VENI VIDI VICI: LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM:RESHAPING THE WORLD'S NEW IDENTITY

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Abstract:
English has emerged as an imperialist language after the dominance of world imperialism. English as the language of technology and modernization lays its shadows on economics and politics, which affect the social, as well as the cultural identity of the world. It is nowadays significantly related to social and economic rise of people. Apparently, this rise is shown in the constant change of the norms of behavior, values, attitudes and beliefs, particularly among the young generations, as a result of their intensive exposure to English. Certainly, the significant impact of the global dominance of English manifests in constructing social inequalities between those who speak and use English and those who do not. This study includes what is called the hidden agenda aimed by the super powers to reshape the global system through eliminating other cultures and identities and forming new ones. World efforts and procedures are required from scholars, governments and formal institutions to encounter such a phenomenon.

Keywords: Linguistic Imperialism, Identity, Global, Dominance, Colonialism.

Introduction
To speak a language is to take on a culture. Linguistic imperialism, or language imperialism, is defined as the transfer of a dominant language to other people. The transfer is essentially a demonstration of power, traditionally, military power but also, in the modern world, economic power and aspects of the dominant culture are usually transferred along with the language. The gap seen in existing research is that Linguistic Imperialism causes deterioration of local cultures through the medium of language. Post-Colonialism in tandem with Linguistic Imperialism causes world domination of one language (here, English.) The aim of this research is to establish how Linguistic Imperialism contributes in propagation of a certain culture. By the use of qualitative analysis including, reading of records and observation of popular culture such as television shows, movies, business pedestals, education institutions and the trajectory of English in post-independence India itself, a post-colonial framework of study has been applied.

Since the early 1990s, linguistic imperialism has attracted attention among scholars of applied linguistics. In particular, Robert Phillipson’s 1992 book, Linguistic Imperialism, has led to considerable debate about its merits and shortcomings. Phillipson found denunciations of linguistic imperialism that dated back to Nazi critiques of the British Council, and to Soviet analyses of English as the language of world capitalism and world domination. Phillipson defines English linguistic imperialism as “The dominance asserted and retained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (1956: 89).

Phillipson’s theory supports the historic spread of English as an international language and that language’s continued dominance, particularly in postcolonial settings such as India, Pakistan, Uganda, Zimbabwe, but also increasingly in “neo-colonial” settings such as continental Europe. His theory draws mainly on Johan Galtung’s imperialism theory, Antonio Gramsci’s social theory, and in particular on his notion of cultural hegemony.
Multilingualism and Language Hegemony

Multilingualism is the use of two or more languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers. Multilingualism is becoming a social phenomenon governed by the needs of globalization and cultural openness. Owing to the ease of access to information facilitated by the Internet, individuals' exposure to multiple languages is becoming increasingly frequent, thereby promoting a need to acquire additional languages. People who speak several languages are also called polyglots.

Multilingual speakers have acquired and maintained at least one language during childhood, the so-called first language (L1). The first language (sometimes also referred to as the mother tongue) is acquired without formal education. Children acquiring two languages in this way are called simultaneous bilinguals. Even in the case of simultaneous bilinguals, one language usually dominates the other. People who know more than one language have been reported to be more adept at language learning compared to monolinguals. Additionally, bilinguals often have important economic advantages over monolingual individuals as bilingual people are able to carry out duties that monolinguals cannot, such as interacting with customers who only speak a minority language. Bilingualism is a feature that has been found in post-colonial countries such as India and Africa. Keeping this in mind, it is important to understand the cultural and specifically the linguistic and discursive practices that came to be associated with European colonial rule. These practices played an instrumental role in assigning low prestige to non-European languages and cultures, including cultural and linguistic forms that emerged due to Europe's colonial expansion, and in establishing the superiority of the coloniser's language and culture. Although many of the formally colonised populations have today gained what is usually called political independence, the cultural and linguistic decolonisation of both European and non-European cultures is hardly complete. The choice of language and the use to which it is put are central to a people’s definition of itself in relation to its natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe. Hence language has always been at the heart of the two contending social forces—imperialism and the struggle for liberation from imperialism.

