Sociolinguistics
Soziolinguistik

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of Language and Society
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von Sprache und Gesellschaft

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1. Introduction

To assume the existence of language empires presupposes the existence of empires as such, and the hypothesis that the dynamics of the languages related to a given empire bear a certain relationship to other aspects of imperial development and behavior. A third theoretically thinkable hypothesis of the word compound could assume the existence of entities that are imperial only in the realm of language and not otherwise. The question of whether empires – and imperialism – constitute valid concepts in a so-called "post-capitalist, post-modern, and post-imperial" era has aroused considerable debate and led to extensive literature over the past twenty years. Globalization has taken over the field, the concepts, and our minds and has replaced names like imperialism, modernization and others from previous times.

Different from imperialism, globalization seems to have no clearly identifiable actor – rather, its discursive shaping places it in the neighborhood of natural events such as earthquakes and hurricanes that occur without human intervention. Hardt and Negri's 'Empire' (2000), probably the most read oeuvre on the topic in recent years, proposes to reframe the concept of empire as largely independent from any specific nation-state. The debate on renewed imperialism versus actor-less globalization has acquired considerable weight in the analysis of the modern spread of English, as we shall see. It is related to our second issue, the relationship between linguistic and other aspects of imperial conduct, which in turn reframes basic questions about the *socio* and the *linguistic* in the sciences of language and society (section 2). A quick revision of the history of the Roman (3), the Spanish (4) and the British Empires (5) will shed light on our theoretical questions that arise from the previous debate. Next, I will analyze the passage of English as the language of one empire, among others, to its actual position as the only fully globalized language (6). Since the spread of English threatens the position of other international languages and global language ecology as a whole, influential positions opposed to total English domination arose. Of these I will outline two (7): one that accuses English of being the 'killer language' and postulates the unrestricted defence of all minority languages based on a close relation

between linguistic and biological ecology (Terralingua, Skutnabb-Kangas; Maffi et al.); and a second sustained mainly by European scholars (Calvet; Ammon; Ehlich et al.) that I will frame as the "strong national language" position. Finally, I will return to the initial question about the nature of language empires and sketch some research perspectives and desiderata for future inquiry and debate (8).

2. Empire, imperialism, linguistic empires, and globalization

Language empires will be explored from two perspectives: in what way do linguistic factors – language spread, shift, dominance, linguicism – contribute to the building of empires, to their stability, reign, and governance over linguistically diverse, multicultural populations? And in what ways do empires create imperial languages or, to put it conversely, to what extent do linguistic constellations develop with certain independence from the economic, political and cultural processes that might have brought them about in the first place? Since we do not have any independent sociolinguistic theory of empire, we need to revise past and present concepts of empire, imperialism and globalization, as well as language spread and language globalization, from the perspective of the reciprocal relationship between the linguistic and the social. A first workable definition of empire may be drawn from the previous treatment of the topic in this Handbook, starting from a definition of polities as those social groups that totalize themselves as global societies. Achard (1988, 1541) defines empire as: "The exercise of power from a given political unit over social formations which this political unit considers both as 'foreign' [...] and as globally submitted to the rule of the first society's power."

Such a basic definition covers the development of empires from Rome to modern imperialism from the perspective of the power that one polity exercises over another group or polity that differs in culture and in language. As we shall see, however, it will turn out to be too narrow to cover the whole range of imperial language relations. The conceptual transition from empire to imperialism implied a shift in value and perspective. Theories of empire and imperialism developed over the 19th and 20th century

largely within and in opposition to Marxist theory. Within a Marxist framework, imperialism was defined as the natural next stage that evolved out of colonialism. The development of capitalism required an expansion of trade and production; thus imperialism represented the monopoly stage of capitalism (Lenin 1916/1973). 'Dependence theory', a joint North and South American offspring of Marxist theory in the 1960s and 1970s (Frank; Dos Santos), showed to what extent the capitalist development in the metropolis determined economic development and socio-political structuring of colonial societies right from the beginning of colonization, reproducing third world dependency until present times. Indeed, the modern concept of imperialism, which combines economic, political, and cultural mechanisms of control, was applied both to politically dependent colonies, mainly in Africa and Asia, and independent states in Latin America. Although these mechanisms of external control have deepened the gulf between rich and poor states since the 1970s – and between the rich and the poor inside practically every country – the term imperialism has almost disappeared from political and scientific debate. 'Globalization' has taken its place, a concept with multiple meanings. In very general terms, it stands for increasing inter-connectivity on all levels. Its most relevant and systematic component is a radical restructuration of the world economic system known as 'neoliberalism', where financial capital is taking the lead over productive capital; nation states, especially third world countries, are forced to open their markets, reduce state expenditure and services such as healthcare, social security, pensions, and education, and privatize them, together with public enterprises and natural resources (oil, gas, water, minerals), mainly for the benefit of international corporations. At the same time, electronic technologies facilitate national and international communication in ways impossible to imagine only a few decades ago. Beyond primary (*Gemeinschaft*) and secondary (*Gesellschaft*) social relationships, new impersonalised tertiary bonds mediated by technologies and corporations increasingly determine our lives (Calhoun 1992). New de-territorialized 'third cultures' emerge, such as fashion or the new international management culture, which develop their own discourses and language

usages. Globalization, however, does not only imply homogenization of markets and cultures, but also the growth of diversity, socio-cultural variety and wealth of local discourses, codes and practices that resist and play back against the homogenizing order. Hardt and Neri's (2000) 'Empire' has encountered a surprisingly massive reception, perhaps just because it attempts to detach global dominance from the national state. Economics and other processes of globalization have not only transgressed state borders, they argue, thus severely reducing national sovereignty of most states – but furthermore, power has largely shifted from governments to international corporations who are seemingly not anchored in any specific harbor. The present situation is characterized by 'governance without government' (Hardt/Negri 2000, 14); imperialism has mutated to a new empire – the new paradigm is a "process of the imperial constitutionalization of world order", a new entity that appears as supra-national, worldly, and total. Most important, the classical nation-state is declining and will disappear as a result of "a structural and irreversible process" (ibid., 336), thus giving way to a political regulation of the global market by the large transnational corporations that have defeated the nation-states. Sovereignty is passing from individual nation-states to empire which is neither American nor European, simply capitalist.

Communication plays a mayor role in this process; while it is a fundamental medium of imperial control, it dissolves and subordinates territorial sovereignty. "It attacks the very possibility of linking an order to a space. [...] Deterritorialization is the primary force and circulation, the form through which social communication is manifesting itself. In this way and in this ether, languages become functional to circulation and dissolve every sovereign relationship" (ibid., 347).

