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Disciplines of English and disciplining by English

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Bio-data

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Abstract

The article stresses the importance of seeing English in context, both in terms of its global importance and how we refer to it: labels such as ‘lingua franca’ are misleading. The fact that there is a standard form of written English of global relevance should not beguile one into thinking that the language is ideologically neutral. Academic freedom in universities is constrained in various ways, language policy being of central importance. Efforts in the Nordic countries to simultaneously strengthen national languages and English are reported on. English Studies should ideally serve the entire society, and contribute to promoting multilingualism, but academic specialisation is suspect if it lacks a holistic perspective and political awareness. The study of the international role of English needs to engage with US history, the consolidation of the language nationally, and with its promotion worldwide as a constituent of American empire. This necessitates a multidisciplinary approach. It is helpful to see regional integration, European or Asian, and ‘global English’ as projects, entailing certain products and processes. The monolingual UK-US approach to English learning, of major importance for the British economy, is increasingly under attack. The export business of campuses in Malaysia and China needs careful scrutiny. Bilingual education, as recommended by UNESCO, is becoming more institutionalised in many parts of the world. Developments in the way the use of English is increasing in different parts of the world are of universal language policy relevance. The complexity of English as medium of instruction and a societal language in Malaysia has been insightfully analysed. The integration of higher education and research across Europe structurally favours English. In any given context, it is important to assess how far other languages are being disciplined and marginalised by English or not.

Keywords: English Studies, university language policy, lingua franca, academic freedom, American empire, imperial English, linguistic diversity

This article began life as a keynote lecture at the conference *MICOLLAC 2009: Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. Universals, Distinctions and Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, held at the

Universiti Putra Malaysia Serdang, Malaysia, in April 2009, where I assumed that I share much in common with participants. I lead a multilingual everyday life in a multi-ethnic society. I live in a country with a strong national language, in my case Danish; as an immigrant, I have needed to develop fluency in the language. Denmark is a country in which there are tensions, real or manufactured, between Christianity, Islam, and consumerist secularism. I have a primary professional identification with English, but academic competence in several other languages too. I am deeply involved in the ambiguities of English as an expanding language, and what the implications of this are for the rights of speakers of other languages and for non-anglophone cultures. My professional life started with training to be an English teacher in what I consider was a form of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992) with little awareness of the wider ecology of languages, even if I had learned several. In my research, I consider that the learning or teaching of English needs to be linked to a commitment to linguistic diversity and linguistic human rights. In my view, the English teaching profession needs to be seen in the light of an understanding of linguistic neoimperialism, its global and local impact, and how a more just balance between languages can be promoted.

Functions and myths of English

It is therefore salutary to consider whether the role and disciplines of English Studies are merely servicing global empire, as servants of what the brilliant Kenyan novelist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (in *Wizard of the crow*, 2006) wittily refers to as corporonialism, the corporate world's variant of colonialism. Or alternatively, do we live up to the classic ideals of the university, committed to an unflinching principle of intellectual honesty and a profound search for truth? To cite Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o again (1998, 131): 'paving the ways of seeing and willing a moral universe of freedom, equality, and social justice within and among the nations of the earth is surely the special mission of art. Art is dreams of freedom and creativity.' Ngũgĩ works of 'art' have been concerned as much with non-fiction scholarship (for instance his classic *Decolonising the mind*, 1981) and teaching as with creative writing. One of the joys of the extensive use of English in many cultures worldwide is that those proficient in the written language have access to creative writing and to high quality scholarship and journalism that may be produced in a plethora of Asian or African or other contexts. This makes it incumbent on practitioners of English Studies to be alert to local and global linguistic ecologies, to the causes of some languages being privileged, and to what the implications are for linguistic diversity and equality.