Another important term that arises in relation to Imperialism is Hegemony. Hegemony is derived from the Ancient Greek word *leadership*, a term used by Vladimir Lenin and later theorized by Antonio Gramsci (1971) which defines a geopolitical method of indirect imperial dominance. Cultural hegemony characterizes the domination of a diverse society by the ruling class, through manipulations of the belief systems, perceptions and social representation, values and common practices, such that worldviews beneficial to the ruling class are disseminated and accepted as the norm and the dominant value that legitimates the social, political, and economic status quo. In the 19th century, hegemony came to denote the Social or cultural predominance or ascendancy by one group within a society or milieu. Also, it could be used for the geopolitical and the cultural predominance of one country over others: from which was derived *hegemonism*, as in the idea that the Great Powers meant to establish European hegemony over Asia and Africa. In cultural imperialism, the leader state dictates the internal politics and the societal character of the subordinate states, that constitute the hegemonic sphere of influence, either by an internal, sponsored government or by an external, installed government.

Arguments for English

A central theme of Phillipson's theory is the complex hegemonic processes which he asserts continue to sustain the pre-eminence of English in the world today. His book analyzes the British Council's use of rhetoric to promote English, and discusses key tenets of English applied linguistics and English-language-teaching methodology, these tenets hold that:

- English is best taught *monolingually* (the monolingual fallacy)
- The ideal teacher is a *nativespeaker* (the native-speaker fallacy)
- The earlier English is taught, the better the results (the early-start fallacy)
- The more English is taught, the better the results (the maximum-exposure fallacy)

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• Other languages are used much more, standards of English will drop (the subtractive fallacy).
• According to Phillipson, those who promote English organizations such as the British Council, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and individuals such as operators of English-language schools use three types of argument:
  • Intrinsic arguments describe the English language as providential, rich, noble and interesting. Such arguments tend to assert what English is and what other languages are not.
  • Extrinsic arguments point out that English is well-established: that it has many speakers, and that there are trained teachers and a wealth of teaching material.
  • Functional arguments emphasize the usefulness of English as a gateway to the world.
Other arguments for English share:
• It’s economic utility: it enables people to operate technology.
• It’s ideological function: it stands for modernity.
• It’s status as symbol for material advance and efficiency.

Case studies and historical examples
In 1976, Black school children in Soweto protested at being taught in Afrikaans, which had been pushed by the Apartheid authorities concerned at the growing refusal of the Black population to speak it. They reasoned that by only having access to Afrikaner resources the South African government could control them more closely than by having access to a global language i.e. English. 176 children died for the right to be taught in English. The Uprising became a turning point in the overthrow of Apartheid years later.

At various times, especially in colonial settings or where a dominant culture has sought to unify a region under its control, a similar phenomenon has arisen. In the Roman Empire, Latin, originally the language of a limited region in central Italy, was imposed first on the rest of Italy and later on large parts of Europe, largely displacing previous languages spoken there, while in Roman Africa Latin was merely dominant until it and the native languages were displaced by Arabization.

Trajectory of the English Language
The English language during the Middle Ages was an object of linguistic imperialism by the French language, particularly following the Norman conquest. For hundreds of years, French or Anglo-Norman was the language of administration and therefore a language of superior status in England. Latin remained the language of the church and of learning. Although many words introduced by the Normans are today indistinguishable by most English-speakers from native Germanic words, later-learned loanwords derived from Latin or French often have a more cultured sound to a native English-speaker. Following the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire over much of present-day Germany and Central Europe, the German language and its dialects became the preferred language of many Central-European nobility. With varying success, German spread across much of Central and Eastern Europe as a language of trade and status. This ended with World War II, when English supplant German.

Post-Colonial effects
In India itself various examples of Linguistic Imperialism abound. American and British television shows propagate a certain way of speaking and in doing so, they also propagate a certain “American” culture. The majority of today’s youths converse in English as they have attended English schools and institutions and largely follow the Western culture. Sitcoms like Friends and Bigbangtheory and multiple other shows showcase a purely “white” culture where there are also subtle stereotypical allusions to third world countries encompassing racist jibes. These shows are hugely popular in India and have a wide audience all over the country. Subconsciously, English culture seeps in and changes the way Indian youngsters view English as compared to how they view their own local languages. The media industry in India has also progressed by leaps and bounds especially in the last fifty years or so. Hollywood is hugely popular in India and the Oscars, Emmys and Grammys harbor a wide audience in the country. Blockbuster films as well as Art movies garner a wide appeal in the Indian context especially to the upper middle
classes. The Bollywood Industry itself always tries to emulate Hollywood whether in movies or lifestyles.