In sum, Hardt and Neri synthesize the impressions of many puzzled observers who notice increasing dominance, restrictions and global control over a growing number of domains in our lives, while at the same time the actors or sources behind the scene appear more and more diluted: "David doesn't find Goliath any more", to use García Canclini's (1999, 26) poignant metaphor. Opponents argue that corporate power is not diluted, but is concentrated in seven nations only, and that national governments of industrialised states stronghandedly intervene to support the industries of their countries (Chomsky 1994). Globalization stresses rather than weakens imperialist domination of a few central nation states (Borón 2002, 13). Last but not least, war is back as an extension of politics with other means. The US-British invasion of Iraq in 2003 reopened in the eyes of many critiques our views on the *Handlungslogik* of empire states and imperialism in our days. It is difficult to believe that empire states do no longer exist or hold power in the face of the world's most powerful nation state establishing an explicit doctrine of preventive and pre-emptive war as the basis of its international relations (Chomsky 2003). The thesis of imperialism in its classical meaning lies at the bottom of the most influential book along this line of thinking in recent years, Robert Phillipson's (1992) 'Linguistic Imperialism'. It analyses the role of British and US American state support for the spread of English as a global language. Phillipson arrives at the conclusion that English attained its dominant position as the prime world language because it has been actively promoted "as an instrument of foreign policy of the major English-speaking states" (Phillipson 1992, 1). The language policies that third world countries reproduce as a result of colonization serve first and foremost the interests of Western powers and contribute to preserve existing inequalities in the world system. English linguistic imperialism, as a specific case of linguicism, "is a theoretical construct, devised to account for linguistic hierarchization, to address issues of why some languages come to be used more and others less, what structures and ideologies facilitate such processes, and the role of language professionals" (Phillipson 1997, 238).

The linguistic imperialism hypothesis sustains that English – and other colonial languages – were imposed by force, albeit selectively, on native populations as part of an array of other imperial measures for maintaining and reproducing control, or at least cultural and linguistic hegemony (Phillipson 1992; 1997; see Pennycook 1994; 1998; Schiffman 1996). The opposite position sustains that the characteristics of an international language imply that learning and using the language bears no relationship to cultural assimilation; such a language

becomes denationalized and is no longer the property of its mother tongue speakers (Smith 1987). Here we discover a significant parallelism with Hardt and Neri's (2000) dissociation of global empire from imperialist nation states. Furthermore, "English owes its existence as a world language in large part to the struggle against imperialism, and not to imperialism alone" (Brutt-Griffler 2002, IX). We shall return to this debate once we approach the English Language Empire (section 6). For our more general debate, let us retain for the moment that different views persist about the nature of modern domination – imperialist states versus state-less empire, or even a loftier globalization. In the field of language policy, divergence exists on the role of imperial languages, both in the construction and maintenance of power relations, and in the more linguistic and sociolinguistic concerns of language spread, globalization and the development of world languages. Certainly the question of power relations mediated by language dichotomies, rather than spread itself, will turn out to be an essential common ground to explain the functioning of language empires.

3. The Roman Empire: centralized government without massive language spread

At first sight the Roman Empire, the polity that coined the concept until our days, might seem to fulfill the prototypical characteristics of a full-fledged cultural and linguistic empire: a world-embracing polity that extended its realm to the four corners of earth – not only by military force, but also through its superior state organization including the domains of law, politics, culture and language. Different from later empires whose capitals functioned as fairly monolingual centers of linguistic irradiation, Rome was bilingual right from the beginning in a very peculiar way. For six centuries, between the 3rd century BC and the 3rd century AD, "the educated Roman was bilingual" (Kahane/Kahane 1979, 183). Apart from nascent Latin, Greek occupied both the space of the dominant cultural and scientific language, and that of the slaves, many other lower class segments and immigrants from the East. The world of Greek, whose territory was never unified, could look down on their

Roman conquerors with condescendence because they represented the language of prestige, philosophy, and higher education. Latin, on the other hand, evolved as the language of the polity – the Senate never accepted Greek, not even when used by foreign representatives –, of law and of the legion (Achard 1988, 1543). During its heydays, Rome reigned over five to six million citizens and some fifty to sixty million subjects without imposing its language to the conquered nations. Similar to the Aztecs in Mesoamerica and the British in India, the Romans governed at the lowest possible cost and limited their intervention to tax collection and the avoidance of revolts. In sum, the Roman Empire no doubt extended Latin as the language of administration and citizenship, of military and legal rule. The image of a linguistic empire, however, where the extension of political power correlates on a one-to-one relationship with the spread if its language, should be differentiated on several grounds. First, Rome as the very center of the empire was bilingual throughout most of the empire's splendor. Second, the Roman Empire did not foster a policy of massive language spread; instead, the emergence of Romance languages and the revival of Latin as a language of power occurred long after the downfall of the Roman Empire, ironically as the result of the anti-Roman new religion of Christianity and in the heart of a Germanic empire. Thus the Roman Empire does not represent the typical case of a central state which extended and imposed its language on the conquered nations.

4. The realm of Spanish: from colonial empire to a second tier world language

On the other hand, the Spanish Empire may be seen as the one colonial regime where the extension of domination and the spread of its state language coincided to a large extent, probably more than in any other empire before or afterwards. Today, Spanish is spoken as the official language on the mainland peninsula and in practically all long-lasting former colonies, i.e. in 21 sovereign states. How did Spanish achieve such a solid and massive spread, considering the fact that Spain never reached a level of economic development comparable to other contemporary colonial powers such as Britain and

France? During 1492 three important milestones paved the way for Spain's linguistic empire: Columbus reached the Americas and launched the Conquest – without ever knowing that he had 'discovered' a new continent; the fall of Granada, the last Arab stronghold in Europe, was celebrated as the final triumph after 800 years of *Reconquista* and the consolidation of the Hispanic Kingdom initiated by Castilla and Aragón on the Iberian Peninsula; and finally, Nebrija published the first grammar of the Spanish language, pronouncing the famous and visionary prediction that the Spanish language was and would be the loyal companion of the empire (Quilis quoted in Cifuentes 1998, 117, note 43). Here, at the brink of modernity, we find the first formulation of the modern hypothesis which forcefully links the growth of an empire to the standardization and spread of its imperial language.

In which language(s) should public administration, military rule, and religious conversion proceed in the American colonies to grant optimal conditions for government, exploitation, and the saving of souls? Although both the clergy and the Crown sustained that the language question was subordinate to that of rule and Christianization, the spread of Spanish meant much to a kingdom that had only recently achieved unification of its own state, based on a common religion and the imposition of a national language. The 16th century represents the most interesting period of colonization in terms of language policy controversies (Heath 1972; Suárez 1983; Cifuentes 1998). The clergy studied and learned dozens of indigenous languages as never afterwards and wrote hundreds of vocabularies and grammars based on the structure of Latin. After a first impulse to impose Spanish rapidly on the new colonies, King Carlos V reconsidered his linguistic policy in the face of the impossible task it represented. In his 1550 edict he concedes the use of vernacular languages, especially the general languages of the former empires: Nahuatl for Mexico, Quechua for the Andean region and Tupi-Guarani for the central South American area which today is Paraguay. Thus language policy practiced restricted multilingualism; it favored some majority languages and attempted to introduce and stabilize them as general languages, whereas the languages of smaller groups with less prestige and extension were not considered. Tupi-Guarani in central South America reflects the most successful case of a *lingua geral*, perhaps just *because* it did not represent a former Indian empire like Aztec Nahuatl and Quechua and a new vice royal capital (Barros 1993). The historical roots of Guarani constitute the basis for explaining its stability and singular extension in Paraguay, the only massively bilingual country in the Americas where an urbanized, formerly indigenous language, is spoken by more citizens from all social classes than Spanish is.

