro and macro levels

Language policy in the Nordic countries

- **National studies** over past 15 years: English as threat?
- Commissioned **scholarly reviews** over past 5 years via national language boards.
- Plans for the **continued vitality of national languages**, and for explicit **language policy** and planning, and **language rights**.
- **Limited implementation**, but
- **Report in 2017 on Parallel language competence in the Nordic countries**

More parallel, please! Sprogbrug i internationaliseringsprocesser

Final Report of the Nordic Parallel language Group with 11 recommendations for universities on ideal arrangements for the use of international and local languages.

Recommendations (1)

1. All universities should have ***a language policy*** integrated with its internationalization policy and that relates to national language policy parameters and the role of the university locally.
2. All universities should have a ***language policy committee*** that follows developments continually.
3. ***A language centre*** should, on the basis of research criteria, elaborate courses in the local language of relevance for ‘international’ staff and students, and should ensure the quality of such courses; it should also offer translation and language revision services; it should develop digital resources.

Recommendations (2)

4. International teaching and research staff should be instructed in forms of *parallel academic language use, and features of local students' dialogue*; they should also be familiarised with the local language of *university administration*; and progressively acquire competence to function fully in the local language; this should be stipulated in their *employment contract*.

5. There should be *needs analysis* in relation to study disciplines and future employment *for guest students* and for foreign students doing an *entire degree*; *local* students should be instructed in the discourse of their academic field in their language and in English, and ideally in additional languages.

6. Elaboration of a *specialised needs analysis* so as to achieve full parallel competence.

Recommendations (3)

7. Criteria for *choice of the language(s)* of instruction, for lecturers' language proficiency, reading material, and specification of achievement in each language are needed.

8. Principles for *the language of university administration*.

9. Strategies for *languages of publication*.

10. Policies for *research dissemination* and popularisation nationally and internationally.

11. Elaboration of relevant *digital tools* for staff and students.

University of Cambridge

Languages as public policy *The value of languages*

- Language contributes to UK **prosperity**.
- Language learning forms part of ‘**cultural agility**’ from knowing other languages and cultures.
- Languages provide **value-added skills** across a range of **occupations**.
- There is increasing understanding of the **personal and societal benefits** of bilingualism.
- Recognized importance of ‘**soft power**’ and language skills in conflict areas.
- **Academics** and **civil servants** should develop language policy together.

The big picture

Capitalism creates **winners and losers**, internationally (USA, China, Germany,...) and nationally (classes).

Movements for political, social, and linguistic justice have achieved some **success**, but democracy and human rights principles are currently being **weakened** in many parts of the world.

The EU has some major accomplishments, but is constitutionally committed to **neoliberalism**, with devastating effects (Greece, southern Europe) and **weak language rights commitments** (institutionally, in EU 'actions', and in language policy recommendations).

The big and small pictures

As scholars, we should integrate our **teaching** and **research** (Bourdieu) into **sociopolitical activism**.

In language policy and language education, think **global** (international languages), act **local** (national language vitality, and minority language revitalisation).

Entrench **linguistic diversity** in education systems.

We may be pessimistic in much of our **analysis**, but there are grounds for optimistic and effective **action**.

There is a massive wealth of **literature** on all the topics touched on, and there are many **NGOs** active in working for positive change.

Wealth of languages

This wealth exists in a wide range of scholarly languages.

It is admirable that a conference on multilingualism announces plenaries in two languages, and organizes parallel sections in Lithuanian, French and German, so that English does not have an inequitable monopoly at ‘international’ conferences.



Anna Wierzbicka, in *Imprisoned in English. The hazards of English as a default language* (2014)

‘**a conceptual prison**... the practice of implicitly treating the English language as a standard in relation to which all other languages and cultures can be analysed and interpreted is still very widespread’.

‘The historically shaped vocabulary of English can be a conceptual prison for those who absolutize it and **never look at it from a historical and cross-linguistic perspective**’ (192). The risk is of being trapped in a restrictive conceptual universe with a ‘wall between ourselves and other people ... one gets a slanted picture of what it means to be human one cannot understand *oneself*: one takes one’s own conceptual categories and cultural scripts for granted, one doesn’t appreciate their distinct character, shaped by a unique history and culture, and consequently one cannot get an insight into what it is to be an “Anglo” – **a bearer of a particular culture and inhabitant of a particular conceptual and cultural universe**’ (193).