**The conspiracy of Linguistic Imperialism**

Another important fact that arises is that the study of linguistic imperialism can also help to clarify whether the winning of political independence led to a linguistic liberation of Third World countries, and if not, why not. Are the former colonial languages a useful bond with the international community and necessary for state formation and national unity internally? Or are they a bridgehead for Western interests, permitting the continuation of a global system of marginalization and exploitation? What is the relationship between linguistic dependence and economic dependence? These are some pertinent questions which arise from this study.

The rejection of the linguistic legitimacy of a language, any language used by any linguistic community in short, amounts to little more than an example of the tyranny of the majority. Such a rejection reinforces the long tradition and history of linguistic imperialism in our society. The harm, though, is done not only to those whose languages we reject, but in fact to all of us, as we are made poorer by an unnecessary narrowing of our cultural and linguistic universe.

There is by now a well-entrenched and very respectable branch of sociolinguistics which is concerned with describing the world of globalization from the perspective of linguistic imperialism and 'linguicide' often based on particular ecological metaphors. These approaches assume that wherever a 'big' and 'powerful' language such as English 'appears' in a foreign territory, small indigenous languages will die. There is, in this image of sociolinguistic space, place for just one language at a time.

**World effort and Language Planning**

Many scholars, such as Brosnahan (1963) have dealt with the spread of certain languages over others. The power and military control was the main reason considered for the spread of these certain languages. Brosnahan maintains that the tree languages - Arabic, Greek and Latin - which survived their empires shared four characteristics. These characteristics are:

1. The spread by military conquest
2. They became languages of administration
3. Their rule lasted for centuries
4. They served as a lingua franca in multilingual areas.

Phillipson (1992: 46) maintains that we live in a world characterized by inequality - of gender, nationality, race, class, income and language. He goes further in explaining the inequality of language and suggests a working definition of English Linguistic Imperialism (ELI). ELI, in his view, is the dominance of English which is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages. Structural inequality refers broadly to material properties (for example, institutions, financial allocations) and cultural inequality refers to immaterial or ideological properties (for example, attitudes). The legitimation of English linguistic imperialism makes use of two main mechanisms in relation to educational language planning, one in respect of language and culture, i.e., "anglocentricity" the other in respect of pedagogy i.e. professionalism (Ibid: 47).

The term "anglocentricity" has been coined with ethnocentrism, which refers to the practice of judging other cultures by the standards of one's own. Anglocentricity takes the forms and functions of English, and the promise of English represents or can lead to, as the norm by which all language activity or use should be measured. It simultaneously devalues other languages, either explicitly or implicitly. Anglocentricity and professionalism legitimate English as the dominant language by rationalizing activities and beliefs which contribute to the structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages.

Whether it is called linguicism, cultural imperialism, or linguistic imperialism, the concept is the same. The fact that there are some dominant languages over others cannot be neglected or denied and, of course, there are certain factors and decisions that work together to keep this dominance of these
languages. The more a language is dominant, the more it gives an upper hand to its nation and people for it represent the source of political, cultural, financial and educational power. What is important to know is that the simplicity in structure and vocabulary and the English language is a good example of this.

**Impact of Language Shift**

Socio-psychologically speaking, languages have always been inseparably yoked with their respective nations’ very basic identity, cultural heritage and social pride. Being the pivotal point of their speakers’ social and communal unity and national individuality, they have played a very significant role for the promotion and infusion of patriotism amongst the successive generations of their speakers and societies. So a language’s rise and fall is directly linked with its speaker community’s socio-cultural recognition. An example obtained from records in that, in Pakistan, the elite class not only sends its children to Westernized English medium educational institutions, but also makes sure that the children speak English at home. If one demonstrates fluency in English, without any thought of correct usage of grammar and even is poor at general knowledge, he or she is considered to be an educated person while a learned person, in any field, on the other hand, is hardly considered to be worthy of anything unless he trumpets his command over English.

The guardians of English language’s international status vehemently assert that it is the intrinsic qualities of accommodation, amalgamation and coexistence, in English, that have made it popular and people are themselves keen to learn and use it, along with their own languages. If English has influenced other languages, it has also got influenced by them. For instance, we can take the case of South Asian countries’ altered English versions: ‘Singlish’ in Sri Lanka, ‘Pinglish’ in Pakistan and ‘Hinglish’ in India.