It is undoubtedly the project of building homogeneous, monolingual and monocultural *nation states* shaped on the European model that emerges as the single most important political process throughout Latin America in the 19th century. After the wars of Independence, the new national bourgeoisies had to overcome the heritage of a disastrous colonial administration, internal violent rivalry between power groups, and the weak constitution of national identities. Whereas at the beginning of the 19th century the indigenous population formed a majority in most states (64% in Mexico, Cifuentes/Ros 1993), one hundred years later it had been reduced to tiny minorities in the countries of the southern cone and to less than 20 per cent in Mexico; only in Bolivia, Peru, and Guatemala did the members of Indian peoples still form a majority. The 20th century consolidated this tendency of stabilizing Spanish and Portuguese in Latin America and transformed them into international languages (Hamel 2003a; Hamel/Martín Butragueño, article 216); at the same time indigenous languages became more and more threatened throughout the continent to the extent that over 80 per cent of them are considered to be at risk (Maffi 2001). Although legal and military action, as well as economic development, resulted to be key factors for Spanish language spread, the general objective of constructing homogeneous nation states was propelled by two basic strategies of language policy (cf. Albó 1988; 2002; Plaza/Albó 1989) and education for the indigenous peoples (cf. López/Moya 1990; Hamel 1994a; 1994b; 2000). The first and generally dominant strategy considered the assimilation (i.e. dissolution) of indigenous peoples and the suppression of their languages as a prerequisite for building a unified nation state. A second position favored the preservation of indigenous lan-

guages and cultures in this process, without giving up the ultimate aim of uniting nation and state. The first strategy imposed direct Hispanicization (castellanización) through submersion programs. Transitional programs reflecting the second strategy applied diverse bilingual methods where the indigenous languages played a subordinate, instrumental role as the languages of instruction and for initial alphabetization. Only since the 1980s have new language policies and programs of intercultural bilingual education geared towards preserving indigenous cultures and languages emerged as the result of vigorous indigenous movements, e. g. the national coalition of indigenous peoples in Ecuador or the Zapatista Army in Mexico. In the course of the 19th century, Spanish became the national language in Hispanic America and gained independence from the Castilian norm. One country after another set up a Language Academy and arrived at the conclusion that its own variety of Spanish should become the national norm (Cifuentes/Ros 1993). This process consolidated during the 20th century. In sum, the development of Spanish language spread – both inside nation states and internationally – reveals a complex pattern in relation to the political development of Spanish-speaking polities. During the vigorous rise and expansion of an empire where the sun never set, Spanish did not consolidate in Spain and made only weak inroads in the newly conquered territories in the Americas, where Spain's language policy oscillated between the imposition of Spanish and tolerance of the indigenous languages during two centuries. Paradoxically, Spanish really started to spread massively in the 18th century, when the empire had weakened drastically, and it was during 19th century, *after* independence from Spain, when Spanish became the majority language in most Hispanic American countries. At that time, Spain had lost its economic and political influence in the former colonies; Britain first and the USA later, extended their economic and political power in the region under the banner of modern imperialism, which promoted unilateral free trade, political and sometimes military intervention, and maintained at the same time regimes of formal political independence. The Hispanic American elites kept their cultural orientation towards France and some other European countries; at the same time they

firmly expanded Spanish as the language of national unification (Del Valle/Gabriel-Stheeman 2001). English made no significant inroads whatsoever during this time; even as a foreign language it ranked behind French until the second half of the 20th century in most countries (Hamel 2003a). A loose ensemble of nation states, rather than an empire in its old and new sense, made Spanish the most solidly rooted ex-colonial language in any part of the third world, comparable only to the first circle of early colonization in the British (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) and French (Quebec) Empires (Mar-Molinero 2000; Walter 1994). The appropriation of the colonizer's language that constitutes a contemporary issue in language policy debates in Africa and Asia had already known a predecessor after the Latin American independence movements 150 years earlier.

5. The British Empire and the rise of English

English has been the most expansive language during the past 500 years. "Between the end of the reign of Elisabeth I (1588) and the beginning of the reign of Elisabeth II (1952)" (Crystal 1997, 25), the number of speakers of English increased from five to seven million, most of whom lived in the British Isles, to approximately 250 million, residing in their vast majority outside the British Isles (see figures in Crystal 1997; Graddol 1997; Pennycook 1994). For a long time English language spread developed alongside the expansion of other imperial languages such as Spanish and French. From a certain period onwards, however, English attained unique conditions of development which made this language overtake all other international competitors during the 20th century.

The British Empire – similar to the French – developed in three distinct periods with different results. During a first period throughout the Middle Ages English spread over the British Isles to set the stage for becoming the language of the British Empire. The next period started at the end of the 16th century with settlements in North America and, later on, in Australia and New Zealand. The third period initiated towards the end of the 18th century with the building of a vast colonial empire, mainly in Africa and Asia. Whereas the first period made English emerge from a subordinate position in a

Norman French vs. English diglossia to become the national language of one of the most powerful European empires (Kahane/Kahane 1979), the second period laid the ground for English world rule through the conquest, massive settlement, and future industrial development of North America. These two periods consolidated English in the seven countries of the inner circle (Kachru 1986), where English became the majority language. Like other language empires, Britain never obtained total linguistic unification in its homeland. The second period implied the most significant phase and area of language spread, but would not easily fall under the narrow definition of *Language Empire* as the imposition of the dominant language on populations with different cultures and languages we set off with (cf. Achard 1988, 1541). Only the third period follows the classical scheme of empire building where colonial rule was imposed on huge numbers of non-European peoples, but no massive settlement took place except for South Africa and Rhodesia.

During the third phase British colonial administration was based on the principle of indirect rule: basically, each group should govern itself according to its own principles and traditions, as long as exploitation and British supremacy were not challenged. Different from the Roman or French Empires, individual citizenship in the empire linking the local elites to colonial government was not set as their highest goal, but instead a concept of local communities that collectively formed a federation in the Empire prevailed. Consequently, indirect rule meant the preservation of traditional forms of government, customary law, language and culture, whose study gave rise to modern anthropology as a discipline of colonialism. Orientalism became a key concept of the British and French handling of the East. Starting in the late 18th century, it expressed at the same time a world view that shaped, reinvented and mystified the colonized East from the perspective of a great divide between Occident and Orient; and a "corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, [...] describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: In short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1978, 3).

According to this view, European colonialism construed a vast array of cultural components including literature (Said 1993) and language into an overall hegemony that constantly reproduced Western superiority as cultural imperialism. Thus Orientalism fulfilled a similar purpose as the concept of *indigenismo* in Latin America which represents both a state institution and "the ensemble of ideas about the Indians in the heads of non-Indians", to use the Mexican philosopher Luis Villoro's (1950) definition. Indigenismo, however, was developed by the national bourgeoisies in Latin America who understood themselves as part of Western culture.