The context where I work is continental Europe, where the use of English is increasing. English is now the corporate language of many of the larger continental European companies, partially replacing German, Swedish, and other languages. Youth is consumerist, Coca-colonised, and more familiar with US products and norms than those of other European countries. 70-80% of films on TV and in cinemas in Europe are Hollywood products - whereas in the USA, foreign films represent only 1% of the market, which is indicative of the asymmetrical nature of cultural relations worldwide. English is the most widely learned 'foreign' language in continental Europe, and other foreign languages, like French, German and Russian, are mostly in retreat. Research is increasingly published in English rather than national and international scholarly languages, which affects career prospects for the individual and the role of the national language.

Is English then merely a '*lingua franca*', a neutral instrument, for inter-lingual, 'international' communication ... or should it rather be seen as

- a *lingua economica*: the language of corporate neoliberalism and Americanisation
- a *lingua emotiva*: the language of Hollywood myth-making, of youth culture and pop music
- a *lingua cultura*, when English is taught as a subject in general education, linked to the study of national cultures and literatures
- a *lingua bellica* in wars of aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in the arms trade that the permanent members of the UN Security Council profit from
- a *lingua academica*, when it serves as the dominant language of publications, international conferences, and increasingly as a medium for content learning in secondary and higher education?

The language is seen by some as God's gift to humanity, a *lingua divina*, by others, the victims of genocide (Churchill 1997) and linguicide, as a *lingua diabolica*. This is captured brilliantly by an Indian who was at the receiving end of injustice at the hands of elites who privilege proficient users of English and stigmatize those less proficient:

It wasn't until he was 18 that Kanchedia Chamaar realized that God spoke and understood English and nothing else. Because unfamiliarity with the *lingua divina* was a matter of intense shame at Delhi School of Economics in the 1970s, he started learning English on the sly, and continues to be consumed by the process to this day. Over a period of three years after his master's degree, no fewer than one hundred and eight Indian firms found him unfit for gainful employment. While doing his PhD in the 1980s, he found that at Universities in the US, even those not fluent in English were treated as human beings, a dignity that not everybody seemed willing to accord him in Delhi. He has been hiding in the US ever since. (Chamaar 2007)

English as a diabolical language, a *lingua frankensteinia*, is captured by such terms as Louis-Jean Calvet's 'glottophagie', linguistic cannibalism (1974) to cover the way 'big' languages gobble up small ones; by John Swales (1996) seeing English as a *lingua tyrannosaura*, when some languages of scholarship are on the way to extinction because of a shift into English; and by Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), who refers to *killer languages* and language murder because extinguishing minority languages has often been state policy, with the agents behind such policies identifiable. She also uses the term *linguistic genocide* in the international law sense, in order to determine when state policies fail to respect linguistic human rights, and can be seen as constituting crimes against humanity (Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar forthcoming). I have asked the question 'English, a cuckoo in the European higher education nest of languages?', a *lingua cucula* (2006) when assessing whether university policy for more English entails the rejection of other languages.

In my view (elaborated in Phillipson 2009), the term *lingua franca* is a *pernicious, invidious* term if the language in question is a first language for some people – or has been their primary language of learning - but for others a foreign language. This is asymmetrical communication. It is a *misleading* term if the language is supposed to be neutral and disconnected from culture, such as the 'special purposes' that English serves, exemplified above. Similarly, it is a *false* term for a language that is taught as a subject in general education, since then the language is learned in symbiosis with familiarity

with the cultures in question, English originating in England and then its speakers moving elsewhere. Ironically there is a historical continuity in that the term *lingua franca* was originally used by speakers of Arabic and Persian to refer to the language of the Crusaders, whom they assumed were all Franks, whose task was to re-impose Christianity in Palestine and push out the infidel from the 'Holy Land'. Whereas in the contemporary world, English is seen as integral to the crusade of global corporatisation, which is marketed as betokening freedom and democracy, the rhetoric that accompanied the unravelling of Communist Europe and wars of aggression in Iraq.

The fact that English was not an unmixed blessing for colonised people was seen clearly by Mahatma Gandhi: 'To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave us. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us' (1908); 'English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother tongues' (1921, both cited in Naik 2004, 255). And specifically in relation to universities, he noted that there were problems of quality both in what was attempted and in what was ignored (1942, cited in Gandhi 2008, 463): 'I am afraid our universities are the blotting-sheets of the West. We have borrowed the superficial features of the Western universities, and flattered ourselves that we have founded living universities here. Do they reflect or respond to the needs of the masses?'