Dr. Juliane House, in her research journal, clearly differentiates between “languages for communication” and “languages for identification” and does not see any threat posed by ELF to other national and regional languages. (2004). Her point is valid for when a Sri Lankan talks to a Pakistani or a Bangladeshi talks to an Iranian. All of the speakers use English as a neutral global language, solely for communication purposes. However, the socio-cultural prejudice and superiority of the language may arise when an English person is conversing with a non-native speaker.

**The formation of Social Inequality**

Although the contemporary sway of English language over others is beyond any cavil, based upon the fact that it is also the language of the Americans, the most developed and influential nation on the global map in the fields of education, economics, defense technology and world trade, the fact remains that the seeds of English language’s flourishing crop were sown by the British’s unjustifiable colonialism and forced occupation over weaker nations. Moreover, if people living in the developing countries have started believing that their educational, economic and social growth and future prospects totally depend upon developing English language proficiency, they are psychological slaves and under threat. In relation to the issue, third world countries are, definitely, exposed to the risk of a socio-cultural decline because in the audio-visual labs and libraries of the educational institutions as well as language learning centres, the students are shown English movies, cartoons and TV serials and provided English storybooks, to develop their listening and reading skills and for building their vocabulary. One can deny the fact that a nation’s literature, folk tales and entertainment media are the most vibrant sources of promoting its cultural norms, moral values and social ethics, and the positive and constructive process of learning a global language. Broadening the horizon of communication and information can easily drift students away from socio-cultural values. Native citizens are the architects of their socio-cultural future. Linguistic imperialism also accounts for linguistic hierarchicalisation, to address issues of why some languages come to be used more and others less, what structures and ideologies come to be used more and others less, what structures and ideologies facilitate such processes, and the role of language professionals.

**Why English and not any other language**

David Crystal raises a very important question: Why does English spread and take such an
incomparable stature over other languages? (1978). English dominates over Hindi, the national language of India and also over any regional language such as Marathi or Bengali. In 1950, any notion of English as a true world language was but a dim, shadowy, theoretical possibility. Fifty years on, and world English exists as a political and cultural reality. How could such a dramatic linguistic shift have taken place, in less than a lifetime? And why has English, and not some other language, achieved such a status? (Crystal, 1984: 12). Phillipson answers Crystal’s questions and stands for the view that the dominance of English as a world language is attributed, in the first place, to the effect of the British empire and the role the English language plays in the teaching profession. The British empire has given way to the English Empire.

Crystal and Phillipson pinpoint the concept of power, however the handling of the notion of power is different. As for Crystal, he assumes that various types of influences, or power—political, military, economic, cultural, among others—best explain why English has become dominant throughout the world. Phillipson, on the other hand, locates power within a larger more expansive concept, that of imperialism. Power, says Phillipson, is the power which is expressed in the English language. Considerable (2) which shows the dominance of English worldwide:

According to a press release from the British Council, it has been indicated that the English language almost prevails all over the world to become a global language of the twenty-first century in most of the official and crucial fields of modern life. This fact is asserted in the following shocking statistic: Worldwide, there are over 1,400 million people living in countries where English has first language status. One out of five of the world’s population speaks English to some level of competence. Demand from the other four-fifths is increasing. By the year 2000, it was estimated that one over billion people would be learning English. The numbers have greatly increased now. English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air, traffic control, international business, academic conference, science and technology, diplomacy, sport, etc. (British Council, English 2000 press release, 23 March) (Graddol, 2002: 181)

As English is dominant in most international corporations, as well as in bodies such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, English is usually accepted as a global language of communication. English has therefore become the language of diplomacy and is thus the “established lingua franca of the political sphere, because it is the language of the most powerful players and of the dominating ideology”. (Wright, 2004: 150). Because communication with all participants in a globalized world is indispensable and English has become a fact and an uncompetitive medium, we can definitely
assert that communicative imperialism is bolstered every day through linguistic imperialism. The following chart shows the expansion of English speakers worldwide. Table (3). Kachru’s Three Circles of English Speakers. (Crystal (1997) in Zughoul, 2003)

Certainly, the danger is not included only in such a rapid flow of English everywhere, but the real danger lies in the dominance of the English mentality which is imported into every part of the world through the spread of technological and electronic devices, and through the film industry which entails the western culture with all its aspects. Therefore, it becomes apparent that cultural imperialism is a settled and inevitable fact. (Scollen, 2004). In another respect, Eco, a well-known Italian novelist and cultural theorist, adds other reasons for the spread and dominance of English over other languages. He asserts that the rapid and unavoidable spread of English Language over other languages worldwide is attributed, not only to the colonial expansion of the British empire, but also to the nature and structure of English which makes it capable of absorbing foreign languages and forming neologism. The fact that English has succeeded because it is rich in monosyllables, capable of absorbing foreign words and flexible in forming neologism (Eco, 1995).