As a case in point within this global context, British language policy in India has been the object of detailed studies and controversial debates. Similar to Spanish colonial policy in Latin America, two positions concerning the languages and orientations of education competed with each other in the early 19th century: Orientalism versus Anglicism. The first advocated teaching in the local languages, whereas the second proposed English for secondary education. The acceptance by the governor of the now famous Macaulay Doctrine, a minute formulated by a civil servant in 1835, concluded a long-standing debate in favour of English (Phillipson 1992, 110) and is seen as a recognized turning-point in educational policy (Crystal 1997, 42): "It is impossible for us with our limited means to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Macaulay 1835, 249; quoted in Pennycook 1994, 78).

The main purpose behind language policy issues consisted of the British attempt to reduce the costs of government in all her colonies by employing local civil servants for lower posts in administration. For that reason, a small portion of civil servants had to be educated in English, mostly at secondary level. "Anglicism never really replaced Orientalism, but rather operated alongside it" (Pennycook 1994, 77). More important from the point of view of the ideological debate was the fact that Macaulay's orientation implied a total disregard and despise for Indian 'dialects' which he considered absolutely improper to convey scientific knowledge or literary quality: "A single

shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (Macaulay op. cit., quoted in Pennycook op. cit., 79). As a matter of fact, English did not spread massively, neither during colonial rule nor after Independence in 1947. Nevertheless, English maintains the complex status of associate official language and is part of the 'three language formula' introduced in 1960 after the failure to establish Hindi as the sole official language based on the Soviet model of language policy (Schiffman 1996); the principal alternative to state languages, English is the *de facto* language of federal administration, most higher education, science, and international relations, although only four to five percent of the population exhibit some mastery of the language (Crystal 1997).

The British language education policy in the colonies contrasts significantly with the same policy developed by its eternal rival, the French Empire. Whereas British colonial rule apparently never fostered massive education in English but preferred vernacular language or bilingual education, the French Empire deployed a policy of imposing its language massively (Calvet 1987; 1994). From the previous analysis of the English language empire we can arrive at some provisional conclusions that will be taken up in the sections 6 to 8. Certainly, the British spread their language. This movement worked very clearly in the first phase on the British Isles, where English became the national language and erased other languages almost completely with the exception of Welsh. The second phase in North America, Australia and New Zealand followed the same pattern observed in the South American countries with scarce and not highly developed indigenous populations. Military conquest, combined with massive immigrant settlement, decimated the native populations and made English the national language. The classical colonial empire building in Africa and Asia from the late 18th to the 20th century, however, shows a more differentiated picture. As a result of indirect rule without significant settlement, English did not spread massively in most British colonies.

6. English: from colonial empire to the global language

The rise of English has triggered one of the most exciting debates in language policy of our days. The questions are basically: Why English? How did English develop externally and internally to become the leading world language? Who, if anyone, controls or 'owns' English? Will English continue to hold its position, and how does its role relate to the fate of the other languages of the world? How did English jump from its role as a powerful international, colonial language among a few others to the status of *the* hegemonic world language? Most of the debate on these topics occurs within the Anglo-Saxon world itself. Even prominent academics from outside the Anglo-Saxon language realm are usually not taken into account. Thus, it may be taken as a symptom of English scientific imperialism in itself that most authors – with the exception of Phillipson and Schiffman, among a few others – from English speaking countries and their former colonies who write about the world as a whole do so without quoting a single text from outside English in their vast bibliographies. Around 1900 French still held a mildly leading position as the language of international diplomacy, culture and literature and, consequently, as the first foreign language in many parts of the world. In science three powerful European languages, English, French, and German, maintained a tripartite equilibrium, each of them salient in some scientific domains (Ammon 1991). No research available at that time foresaw that English would rapidly bypass its rivals in the course of the 20th century. In his very influential book on "English as a global language", David Crystal (1997) sustains that in 1950 world English was still not an issue. In retrospect, however, it becomes clear that the future of English was deeply rooted in the British pattern of migration-intensive colonization of North America, its process of early industrialization, and the building of its colonial empire in Africa and Asia. When economic and political leadership passed over from Britain to the USA in the early 20th century, English, together with other components of shared culture, constituted the common bridge between the old and the new empire that set the game and gave English the decisive lead over its competitors. Crystal concludes that English is "a language which has repeatedly found itself in the right place at the right time" (1997, 110). While hardly anyone would question the historical accounts and the hegemonic role of English today, controversy persists

about the reasons, particularly the kind of agency that has brought about this hegemony. Crystal's rather 'naturalistic' interpretation, which converges with those who posit the existence of many Englishes belonging to no one today, is criticised by Phillipson and others who insist on the decisive role of imperialist action in language policy, particularly in the field of education in the colonies and the active spread of English via English Language Teaching (ELT, TESL) promoted by Britain and the USA since the 20th century. The spread of English from a colonial language to globalization has been framed by Kachru (1982; 1986), both in its external spread and its internal variation as 'World Englishes'. His model of three concentric circles is widely quoted: the *Inner Circle* comprises the six countries where an old-variety English is used and English has become the majority language through massive migration to the overseas colonies: Britain, Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The *Outer Circle* contains more than 70 states that correspond to the second diaspora (Kachru 1992; Kachru/Nelson 1996), when English was transported without significant migration to the vast territories of Britain's colonial empire, mainly in Africa and Asia. In those countries English has played a major role up to the present as a second and official language in many key institutions of governance and education (Kachru/Nelson 1996). Typical countries are India, Pakistan, Singapore or Nigeria where new varieties of English arose over time through contact with native languages. The *Expanding Circle* includes countries where English plays a variety of roles and is widely studied as a foreign language; these countries were not colonized by any country of the Inner Circle, and English has no official status. This circle, less well defined than the others, comprises countries like China, with more than 200 million English language learning children in 2003 according to Yajun (2003), Japan, Korea, and certainly most if not all European and Latin American countries. Around 2000, estimates gave some 680 million English language speakers for the combined first and second circle, whereas foreign language users may have exceeded 1.5 billion already. Most important, the Expanding Circle is growing fast and has outnumbered the speakers in the two other circles already. The relevance of a global language can be measured by its Outer and Expanding Circle which indicate its role in international relations, commerce, science and technology. Conversely, the reduction of the third circle denotes shrinking influence of a given international language. Thus, it could be said that Russian and, to a lesser degree, French are surrounded by 'imploding' second and third circles, whereas Spanish is entering a period of expanding its third circle given increasing spread as a foreign language in several continents. Pennycook (1998) complains that the scope of the debate within the Anglo-Saxon world has been reduced to the question of standards and varieties of English; Kachru (e. g. 1982) represents a liberal pluralistic position fostering 'many Englishes', whereas Quirk (1990) defends a more conservative view, stressing the need for common standards that grant intelligibility. Most actors, however, share the view of the spread of English as natural, neutral, and beneficial which is considered to be central to the discourse of English as an international language, especially among the English language teaching profession (Pennycook 1998). Broader issues about the relationship between British or US-American business interests and the promotion of English usually remain hidden behind the smokescreen of actor-less globalization. Most significantly, Kachru, Crystal and others dissociate English from centralized power relations of national imperial states. For Kachru, Asian varieties of English are considered not as a colonial transplant, but part of a local pluralistic linguistic heritage. English language teaching (ELT, TESL) has come to the foreground in this debate on agency. Phillipson (1992) gives a detailed account from inside the 'Company' on the British Council's strategies and activities which, according to his analysis, constitute an imperialist strategy. Since the 1950's the British government assigned a key priority to the teaching of English abroad to support its foreign policy, to strengthen the Commonwealth, and to promote trade relations. At the same time the USA also began to involve an increasing number of government agencies, such as the United States Information Agency and the Agency for International Development in educational planning and ELT in the Third World as part of development aid. Evidence shows quite clearly how both countries integrated their general economic, political and military