We need therefore to be cautious and precise in our use of sociolinguistic concepts (like *lingua franca*) and when assessing the issues of quality, appropriateness of content, and medium of instruction in higher education. Such issues are relevant in relation to English both in countries traditionally seen as multilingual (e.g. Malaysia) and in those with a strong monolingual tradition (most European countries). The multiple purposes which English now serves both in the postcolonial world and in contemporary Europe raise the question of whether the language can be seen as post-imperial (Fishman et al 1996). As Asmah Haji Omar sees matters, when asked whether English is a linguistically imperialist language in Malaysia (1996, 532): 'English is now looked at as an entity which can be separated from English culture. This is evident in the urging "to learn English but not to ape the Western [meaning Anglo-American] culture" '. At one level this is a factually correct statement. On the other hand, there are many challenges so far as both the forms and functions of English are concerned. The relationship between 'Global English' and local Englishes needs unpicking, as do the sociocultural forms and functions, written and spoken, that characterize English as an Asian/Malaysian language, or English as a European/Scandinavian language, and the myths and realities of 'global' English. The historical roots of the norms of the language, its disciplining into standardized semantic, syntactic and lexical conventions, cannot be totally ignored.

The Polish-Australian linguist Anna Wierzbicka warns against an assumption that English can be detached from its original roots (2006, 13, 14): 'Publications on "global English", "international English", "world English", "standard English" and "English as a lingua franca" ... neglect the Anglo cultural heritage ... the semantics embedded in the words and grammar.[...] In the present-day world it is Anglo English that remains the touchstone and guarantor of English-based global communication'. Probal Dasgupta (1993: 203, 215-6) makes a similar point:

English is not a space. It is a piece of real estate. Its owners – whose biological identities keep changing, as in the case of any real estate, - enforce normative spelling, punctuation, grammar, and phonological and lexical limits (within which accents and dictions may vary) throughout the domains of English discourse. Indian use of English will forever remain a tolerated, degenerate variant of the

norm in the eyes of the owners. Hence the striving by Indians to attain near-native command, to count as individuals who may be co-opted into the metropolitan Herrenvolk.

(...) The forces that keep this fact in place have not been and are not being contested. You and I may coin a new expression for our private games in the language: but our coinage will not be part of the language unless the Anglo-American mint canonizes our doings in standard reference works.

It is this variant of English that English learning in general education in Europe aims at, even if receptive competence may be built up in relation to the diversity of ways in which English is used worldwide: the weighting is more towards Quirkian standard English than Kachruvian liberation linguistics (for analysis see the contributions to Sharifian 2009). In international communication there are modifications in ‘world Englishes’ of a minor type in lexis, syntax, and discourse patterns, and more major ones in pronunciation. There is substantial variation in the use of English within and across countries, but especially in writing, there is a standardised *product* that ensures intelligibility (Rajadurai 2007). There are serious theoretical and empirical weaknesses in the way ‘world’ Englishes are classified and analysed, since the reification involved in any standardisation is not faithful to the variety and complexity of sociolinguistic realities (Bruthiaux 2003). Analyses of ‘postcolonial’ Englishes tend to ignore the constraints that affect the way languages are experienced and used: decolonisation ‘has become another convenient term used to legitimise world Englishes without problematising its political, economic, educational and ideological significations [...] world Englishes are played out across such structures and determinations of inequality’ (Ruanni Tupas 2001, 87, 93).

Thiru Kandiah of Sri Lanka (2001) insightfully notes these complexities:

... the written English prose medium which, in some ‘standard’ form, is the staple of the global medium is hardly a neutral or innocent instrument. It defines a discourse whose conventions of grammar and use are heavily vested ideologically, affirming and legitimising particular ways of seeing the world, particular forms of knowledge and particular relations of power, all of which work decidedly against the best interests of the disadvantaged countries.