The basic questions that I came up with are:

- How did English prevail externally and internally to become the major world language?
- Will English continue to occupy its stature?
- How did English develop from being one of the few powerful international colonial languages, to the position of the hegemonic world language?

The concept of linguistic imperialism and the dominance of English as a conspiracy intended by imperial powers to achieve secret political and economic agendas is broadly discussed in Spolsky’s book Language Policy (2004) and in Phillipson’s Linguistic Imperialism (1992). It is assumed that the policies intended by political and economic powers may draw the attention away from hidden policies and goals and from the reality of how dominance and inequality are intended and legitimated. The promotion of English in broader political and economic activities is well accounted. Language policy and management require more insightful and thorough efforts, drawing on a wider knowledge to justify whether linguistic imperialism is a conspiracy or rather a conspiracy of silence as assumed by Phillipson (1992).

**Applying a Postcolonial Framework**

Postcolonialism represents several historical, political, economic, racial, literary and linguistic
perspectives outside and against the Western systems of knowledge that intersect one another. Broadly speaking, it is a critique of imperialism and colonialism and deals with complex issues such as suppression, race, cultural identity and ways of resisting Imperial power. It also examines the issues that have emerged after the end of political colonialism. Postcolonial critics argue that colonialism was the source of suffering and exploitation and it did not end with the exit of the colonizers. It continues to affect culture and literature insidiously and subtly even today and therefore should be resisted. “Mimicry” is a double-edged concept of colonialism wherein the colonized imitates the colonizer’s attitudes, undermining his own culture but also the colonizer’s authority over him.

Linguistic Imperialism serves as the very tool of postcolonialism. By applying such a framework to this study, it is apparent that English was and has always been the colonizer’s language, the white man’s supremacy over another race. It was passed on to the various colonies of England over the years and has thus established itself to be linguistically imperialistic in nature. The role played by linguistic imperialism is also within a wider imperial, or exploitative structure. The vulnerability or demise of powerless languages was considered a natural progress, the alternative to which is implementation of some conscious policy on the part of governments, civil servants, English-teaching professionals and their elite collaborators and successors in the peripheral countries. Drawing on work by Fishman and De Swaan, it was concluded that the global dominance of English is due to the changing nature of the World English being widespread, and because the remaining superpower used it unconsciously. Humanitarian interests do not figure at all in the rationale behind British foreign policy. In 1948, the State Department’s senior imperial planner, George Kennan, wrote: “We have 50 per cent of the world’s wealth, but only 6.3 per cent of its population. In this situation, our real job in the forthcoming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which allow us to maintain this position of disparity. To do so, we have to dispense with all sentimentality. We should cease thinking about human rights, the raising of living standards and democratization.” (Pilger, 1998: 59).

India and Post-Colonialism

British colonization had a great impact on Indian culture and changed the way Indians behaved and saw the world. Concerning education, the British tried to impose Western ideas, that of democracy and Christianity. They established schools and universities that were English-spoken. The British education was characterized by the ideas of Western superiority and modernity but it was aimed not to educate but to train Indians to obey. Indians were forced to learn English as without proficiency in this language they were unable to work for their colonizers and lose the possibility to earn. “Modern education” imposed by the British was harmful and caused Indians feel degraded and even belonging to the oldest civilization did not encourage them to struggle for their independence. India is now defined as a postcolonial society that was once ruled by the British colonizers. Repression and exploitation were the tools of changing the essence of the ancient nation according to the English pattern.

Contradictions and mutual influence of two countries are the major problems of the post-colonial era. It can be partly explained by the fact that decolonization is characterized by certain destructions from the one side and trying to return the lost power from the other one. It results in natives realizing their independence and colonial powers accepting the failure to control the other country. Undoubtedly, even today India and Great Britain deal with their mutual colonial past.