interests and language spread policies to maintain and advance imperial control in vast areas of the world. The language teaching centres have intended to control ELT, Britain's second largest export business, based on a number of tenets that establish a hierarchy of programmes which favour the native speakers of English and their countries: English is best taught monolingually, with the same methodology and textbooks worldwide, preferably by native speakers and as early as possible; and the teaching of other second languages obstructs the acquisition of English (Pennycook 1994; Phillipson 2002). Many of these tenets have proven to be fallacies, conflicting with research findings on second language acquisition and bilingual education (Cummins 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Brutt-Griffler (2002) criticises that current conceptual frameworks of second language acquisition and ELT are inadequate to cope with the extremely diverse cultural contexts and conditions of acquiring such a diverse world language as English.

In sum, the leap of English from a colonial language, among others, to become *the* hegemonic world language implies a number of complex processes. To affirm that "English was in the right place at the right time" (Crystal 1997, 110) is certainly too simple to explain this phenomenon. From the point of view of empire building, agency seems to be the most significant, and at the same time, controversial aspect to answer de Swaan's (1993) fundamental question to what extent linguistic constellations develop with certain independence from the economic, political and cultural processes that might have brought them about.

7. Resistance against English hegemony: English only or language pluralism?

The dynamics of the world language system and the increasing hegemony of English have been discussed from a number of diverse perspectives beyond the rather ethnocentric Anglo-Saxon debate reported before. Not surprisingly, from outside the English language empire, the unprecedented power accumulated by the global language is increasingly perceived as a menace. For many, English and its armies have been – and still are very much – in the wrong place at the

wrong time. English language globalization, whether identified as linguistic imperialism or not, is perceived as a threat to the survival and the historical spaces of other languages. Many scholars interested in discovering some underlying rules of power and hierarchy attached to language dynamics that could explain their status and future role, are involved in exploring the possibilities of counteracting English dominance.

Whereas only a few scholars have voiced the fear that English may displace and make robust languages such as German (Dieter et al. 2001) or Portuguese (Faraco 2001) disappear altogether, the inroads of English into specific discourse spheres in national and international fields are being taken more seriously. Although welcomed by many supporters for globalization, the advancement of English in trade, international relations, the media, cinematography, popular music, military, education and science is perceived as a threat by many. Studies and complaints about the increasing hegemony of English in international organizations (Born/Schütte 1995; Labrie 1993), protests by Francophone countries (Calvet 2002), the devastating effects of unequal free trade for national cultural industries like motion pictures in France and Quebec or Latin American popular music controlled increasingly by US companies – all these processes express the inextricable relations between culture, identity, language and power. In science, the shift to English and the new functional reduction of other once powerful languages is monitored in careful studies (Ammon 1991; 1998; Ammon/McConnell 2002). Serious critique warns that scientific monolingualism might not only deepen the existing inequalities in access and diffusion of scientific findings, but also threaten scientific creativity and conceptual diversity itself as a basis for scientific development as such (Durand 2001; Hamel 2003b).

In all these cases, English is not imposed on – or acquired by – vast populations as a language for everyday communication, but as a functionally defined language for specific purposes that increases control of English – and of those who control English – in strategic domains of a globalized world. Opposition is voiced in many cases, not so much against the leading role of English, but against the thread of an imminent passage from a strong hegemony to monopoly, from a plurilingual paradigm of diversity that ad-

mits language conflict to a monolingual paradigm of English only. Let me select two positions – quite different in nature and social representation – from a number of diverse voices that oppose the dominance of English. Both share the view that English is a menace to the languages their spokespersons claim to defend. They differ, however, in their analysis of remedy and strategies for action. The first position is identified with the international NGO *Terralingua*, devoted to the preservation of the world's linguistic diversity (Harmon 1996; Maffi 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; see also Hagège 2000). In line with the warning launched by Hale (1992), Krauss (1992) and others regarding the possible death of ninety per cent of the languages of the world by the end of the XXI century as a result of linguistic globalization, they are champions of an unlimited defence of all languages of the world, arguing that the disappearance of any single language constitutes an irreparable loss of global linguistic treasures. Given the high correlation between countries with biological and linguistic mega diversity, biological and linguistic diversity are seen as interrelated in multiple ways and constitute a unified principle of ecological diversity that needs to be preserved (Maffi 2001). Threatened or endangered minority languages store indigenous knowledge about how to maintain vulnerable biological environments and to produce food in sustainable ways. To help maintain minority languages, the fundamental linguistic rights of all citizens of the world to be educated, and to have access to other public services in their own language need to be defended. To achieve this goal, writing systems and literacy should be developed in every language (Skutnabb-Kangas/Phillipson 1994; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Multilingualism is not only considered to be an ecological necessity, but also an individual and collective asset for professional development. As a counter strategy *Terralingua* suggests intensive survival, preservation, revitalization and literacy programmes for endangered languages.

Quite a different perspective, which might be framed as the "strong national language position", stems from representatives of those international languages that have been most affected by English. The French sociolinguist Louis-Jean Calvet (1999; 2002) sustains that the main contradiction is not between English and threatened minority languages, but between English and all other international languages. He points to the risks involved in strengthening local languages to the detriment of national and supranational languages. Calvet adopts central elements from de Swaan's (1993) galaxy model of the world language system which establishes a hierarchy of four language types and three linguistic functions to which all people ought to be entitled. In Calvet's (1999) version English is the *hyper central* language in this model, followed by a limited number of *super central* languages (e. g. French as the official language of Francophone Africa), others which he calls *central,* such as national languages and regional *linguas francas*; finally, the fourth group is composed of *peripheral* languages (first or vernacular languages). The relationship is gravitational because all the languages of a lower level gravitate around a language on the higher level. The three designated functions (official, vehicular and first), which correspond to linguistic rights, may materialize for individuals in the form of one, two or three languages, according to each case. Calvet (2002) accuses what he calls the "politically correct language discourse" sustained by minority language defenders, of establishing taboos which impede an open discussion as to whether all languages are equal in the real world and whether mother tongue literacy and education is beneficial for all. For Calvet, not everybody should be entitled, nor is it necessarily an advantage for every person, to be educated in their first language, since the introduction of literacy in illiterate cultures often upsets the preexisting ecological balance. The reduction of a vernacular language to writing may accelerate its displacement and shift (see Melià 1995 and Mühlhäusler 1996 on this issue). Calvet's main argument is that the spread of English imperialism can not only co-exist with lesser used languages, but can actually benefit from the process of minority language revitalization, since the strengthening of local languages weakens national and super central languages, which are often an obstacle for the spread of English. In the case of Europe, the emergence of national languages such as Catalan, Basque and Galician in Spain is seen as a contributing factor to the weakening of Spanish. The transformation of the European Union, from its present status as a community of national states into a federation of regional