To ‘countries’ I would add *classes, languages, and marginalised peoples*. This does not mean that I am in any way arguing against using English. Whether English has functioned as an imperialist language in any given context, in the colonial or postcolonial periods, and currently in the neoliberal age of US-dominated corporate empire, is an empirical question: what is at issue is whether there is an inequitable structural and ideological favouring of one language – in this case, English - and the interests behind it, at the expense of (speakers of) other languages. As I see it, the challenge for the English teaching profession is to strike a balance between promoting maximal competence in English while being deeply aware of the issues of the appropriateness and consequences of its use in diverse cultural contexts and multilingual ecologies, and of the purposes that English serves in any society. For universities, this means addressing the question of academic freedom, a fundamental principle.

Academic freedom and university language policy

'Free' universities in *The Netherlands* and *Belgium* are so designated because the particular institution is free of religious ties, affiliated neither with Roman Catholicism nor Protestantism, unlike many universities. How free is an 'American' university in the Arab world or a 'Christian' university in Japan? How freedom is understood is flagged openly at the *Margaret Thatcher Center For Freedom*, based at the Heritage Foundation in Washington DC: the Center's goal is to ensure that the US and UK can 'lead and change the world'ⁱ? The 'free' of the *Freie Universität Berlin* means free of communism, so named because the university was established, with US funding, in the non-Soviet Union sector of Berlinⁱⁱ. Ironically the unfree university in communist east Berlin, the *Humboldt University*ⁱⁱⁱ, is named after the polymath scholar of the early 19th century whose higher education principles underpin the modern university ideal: university teaching should be delivered by active researchers; academic freedom and the search for knowledge and truth should not be constrained by any orthodoxy. The search for truth is encouraged in the People's Republic of *China*, but not its dissemination: an 'unwritten rule for academics is that there is no taboo for research but there are regulations governing what can be published and what cannot be published' (Zhou and Ross 2004, 10). Freedom is evidently a semantic chameleon, adapting to a range of historical and ideological constraints.

The magnificent chapels of *Cambridge* colleges, like the names of many of them (Christ's, Trinity) signify the close bond between the Church of England and scholarship in earlier centuries, others laud the state (King's, Queens') or mammon (Churchill, Wolfson) and occasionally science (Darwin). *Christianity* has been integral to the spread of Euro-American values and languages worldwide, and is at the heart of the Myth of America, the sense that the USA sees itself as having a Christian God-given right to spread its values worldwide by military and economic force, a warfare society, initially national, now global (Hixson 2008). *Economic gospels* underpin higher education activities in our more secular times, making it unlikely that universities are committed to the needs of the masses (Gandhi), or to cultural diversity or multilingualism. What then of the 'English-medium university' – is it purely utilitarian, a practical necessity, a productive panacea (Phillipson 2009, chapter 9)? Or is English so imbued with the values and senses of an unjust world order that it needs to be controlled vigorously by well qualified people like any other infectious disease or pandemic^{iv}? Are the language policies of universities disciplining English, or is academic freedom being disciplined by the way English is used?

A number of European universities now have explicit language policies. The University of Helsinki, Finland, for instance, states that its Language Policy (promulgated in Finnish, Swedish, and English, 14 March 2007) is based on key strategic precepts, in particular that

Languages are a resource within the academic community. The University's bilingual and multilingual environment and internationalisation are sources of enrichment for all and are a necessity for the international comparability of its research performance. Language skills are a means to understanding foreign cultures and for making Finnish culture known to others. The university promotes the language proficiency of its students and staff as well as supports their knowledge of different cultures. Multilingual and multicultural communities promote creative thinking.