English as stated by Timothy J. Serase “is not only important in getting a better job, it is everywhere in social interaction. If you can’t speak it then you are nobody” (2003: 87). This view makes it clear that English occupies a place of prestige in our country. People belonging not only to different language groups but also to the same speech community make use of English in their inter-personal communication. It is quite interesting to note that India, a multilingual nation, is the third largest English-speaking country after the US and UK. In India, it is increasingly being perceived as a 'must-know' language. It has now become a ladder for upward social mobility and 'a window to the world'. Such is the
demand for learning this language that a variety of English coaching centres and private-tuition shops, English-medium schools which are mushrooming in a large numbers and are easy to spot almost everywhere in our country, even after independence, clearly indicate the respectable position this language enjoys in the minds of the democratic Indians. In India, English is seen not only to be the key to economic prosperity, but for the social value as well. Parents, especially, those belonging to the upper and middle classes, expect their children to get the best type of education and they think that it is possible only through English medium. On the other hand, people from the lower classes emulate the model-setting behavior of the upper and middle classes. Timothy J. Serase explains the growth of English in India in the following words: “Since the days of the British Raj, English remained the language of domination, status and privilege in India. The hegemonic colonial project in India was to create and maintain a class of administrative officers, clerks and compliant civil servants to carry out the task of ruling the vast and expansive subcontinent” (2003:92) By spreading English in India, the Britishers aimed at creating a class of persons, Indian in blood and color but English in taste, in opinions, morals and intellect. Referring to the baneful effects of English education Gandhi himself had spoken: “...English today is studied because of its commercial and so-called political values. Our boys and girls think that without English they cannot get government services. Girls are taught English as a passport to marriage...I know husbands who are sorry that their wives cannot talk to them and their friends in English. I know families in which English is being made the mother-tongue. All these are for me signs of our slavery and degradation.” (1910:102) These statements cited above make it clear that Gandhi was against English education. He gave a call to castigate everything that was English-language, manners, clothes all. Therefore, English education suffered a serious setback. In today's scenario, the wide publication of newspapers, periodicals, and magazines in English clearly indicates its increasing use in India. According to Peri Bhaskarao the total number of newspaper copies for all languages circulated in 1997 stood at 105,709,191. Of these, a Hindi newspaper had the highest circulation of 1,292,277 copies followed by an English newspaper with a circulation of 1,243,603 copies. In the same year, a total of 41,705 newspapers were published in various languages. Of these 16,864 were in Hindi, and 6,227 were in English. Urdu ranks next after English with a figure of 2,670. English even today continues to act as an indispensable 'Link' language. English symbolizes in Indian minds better education, better culture and better intellect. It is still freely used in administration, judiciary, in education and even for literary purposes in India. Further still, English occupies such an ambivalent nature today in India. According to current statistics, India is one of the foremost nations in Asia to produce graduates and post graduate students out of which almost 65% from the upper middle classes migrate to the West for further education. Without English, the innumerable educational institutions wouldn't have been able to flourish. Even streams like the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences have become well established with proper degrees and future careers nationally and internationally, all because of English. If it wasn’t for this post-colonial language, we would probably be far behind in terms of educational developments.

Karen Washinawatok, the Director of the Menominee Language and Culture Commission made an important point when she said: “That’s why knowing our language is so important, because it teaches us who we are; it’s not just a set of words. It’s about our history, it’s about our heritage. It’s about our way of life that our ancestors fought and died for.” (2012:334)

**Multi-ethnicity**

Language Shift happens when a foreign language gradually overwhelms the native tongue of other countries throughout the course of time. It has been stated that ELF is becoming widely adopted by people who speak it as a second language, for personal and social reasons and not as something being imposed from external ways. When 'language shift' occurs, a society unwillingly and unconsciously gives up its identity and finds itself dragged into a new one, as part of the new language and cultural concepts associated to it. By time, and under the impact of incoming language and culture, the identity of the native
language gradually evaporates and hides behind the new one, particularly if not met with efforts to reduce or prevent its effect on society and individuals. Moreover, language shift is a direct result of political and economic impetus, i.e., learning the incoming language as previously mentioned, is associated with work. People in the developing countries are ready, not only to shift their language, but also to shift their residence, as a result of the deterioration of economic and social conditions. To elaborate, we notice that people emigrate to western countries, either for the purpose of study or for the purpose of looking for better job opportunities. In both cases, the danger exists. Those migrants find themselves surrounded by foreign language, and foreign culture. Of course, the faster those people adopt the foreign culture, the more their conditions improve, consequently and gradually their native language and culture evade. Naturally, language shift takes place in one direction with the minority group’s language being taken over by that of the dominant majority group. Accordingly, the majority language has the tendency to show glamorous norms which many minority language speakers find simply irresistible.