nationalities, would mean that English in-
evitably became the only language of com-
munication among them, thus destroying
the principle of present-day multilingual
communication in its official bodies. From
the perspective of de Swaan's and Calvet's
gravitational model, then, the gravitation of
vertical bilingualism is so strong that most
speakers opt for a higher ranking language
as a second language and abandon the op-
tion of horizontal bilingualism. Many
speakers of vernacular or central languages
even decide to skip the next step and go
straight to English, the hyper central lan-
guage (Leáñez Aristimuño 2002), as can be
observed among Swiss Germans and French
who increasingly prefer to learn and com-
municate among each other in English in-
stead of learning the other official language
of their country. According to this analysis
shared by many national language defenders
in Europe and elsewhere, language globaliz-
ation today means above all the attempt to
reduce the *super central languages* like
French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and
others to *central languages* in order to stop
them from competing with English in the
strategic arenas of international relations,
trade, science and the technologies of the fu-
ture. Candidates for significant barriers
against a total English monopoly are the
'big' international languages or regional
blocs that can exist without English or
where other strong languages counterbal-
ance its influence (see Hamel 2003a for the
development of this argument). Certainly
one of the most important barriers today is
or could be the European Union. Its tradi-
tional policy of plurilingualism is at risk,
however, given its extension from 15 to 25
member states in 2003 (Phillipson 2002;
Skutnabb-Kangas/Phillipson 2003). An-
other candidate, although representing
much less centrality and power, is Mercosur,
the Common Market of the Southern Cone
established in 1991 among Argentina, Bra-
zil, Paraguay and Uruguay and which is
about to include other countries in the area.
There, the South America leaders and his-
torical rivals, Argentina and Brazil, who at
the same time represent two vital super cen-
tral world languages, Spanish and Portu-
guese, have broken down their traditional
linguistic antagonism and have started a
process of regional integration based on the
these two languages, leaving English outside
(Hamel 2003a).

How do these debates relate to language
empires? No doubt central questions about
the relation between empire and language
spread, agency, resistance and appropri-
ation are at stake. The dispute between di-
vergent strategies to resist the increasing he-
gemony of English reveals different
concepts of plurilingualism and different
priorities to defend. Certainly Skutnabb-
Kangas' (2000) claim that English is the
'killer language' of threatened languages
worldwide seems difficult to sustain outside
Anglophone countries of the inner and
outer circle, where languages at risk face the
dominance of the local national or regional
languages. On the contrary, as Calvet (2002)
would argue along with Crystal (1997), the
pressure of English against national lan-
guages has opened and increased the spaces
for minority languages to survive and grow.
On the other hand, many may disagree with
Calvet's (2002) claim that vernacular lan-
guages should be subordinate to the stra-
tegic interests of strong national – central
and super central – languages and not be ex-
tended to prestige domains like education.
The debates about the strategies to counter
linguistic globalization (or rather US-Ameri-
canization), which in part line up with the
international anti-globalization movement,
seem to indicate that not language spread
per se may be most relevant for either empire
or imperialist agency, but language hie-
rarchization and English superiority estab-
lished both in usage and language ideologies
in strategic areas of national and inter-
national conflict. We will pursue this debate
in the next section.

8. Perspectives on Language Empires

The world language system (de Swaan 1993;
2001) and the future of threatened langua-
ges (Maffi 2001), English as a global lan-
guage (Crystal 1997), geolinguistic dy-
namics (Maurais 2003), the fate of lan-
guages (Mackey 2003), an ecology of the
languages of the world (Calvet 1999), the
linguistic market and the linguistic effects of
'mondialization' (Calvet 2002) are but a few
of the most common concepts and meta-
phors used to describe the recent processes
of language spread and shift, and of the
changing power relations between ethno-lin-
guistic groups and their communicative
practices. The question arises, then, whether
Language Empire or *Imperialism* could be

considered to be useful scientific concepts, and to what extent they contribute to explain the broader sociolinguistic questions about the relationship between the linguistic and the social, the degree of determination or autonomy of linguistic processes, and the explanatory potential that could be derived from them. I will take up these questions in the light of our initial hypotheses and the exploration of various language empires along the text. The Roman Empire created the concept itself, but it was never a monolingual center and did not develop a policy of massive spread of Latin. Its linguistic legacy, however, was perpetuated in a twofold fashion. First, the real language spoken by the colonizers, Vulgar Latin, did spread and lay the groundwork for one of the most consistent and vital language heritage empires known in history, the empire of the Romance languages (Bochmann 1993). Second, the spiritual projection through literature, religion, and the most efficient writing system ever developed in history, revived Latin as the unifying language of the European Middle Ages and made it survive as the language of prestige in religion and science until long after the Middle Ages had given way to modernity. Therefore, the ideological power of the Roman Empire, expressed equally through other fields of knowledge like medicine and law, whose conceptual frameworks maintain their relevance until our present times, did certainly have a tremendous linguistic impact if we overcome a narrow view of language as linguistic structure and extend our exploration to the realm of discourse and ideology. The Spanish Empire may be seen as the one that fits most clearly the narrow definition that any central power will tend to impose its own language. The massive spread of Spanish took place, but in the 18th and 19th century, when Spain was already declining as an empire. It grew more vigorously with the rise of the new national states in Latin America, since the emergent bourgeoisies adopted the Spanish language as one of their central instruments of national unification. Thus, the real language empire expanded based on the policy of a contiguous ensemble of national states, rather than a colonial empire. The strategic weakness of Spanish as a potential world language today is rooted in its colonial past. Given its internal political and economic structure, Spain was unable to invest the immense flow of capital drawn from

its colonies in its homeland. Instead it transferred this wealth to the more developed regions of Europe in the Netherlands, France, England and Germany in exchange for manufactured commodities and consumer goods. Different from the British and the French, the Spanish and the Portuguese empires never achieved economic development and industrialization that could have taken place given the enormous concentration of capital from their colonies. Today, the fact that none of the Spanish speaking countries managed to enter the first circle of industrialized countries constitutes the main weakness of Spanish as an international language. This becomes evident in its frail position in industry, science and technology, where it ranks far behind French, German and Japanese. At the end of the 20th century, only 0.5% of the articles in natural sciences and 3.5% in the social sciences and humanities in international scientific journals were published in Spanish (Hamel 2003b). Here we find some strategic components to define the nature of an imperial language of our times. The development of the Anglo-Saxon empire exhibits a policy of massive language spread in its first and second phases – in the British Isles and the rest of the Inner Circle – but not in phase three. When the British colonial empire reached its peak between the 18th and the 20th century, language spread policy operated in a rather selective way in education, or was simply inefficient. Both English language spread policy propelled by the leading Anglo-Saxon countries and macro-acquisition in Africa and Asia contributed to making English the leading hegemonic language. In phase four, with the USA taking over from Britain, language spread really operated in its expanding circle, which does not cover massive spread of English as a general language, but as a language for specific purposes in strategic and clearly hierarchically structured areas of language use, discourse and ideology. Again we learn that language imperialism is not about mechanical language spread. The decisive process implies power relations that establish language hierarchies and qualitative spread of a dominant language, combined with the construction of specific hegemonic discourses such as *Orientalism* that contribute to describe, shape, restructure and have authority over the colonies or dominated countries. Macaulay's Doctrine in 19th century India is ex-