There are bilingual universities in Europe in several countries, among them Italy and Switzerland. Helsinki University is explicitly bilingual in Finnish and Swedish because both languages are official in

Finland. Many other universities in the country, and in Scandinavia, have become bilingual in recent years – without ever being designated as bilingual - in the sense that a large number of course books are in English, with Danish, Norwegian or Swedish as the language of instruction^v. In addition ‘internationalisation’ leads to more degrees and courses being offered in English, especially at MA level and in specific subjects, such as business studies. Some universities have encouraged the use of many languages of scholarship. Thus at the University of Helsinki, doctoral theses have been written in Finnish, Swedish, English, German, and French (Haarman and Holman 2001)^{vi}. The current trend, especially in the natural sciences, is for most to be in English. But even if a European university offers a large number of MA courses and degrees in English, the students on the courses will predominantly be foreigners, whereas for many Finnish postgraduate students, or Dutch postgraduates in The Netherlands, the medium of instruction will still be the local language.

The very considerable expansion of the use of English in demographically small continental European countries has led to concern about whether national languages are being marginalized and might risk losing their status as the nationally unifying language. The governments of the Nordic countries have commissioned study of the issue, as a result of which a Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy was approved in 2006 by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and promulgated in Danish, Faeroese, Greenlandic, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Saami, Swedish, and English^{vii}. The document specifies the language rights of all residents in a Nordic country, sets out goals for language policy, and specifies four issues to work with: Language comprehension and language skills; the parallel use of languages; multilingualism; the Nordic countries as a linguistic pioneering region.

Choice of language in higher education and research is a central concern of the governments. The Declaration declares as goals for ‘The parallel use of English and the languages of the Nordic countries,

that it be possible to use both the languages of the Nordic countries essential to society and English as languages of science,
that the presentation of scientific results in the languages of the Nordic countries essential to society be rewarded
that instruction in scientific technical language, especially in written form, be given in both English and the languages of the Nordic countries essential to society
that universities, colleges, and other scientific institutions can develop long-range strategies for the choice of language, the parallel use of languages, language instruction, and translation grants within their fields ...’.

In effect what the policy aims at is to ensure that the vitality of national languages is maintained, while education should aim at achieving equivalent proficiency in English. Quite how ‘parallel competence’ in the two languages should be understood has yet to be clarified, just as implementation of the many recommendations has yet to be undertaken. However, since this is the first time that government-level language policy in this area has been made explicit, it is positive that language policy is not merely being left to market forces. The underlying thinking is both/and rather than either/or: not a focus on a single medium of instruction (an English-medium or local language-medium school or university) but a combination. This is the way language policy is understood by representatives of Copenhagen University, in chemistry, mathematics, and life sciences, see Harder 2009.

A contribution to a recent survey of the future of French worldwide by a Mexican scholar, Rainer Enrique Hamel (2008) makes related points of general relevance. While pleading for multilingual strategies in higher education, he stresses the importance of ensuring the priority of the national language in the *production* of knowledge, whereas knowledge can be *disseminated* in English and other languages. He also stresses the importance of ensuring that French remains attractive as an international language. This presupposes the use of the national language in higher education in all key scholarly fields.

English Studies

Specifically so far as ‘English Studies’ is concerned, we need to consider what the implications are of scholarly specialisation, the fact that since the 1970s, English Studies has expanded in countless directions. Syllabuses, publications, and conference papers reveal few efforts to integrate the study of ‘Literature’, ‘society’ and ‘language’. Absence of a holistic perspective is aggravated by scholarly specialisation, the ‘subdivision of knowledge into an ever-multiplying profusion of mutually incomprehensible and inward-looking academic disciplines’, to quote Collini’s study of intellectuals in Britain (2006, 461). Sub-specialisations (e.g. on the language side, between theoretical and applied linguistics, language pedagogy, sociolinguistics, grammar, phonetics, translation, ‘composition’ et al) run the risk of failing to form a coherent whole, of not seeing the societal wood for the academic trees. We suffer from the Humpty Dumpty syndrome^{viii}, the problem of being more knowledgeable about less and less: our professionalism makes us good at segmenting knowledge, at working with isolated bits of language or text, but not at reassembling it and maintaining holistic thinking.