In Mexico, for instance, voices of concern can also be heard, citing the danger of “Americanization” from the United States, especially in light of the cross-border contacts between the two countries and the scope of their interactions. Because English is spreading in Mexico as an L2 or “foreign” language, there is an unease over the issues of identity which always come to surface. For example, as Schmid (2001:89) points out: “Unfortunately, education in the United States strongly encourages immigrant children to lose their fluency in the languages they speak at home. This policy is in agreement with the languages they speak at home. This policy is in agreement with nativist ideals and organizations such as U.S. English, but is at odds with the interests of individuals and a global economy.”

According to the UN’s Population Division, in 2010 there were estimates of 213.9 million immigrants worldwide compared to 155.5 in 1990. The majority of the immigrant population goes to developed countries, which currently receive 59.7% of the total as against 53% in 1990. Actually, many foreign countries always welcome immigrants and facilitate their integration in the western society. Some of the receiving countries tend to set strict rules to control the effect of immigrants’ culture, so those immigrants find themselves obliged to be quickly immersed in the new culture of the receiving countries, meanwhile they neglect and forget their original identity and culture gradually under the impact of the new culture. Undoubtedly, there is a sort of interrelatedness between adopting English and the reformation of identities. English as a medium of communication serves, in the beginning, as a quick and easy way to interact, can later become, on basis of identity, a source of resentment towards the immigrants on the part of the receiving population, especially if immigrants are numerous given that language acts not only as a code for communication but is also bound up with identity (McAndrew, 2010). Consequently, receiving populations will also have to undergo an adaptation of identity, changing their conception from one of a uniform culture to a diverse culture, made up of people from various places of origin, who are fully accepted and socioeconomically integrated. (Wright, 2004).

The horror over identity aroused through globalization, and its association with language, rests basically on the dual social function of language, namely communication and identification (or identity-building). Although language clearly serves as a vehicle for communication, in other words, for inter-signification, it also provides key elements of broad discussion and conclusions (Schellen, 2004). Moreover, the impact of technology which is closely related to the spread of EFL, also plays a crucial role in the destruction of social and cultural identity. The widely perceived need to promote technological development through teaching an international language such as English overshadows an arguably more basic need to transmit indigenous cultures. Friere (1972) calls this cultural invasion.

In India, for example, the overwhelming impact of English on all the aspects of life reflects the suppression of the native culture and thought. Tully asserts that English in India for instance is “…not just an unhealthy hangover after colonialism, but also a means of continuing the suppression of Indian thought, and of preserving an alien, elite culture” (1997:157). It is generally assumed that more social and economic
divisions and the marginalizing of minority cultures, languages, religions and ethnic groups are expected as a result of linguistic imperialism that spread widely and quickly, whether resisted or not.

For Galtung, the world can be divided into two domains: the Center (the powerful Western countries) and the Periphery (the developing ones). Language is the medium through which the elite of the Center regulate the Periphery and plays a crucial function by providing the link between the dominant and the dominated groups and is representative of the basis upon which the notion of linguistic imperialism is built. Integral to the notion of linguistic dominance is the continued expansion of language within an imperialist framework.

Countering such notions have been claims that language can never be entirely divorced from culture and, despite having beneficial functions as a means of communication, carries with it imperialistic influences of the culture it represents. Despite the fact that 'society' and 'culture' may ultimately be shaped and governed by linguistic market forces, one language imposed on another under such circumstances can never be entirely natural, neutral or beneficial. Where individual countries are represented by their own unique political, economic and religious systems it is unrealistic to expect one imposed language to meet the needs of all cultures and their varying social agendas. Linked with the expansion of free market practices and laissez-faire economics of the West, and therefore imperialist in nature, English has demonstrated its role outside the confines of the political and economic elite and flourished in such diverse areas as advertising, music and the Internet. This is what critics such as David Crystal (1997) consider evidence of the English language's 'democratic' qualities. Even when proposals to legislate it as a country's official language have been waylaid (as in the United States), English has continued to flourish and fill a need in society. In such circumstances it has functioned primarily as a lingua franca commodity subject to the laws of language market forces.

Education serves the imperial center by having three functions: ideological, economic and repressive.

- The ideological function serves as a channel for transmitting social and cultural values. In this role English is regarded as a "gateway for better communication, better education and higher standards of living."
- The second function economic legitimizes English as a means of qualifying people to contribute to their nation and operate technology that the language provides access to.