tensively quoted in the literature not so much because of *what* it proposed, but because of *how* it was worded, i. e. its explicit ideological formulations. As a matter of fact, the Doctrine turned out to be much more efficient as a piece of colonialist language policy with ethnizist implications which denied the native languages any capacity of expressing science and literature, than because of the admittedly limited result on turning education over to English. The effectiveness of such a colonialist and imperialist policy can be measured precisely by the reaction of the local elites who pushed for English education which is too easily interpreted as agency fostering the appropriation of English as a tool of resistance (Brutt-Griffler 2002), as if all this had happened outside the imperialist field of gravitation. For English language imperialism to function in India it was not so relevant that only four or five per cent of its population spoke English as a second language, certainly a lower percentage than in Scandinavia, Germany or Argentina, but rather, that the interplay of agency from the colonial and later imperialist powers and that of the Indian elite perpetuated an imperialist hierarchization of all languages spoken in the country which made English the only indispensable language after the Hindi language policy experiment had failed (see Khubchandani 1997 and Pattanayak 1991 for a debate). Furthermore, it carved the Indian elite (as well as others in Africa) as an English-only intelligentsia who had to operate monolingually in the international arena – certainly with a number of exceptions. As a matter of fact, it made these elites and many others prisoners of English dependent on its culture, ideology, and knowledge as the only known and accessible reference within the Western world and cut them off from learning other international languages like French, German or Spanish, and from having access to their cultures, ideologies, literatures, political science and technologies as alternative orientations during most of the 19th and 20th century. The same, of course, happened and is still happening with the French Empire and today's Francophonie (Chaudenson 1991): their neo-colonial elites have been trained to become French-only professionals or intellectuals, and the increasing rebellion in the Francophonie against such a monolingual and monocultural policy which reproduces dependency

from the one imperial center only confirms its existence.

Agency seems to occupy a central space in the debates about geolinguistic dynamics and linguistic imperialism. Most analysts converge in recognizing two types of agency, i. e. forces that induce the functional diffusion of the language: 1. language spread policies propelled by empires to impose their language on other populations, sustained by ideological constructs that establish the superiority of their own model based on religion, political regime, the language and culture, the writing system, science and technology among other components; and 2. the dynamics, initiatives or demands expressed and developed by groups and peoples in the subordinate territories who wish to gain access to citizenship, power, elite status, professional advancement or other commodities through the acquisition of the imperial language. Some authors observe an evolution from imperialist action in the past to the agency of appropriation in our times to underpin the supposedly *post*-imperial character of English language spread today (Fishmann/Conrad/Rubal-Lopez 1996). According to most authors, then, imperialism covers the first case of agency but not the second. In sum, it seems that no ideal language empire ever existed that would fit a narrow definition as a polity with a monolingual center and a homogenous, systematic and permanent language spread policy. Should we therefore dismiss the hypothesis of language empires and imperialism as an explanatory concept altogether? Certainly not. Rather, many other language dynamics beyond spread (macro-acquisition, functional and political dominance) also function as mechanisms of imperial control over subaltern populations or countries. Our previous analysis indicates that language empires and imperialism exist but function in much more sophisticated ways than through mechanical language spread. Brutt-Griffler's (2002) extensive critique of Phillipson's language imperialism thesis claims that, to be acknowledged as imperialism, the British colonial policy would have had to be based on a homogeneous model of sustained language spread, applied everywhere in the empire in the same manner. In my view, this critique misses the central point of what language imperialism is about. It was exactly the policy of restricted access to English through vernacular language teaching at the

bottom and elite English education at the top which constituted part and parcel of a colonialist and imperialist language policy. Thus, both the French imperial policy of radically imposing their language until today and the British policy of hierarchically defined native language education constitute different ways of reproducing dominant power relations via language policy. That is precisely what is meant by Phillipson's definition of linguistic imperialism as the imposition of power relations mediated by language dichotomies that create a hierarchization of languages (1997, 238). Tentatively, we could sketch this process as *qualitative* language spread which establishes a hierarchy of discourse functions and ideologies with the imperial language at the top.

From Gramsci's concept of hegemony to the neo-Gramscian Italian debate on subalternity or Hard and Neri's Empire, modern theories of empire and imperialism extend their analysis of the active forces sustaining and perpetuating unequal international power relations far beyond overt institutional policies or visible agency. Or, to evoke a convergent perspective that goes even further, Bourdieu (1980) upheld the argument that we have to acknowledge the existence of "strategies without strategic calculus" in the observable social action in order to explain causal relationships without having to resort to theories of conspiracy and big brother's permanent control. A second argument is that the dominated classes participate actively in the reproduction of domination (Bourdieu 1979; 1980). Therefore, it makes much sense to understand empire and imperialism as part and parcel, as source and outcome of both active imperial language policy *and* equally active macro or not so macro acquisition deployed by local elites to gain access to some valued commodity. Already in the 19th century Marx had identified very clearly the role of the "Kompradoren-Bourgeoisie" in the colonies and dependent countries, the local bourgeois elites that were bought off by colonial power and facilitated the development of colonialism and imperialism. With neoliberal globalization, these elites play an even more active role in dissolving sovereignty and their nation states than ever before. Certainly, the role of local elites using the colonial languages in the process of decolonization and liberation could and should not be denied, from Mahatma Ghandi and Franz Fanon to more recent processes. In the same vein, indigenous movements in most Latin American countries have to use Spanish (or Portuguese in Brazil) for their inter-ethnic and external relations because, similar to most former colonies in Africa and India, they do not share any indigenous language as commonly accepted lingua franca. How could we acknowledge these processes and distinguish among divergent types of agency? Bonfil's (1988) well-known anthropological theory of cultural control might help to clarify these processes. In his detailed analysis of Spanish colonization in Latin America Bonfil identifies key components of political, cultural and religious organization that were imposed on the indigenous peoples right at the beginning of colonization during the 16th century. These peoples incorporated them into their culture to a degree that today they constitute core values of internal and external identification as ethnic communities, whereas other non-indigenous peasant communities have abandoned these cultural practices already. Bonfil criticizes purist and historicist positions within the anthropological debate that are not prepared to recognize components of indigenous culture as authentically indigenous if they were 'imported' from outside. He argues that the relevant question is not origin, but control, incorporation and identification, given the fact that in modern social theory a culture is understood as a changing relationship rather than a static and essentialist collection of fixed features. Thus, indigenous peoples in the Americas, from the Apaches in the north to the Mapuches in the south, appropriated the European horse and incorporated it into their culture to the extent that the new component acquired central relevance in their lives and triggered fundamental changes in their economic, military and cultural organization. Conversely, the New World potato found its way into several European nations and gained such a fundamental role in their nutritional culture that they – e. g. the Germans, Dutch or Irish – depended almost entirely on it for their survival in past centuries, and are identified as 'Kartoffelfresser' (potato eaters) by their neighbors to date. Cultural components fall into one out of four categories: of internal origin and internal control (their own language, hopefully, and its knowledge base; certain rituals of their own