Simultaneously, external pressures, accountability to the ‘knowledge society’, marketisation, and competition for research funding, are transforming communities of learning, independent scholarship and truth-seeking. We run the risk of English Studies not living up to the ideals of the intellectual:

Academic intellectuals will have to continue to foster the rigour, the respect for evidence, the disinterestedness, and the wider perspective which are among the animating ideals of academic scholarship while at the same time managing to break out from its increasingly self-referring hermeticism to bring these qualities to bear in wider public debate. (Collini 2006, 504)

There is a tension between a legitimate requirement that our research time can be shown to produce results, and academic freedom. This presupposes no undue influence from funding bodies. Bertrand Russell (1960, 166-8) expressed concern 80 years ago about the academic being limited by utilitarian constraints and an excessive influence on universities by business.

As I see it, the macro-level challenge for English Studies is to ask how English Studies can aim at generating truth, wisdom, peace, and justice, with critical students in ethically based societies, in a world that is characterised by marketisation, economic rationales, consumerism, militarism, ecological disasters, and glaring inequalities between Haves and Have-nots internationally and nationally. English is a primary carrier and constituent of both sets of values. The central themes of my paper are therefore

how we can continue to ensure that universities should seek truth (Ngũgĩ) and serve the entire society (Gandhi), with universities that are seen as a public good, enjoying academic freedom and university autonomy, and promoting cultural diversity (see UNESCO's *Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel*, 11 November 1997^{ix}), universities that actively promote multilingualism (Finland); the use of English reflects and constitutes particular interests, and is inherently problematical (Kandiah); academic specialisation is suspect, especially when it is politically detached (Collini); and to constrain scholarly disciplines within their own internal logic entails grave risks.

There are several traditions of critical scholarship in *sociolinguistics* that live up to these ideals. They have mostly evolved within English Studies in its broadest sense, the study of the forms and functions of language. There is solid empirical evidence and theorisation of the key role of language in diagnosing inequality based on race (Labov), gender (Cameron), class (Bernstein), capitalism (Halliday), and language (Skutnabb-Kangas). Such analysis permits the study of respectively racism, sexism, classism, growthism, and linguisticism. The latter in particular can lead to proactive strategies and action in minority education, linguistic human rights, resisting linguistic genocide, and counteracting linguistic imperialism and neo-imperialism (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, Phillipson 2009).

Imperial English and its advocates

It is imperative to see English in historical, socio-political, and cultural context. The powerful forces behind the expansion of English in many parts of the world are identifiable. The following representative quotations are drawn from more detailed studies (Phillipson 1992, 2009):

- In 1838 the 'Board of Foreign Missions of the USA' propounded 'a belief in the manifest destiny of Anglo-Saxon culture to spread around the world' (Spring 1996).
- 'The whole world should adopt the American system. The American system can survive in America only if it becomes a world system', President Harry Truman, 1947 (cited in Pieterse, 2004, 131).
- 'Teaching the world English may appear not unlike an extension of the task which America faced in establishing English as a common national language among its own immigrant population' (Annual Report of the British Council 1960-61).
- The process of European integration might never have come about had it not been imposed on Europe by the Americans. (Holm 2001).

US involvement in creating what became the European Union is narrated in detail in Winand 1993. There are annual summit meetings between the EU and the USA. The 2007 summit endorsed the Transatlantic Economic Integration Plan and the coordination of foreign policy globally, essentially implementing what the corporate world had plotted in many fora, the European Round Table of Industrialists, the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the Transatlantic Economic Partnership, etc.

English has been a central constituent of the US strategy for global dominance. The hierarchy of languages established on the North American continent is being extended worldwide. British governments and politicians have advocated the promotion of English consistently since the 1950s, with Gordon Brown continuing in this tradition. Prior to his first visit as Prime Minister to China and India, on 17 January 2008, Gordon Brown announced a scheme to consolidate the teaching of English worldwide: 'English is our heritage, but it is also becoming the common future of human commerce and communication.... the bold task of making our language the world's common language of choice.' This 'bold task', which has a massive importance for the British economy and for British influence, dovetails with US bodies in the same business of promoting English. For instance, Educational Testing Services of Princeton, New Jersey, responsible for the TOEFL test of language proficiency, declares on its website: 'Our global mission goes far beyond testing. Our products and services enable opportunity worldwide by measuring knowledge and skills, promoting learning and performance, and supporting education and professional development for all people worldwide.' A global mission indeed, buttressed by a rhetoric of 'choice'. Governments and scholars who stress freedom of choice, or the provision of education or English 'for all', tend to ignore such determinants as class, cost, gender, urban/rural access, and, in many multilingual contexts, the significance of the mother tongue: for a study of the myth of the neutrality of English and 'choice', and how the 'demand' for English has been orchestrated in Cambodia, see Clayton 2008.