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The third function repression serves to dominate indigenous languages. Linguistic imperialism calls attention to the potential consequences of English teaching worldwide when center country ideologies are embedded in instruction, having the effect of legitimizing colonial or establishment power and resources, and of reconstituting cultural inequalities between English and other languages.

In the case of English it is virtually impossible to think of its native speakers as the only arbiters of grammaticality and appropriacy and consequently as its sole owners, given the lingua franca status of the language. Yet it has been the native English speaking countries, who have attempted to maintain the status quo regarding the conventions of the language. The codifying agencies of English have been a matter of convention, and perpetuation of convention, through dictionaries, grammars, rhetoric handbooks, and pressures of various other types the makers of all these being unwilling to stretch very far beyond the reach of their immediate predecessors in what they deemed acceptable form and usage and through the newspapers and other widely disseminated popular media that use those sources for their style sheets and usage manuals. They hold in addition to these tangible influences the extremely powerful agencies of social and psychological pressures of various sorts must be factored in. This codification has taken place almost exclusively in the inner circle countries and has made it necessary for the outer and expanding circles to look to these sources when in need of citable authority. This has ultimately functioned as a deterrent to their setting up authorities of their own. Second-language countries are likely to develop their own curricula, materials and teaching resources which they will seek to export to neighbouring countries. In some parts of the world, this may help to bring new, non-native models of English supported by dictionaries and pedagogic materials into competition with the older standard varieties. This will inevitably lead to a tremendous clash of value systems that will ultimately have a bearing on linguistic diversity, cultural pluralism, ethnicity, race, power, status, politics, economics, etc. While continued restrictions on language rights has historically led to segregationist tendencies in society, language legislation rarely results in a unified society speaking solely the mandated language.

Conclusion

The global spread of English is fundamentally an imperialistic process. Some emphasize the fact that English is not imposed by force as it was during early colonial times but its spread is determined by the demand for it. This is the basis upon which English is nowadays “traded” to the effect that it is a highly profitable “commodity” throughout the world. However, this has not lessened the effect it has had on marginalizing certain native languages and even eliminating others. Thus, important findings that arise from this study showcase that English in today’s world dominates not only as a language but also tends to westernize local cultures and in doing so, takes the focus away from native identities to “American” or “British” ways of thinking. This change that is wrought about may either take place gradually over the years due to a desire for upward mobility by the masses or it may be enforced upon a weaker country, thus becoming a tool of colonialism.

Certain limitations which arise from this study are the fact that measuring the quantitative reach of English language in the current times and in the years to come cannot be included within this framework. Only a qualitative viewpoint has been taken into consideration. Further, Linguistic Imperialism has far reaching effects in all domains of life at the macro and micro levels which have not been explored here and will be taken up for further study. Thus, from these findings we can analyze that Linguistic Imperialism is not merely fiction or an illusion as stated by some scholars. English carries its own heritage, legacy and culture. Language Imperialism may thus be, conscious or subconscious. Whether it is done consciously as a tool of the oppressor or subconsciously due to globalization, the end result is the same—English dominates. The implications are clear: The English language is almost the sole language of the new globe. No one can deny its benefits, socially and economically. Also, no one can prevent or ignore its serious impact on reshaping people’s social and cultural identity. Besides, it is confirmed that the global spread of
English does not only result in creating equality among individuals of the same community, but also represents a threat of the lesser native languages worldwide.

Consequently, it is difficult to deny the development of a Global Linguistic Empire and, thus the status of English as an imperialist language. English is imperialist, as a result of its hegemony and inner circle influence. Also, because it is penetrating increasingly into more domains globally, and whether it is adopted willingly or unwillingly. Apparently and undoubtedly, English as a world language, does not only sweep other lesser used languages, but also reshapes the new world's economic, political structure and constructs new social identities. In spite of the researches conducted by linguists, linguistic imperialism as a controversial issue has not been settled yet. Whether linguistic imperialism is a fact or an illusion, whether it is a true conspiracy or just a world phenomenon among various phenomena, there is a crucial need for more efforts from linguists and socialists to investigate this issue, in order to introduce decisive views with regard to this intricate and crucial issue. In the same way Julius Caesar conquered Rome and built a great empire, the Empire of English is one which was set in motion centuries ago and continues to exist even today.

Work Cited