religion); of internal origin and external control (folklorized and commoditized indigenous artefacts produced and sold as souvenirs, and practices like dances performed for tourists); of external origin but internally controlled (the horse; in rare cases, the writing systems of their own languages; in principle, the appropriated dominant language); of external origin and externally controlled (most school systems for indigenous populations). Again, the central category to define the role of a cultural component for ethnic identity and power is control, not origin. Certainly, the most important aspect in the case of languages is, too, control, not origin. As we have seen along our explorations, a strong choir of voices, sounding mainly from the centers of English imperial power, sustains that English has given up its role as an imperialist tool and is now more and more controlled by those who have appropriated and adopted the language from its original owners, or is no longer controlled by anyone. Many Englishes have sprung up like mushrooms that belong to no one and therefore to everyone. More and more people, groups, companies and states become involved in the globalized world economy and 'choose' to do business in English. And no doubt the intervention of non-native speakers in the shaping and development of the corpus and structure of a shared language, e. g. in politics, science or business, has never been as far-reaching as with English today since the common use of Latin. But then Latin was a dead language – nobody's mother tongue. The debate between those who foster diversity of many Englishes and those who insist on the need for common norms – a debate that Pennycook (1994; 1998) considers limited to almost technical details – might be re-analyzed in the light of a struggle about control of the language. The main Anglo-Saxon actors in this debate share the view that English should continue to rule the waves – electronic and others –, and only few from the inner circle defend a plurilingual model and the necessity to prevent world wide monolingualism in international communication (e. g. Phillipson 2002; cf. articles 226 and 231). English continues to be one common language despite a range of variation which meets its functional limits when communication is at risk. Had English reached the stage of Arabic diversification it would no longer be useful for its prime international

functions. The same certainly applies to other international languages such as French or Spanish, and polycentric normalization raises no obstacle for the empire or imperialism to function. English in its written form continues to maintain its norms, and all oral language use for international communication remains subject to centripetal dynamics of norm-keeping to build up the World Standard Spoken English that Crystal (1997) envisages. Therefore, processes related to the establishment, preservation and control over norms should be analyzed from the perspective of the agency that maintains control. At least two kinds of interlocking mechanisms can be identified as the guardians of normative control: the language teaching industries including research and teacher training; and international organizations, institutions, scientific bodies, business corporations of all kinds, broadcasting and cultural industries where Anglo-Saxon countries and their representatives play a leading role. Therefore, we can identify a number of overt and covert actors and the power of combined agency behind the dynamics of vertical bilingualism: the gravitational forces working in favor of English as the hyper central language; the attraction of US economy, technology, and the American way of life as an overall hegemony which constantly reproduces Western superiority as cultural imperialism (Said 1993).

Here we find some key components of strategic relevance to define the nature of an imperial language. It is neither the number of speakers, nor the number of countries, nor the density of its population that makes the difference. Rather, we have to consider economic power, military strength, the ranking in scientific and technological development, the role in international organizations and the cultural industries of those countries and international corporations that back a given language and are determined to operate through it in order to establish the real power and ranking of a language as international, worldly (Pennycook 1994), global (Crystal 1997) or imperialist (Phillipson 1992). Certainly agency is relevant, but we will have to extend our view of agency in two interlocked ways: first, we have to include all activities propelled by a given habitus, in Bourdieu's sense, not only planned and conscious action. And second, we need to consider the agency of all those who from subaltern positions and a second language

status help to strengthen the dominant role of a language which in turn contributes to maintain and increase imperial and imperialist power relations. For Hardt and Neri's (2000, 347) conception of empire, communication and languages play a central role for imperial control, while at the same time "languages become functional to circulation and dissolve every sovereign relationship." However, as we have seen along the lines of our debate on modern power relations mediated by languages, the forces that maintain control over English are clearly rooted in specific territories of a small number of sovereign states some of which could be identified as imperialist states, provided we refine our definitions of imperialism. There is enough evidence that the main difference between an imperialist language and other languages or dialects still is that the first is backed by a powerful army, controlled by a specific nation state, whereas the others are not.

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228. Spracherhaltung, Sprachverfall, Sprachtod
Language Maintenance, Language Decline and Language Death

1. Einleitung

1.1. Die wissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit dem Phänomen des 'Sprachtods', die systematisch erst seit den 70er Jahren stattfindet, hat gerade mit der Jahrtausendwende wieder größeres Interesse geweckt, und da geschätzt wird, dass in den letzten 500 Jahren die Hälfte der existierenden Sprachen ausgestorben ist (Brenzinger 1997, 273), wird im eben begonnenen Jahrhundert mit einem weiteren drastischen Rückgang der Sprachen der Welt gerechnet: Krauss (1992) spricht von 20–50% der Sprachen, die ernsthaft bedroht sind und in den nächsten hundert Jahren verschwinden werden, und davon, dass letztlich nur 10% der heutigen Sprachen 'überleben' werden (vgl. auch Sasse 1992a, 7; Grenoble/Whaley 1998a, viii). Obwohl eine konsistente Theorie des Sprachtods nach wie vor fehlt, gab es in den letzten 15 Jahren eine Reihe von Sammelpublikationen, die den Stand der Forschung dokumentierten (Dorian 1989; Brenzinger 1992; Fase/Jaspaert/Kroon 1992; Grenoble/ Whaley 1998a) sowie Versuche einer Theoriebildung (Sasse 1992a) bzw. systematischen Erfassung der die Sprachverdrängungsprozesse beeinflussenden Faktoren (Edwards 1992; Grenoble/Whaley 1998b). Dabei gerieten im letzten Jahrzehnt zunehmend auch Fragen der sprachlichen Menschenrechte in den Vordergrund (Skutnabb-Kangas/Phillipson 1995; Skutnabb-Kangas 1997; IJSL 127; Hornberger 1997) und die Frage, wie Sprachwechselprozessen entgegengewirkt werden kann und welche Rolle bzw. Verantwortung Linguisten in derartigen Prozessen haben (Grenoble/Whaley 1998a; Fishman 1993; Hale 1998; Crystal 2000; Hagège 2000).

1.2. Von *Spracherhaltung* oder *Sprachbewahrung* (engl. *language maintenance*) spricht man sinnvollerweise nur dann, wenn der Fortbestand einer Sprache durch eine andere Sprache bzw. genauer durch Sprecher einer oder mehrerer anderer Sprachen bedroht ist. Selten erfolgt der Untergang einer