The study of the international use of English and demand for it is complex and demands a multi-disciplinary approach (Phillipson 2009). It needs to draw on the literature on language planning and policy, macro-sociolinguistics, language 'spread', linguistic imperialism, the sociology of language, and language in education; critical theory and critical discourse analysis; nationalism, language, nation and state in political science; comparable to global financial and economic capital, the study of linguistic capital accumulation and dispossession; linguistic human rights in national and international law; language and language rights in globalisation and regional integration (ASEAN, European Union) and the management of multilingualism in supranational institutions and in administering citizenship; the economics of language, North-South relations, foreign 'aid', *laissez faire* and US empire. There is in fact a flood of books and articles on English and other languages worldwide. Research needs to engage with language policy both as multi-disciplinary theory and as practice, in application and implementation. Language policy is at the interface between scholarship and ongoing social policy and politics, national and international. Language policy is even more important in a technological age than earlier.

What is happening currently in Europe demonstrates this clearly. The EU is a new type of polity, with sovereignty and decision-making shared between the member states (currently 27) and the supranational, inter-governmental level. There is uncertainty as to whether the EU is moving towards what de Gaulle envisioned, a 'Europe des patries', international partnership, or Jean Monnet's 'United States of Europe', federalism. There are currently 23 official and working languages, and some recognition of the rights of other languages, but de facto a hierarchy of languages with English now at the top. Just as it is helpful to see the construction of Europe in terms of a project, with specific products and processes, one can also see 'global English' as a project that powerful forces wish to bring about, visible in certain products (functions, forms, texts), and promoted through a range of processes (Phillipson 2009, chapter 7). The projection of 'Global English' as the default language of *international* communication can be seen in the administration of EU and ASEAN affairs (projects), which dovetails

with the use of English increasingly *intranationally* in business, the media, and education (projects). There is a great deal of political and academic discourse that seeks to legitimate the privileged position through describing it as ‘neutral’, a ‘*lingua franca*’ (processes). In force are Anglo-US linguistic norms, with local variation in a rich diversity of texts (products). Making this triad normative entails disciplining, ranking, excluding and including.

I A Richards was one of the most influential figures in English Studies in the 20th century, with attachments to Cambridge and Harvard. He is primarily known for an approach to literature^x and saw English as God’s gift to humanity. His book *So much nearer. Essays toward a world English* (1968, 240-1) is an apologia for global linguistic hegemony:

... acquisition is not merely for ‘wealth and prestige’, but because ‘new levels of mental capacity are induced ... the development of those concepts and sentiments: methodic, economic, moral, political, on which the continuance of man’s venture depends. We of the West have somehow – out of a strangely unself-regardful, indeed a regardless impulse of benevolence – committed ourselves to universal education as well as to universal participation in government, nominal though this last can be.

There is an analogy between the conception of a world order and the design of a language which may serve man best. The choice of words for that language and the assignment of priorities among their duties can parallel the statesman’s true tasks. And it is through what language can offer him that every man has to consider what should concern him most. If rightly ordered, and developed through a due sequence, the study of English can become truly a humane education. May not such a language justly be named “EVERY MAN’S ENGLISH”?

This was the English exported worldwide in the postcolonial age, as described in the Malaysian case by Shirley Geok-Lin Lim (1996). Comparable academic ‘legitimation’ of global English and of English language learning continues in the writings of such influential people as David Crystal, David Graddol, Bernard Spolsky, and Henry Widdowson (for detailed critiques, see Phillipson 2009). A monolingual approach to English learning lies at the heart of approaches to English as promulgated in the UK and USA. The efficacy and ethics of this variant of the disciplines of English are increasingly being challenged, in relation to language pedagogy and ‘native speakerism’ (Holliday 2005), to wider issues of political agendas (Edge 2006), to ELT being harnessed to a Christian missionary calling (Wong and Canagarajah 2009), and to the export of British ELT know-how in projects worldwide (Alderson 2009, analysed in a review article, Phillipson forthcoming).

One wonders how it can be that monolinguals are seen as experts in second language acquisition. I fear that this foundational principle is carried over into the export of English-medium universities worldwide. Thus the University of Nottingham’s subsidiaries – its campuses in Malaysia and at Ningbo, China - give the clear impression that what is being exported, even in degrees in such subjects as Education, English, Applied Linguistics, and Content and Language Integrated Learning, is not only the British English medium but also British content. The Ningbo website proclaims: ‘All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are conducted entirely in English with the same teaching and evaluation standards as at the University of Nottingham, UK.’ Can this really be considered culturally, linguistically or pedagogically appropriate in Asia, with teachers either from Nottingham or controlled by Nottingham? If such campuses are a meeting-place for UK expertise and Asian needs and realities,

is the interaction uni-directional, or open and reciprocal, and how is the project being implemented and perceived?

Managing linguistic diversity

Creating a balance between languages for national and for international purposes, while simultaneously ensuring that all language groups can exercise their linguistic human rights, is a major challenge for education systems at all levels. There is massive agreement in the research literature on the value of mother-tongue based bilingual education. UNESCO's Guidelines on Language and Education state (2003, 30-33):

- UNESCO supports *mother tongue instruction* as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers.
- UNESCO supports *bilingual* and/or *multilingual education* at all levels of education as a means of promoting both social and gender equality and as a key element of linguistically diverse societies.
- UNESCO supports language as an essential component of *inter-cultural education* in order to encourage understanding between different population groups and ensure respect for fundamental rights.

Education is moving in this direction in many parts of the world, with previously marginalized languages playing a central role in achieving success in education in both the mother tongue and state languages. 'Tribal' languages are now being used in basic education in Nepal, and in the Indian states, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2009). Similar developments are occurring in Africa (Rubagumya 2009, Heugh 2009) and being promoted at the political level (declarations from the 'Forum International de Bamako sur le multilinguisme', 19-21 January 2009, African Academy of Languages, www.acalan.org). The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is addressing the suppression of Indigenous people's cultures and languages, so as to achieve more just forms of education (see papers by Dunbar and Skutnabb-Kangas, and others on <http://www.tove-skutnabb-kangas.org/>).

In countries like Malaysia, research confirms that the use of (spoken) English is context-dependent, reflecting and constituting multiple self- and other-identificational variables, is in flux in relation to Malay and other languages, and is negotiable (Kim 2003). And while English permits a reflective and critical attitude towards one's own culture and self, a form of double vision, open-mindedness, and access to information and inspiration from diverse sources, using English can be seen as individualist showing off, elitist, a relic of colonialism, associated with religion, and being 'White' or Westernised, from which the conclusion is drawn that the teaching of English is connected to questions of power, inequality, resistance and struggle (ibid.). These variables obviously influence what happens in classrooms, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Study of what actually takes place in classrooms can clarify some of the ‘Tensions between language policy and practice in Malaysia’ (Martin 2005). Classroom activity in English lessons in two schools in rural Sarawak, in a totally different context from urban Malaysia, was observed: a primary school class in which English and Malay were used, but not the mother tongue of learners, Sa’ben, and a secondary school class that was conducted mainly in English, with some use of Malay and Kelabit for lexical glossing. In both classes the learners were passive, with teachers using ‘safe’ practices and with no recourse to local cultures and languages. The unsound educational practice and poor results are remote from national educational goals. Such work raises serious questions about how education and multilingualism in Malaysia is being managed and implemented.

Language policy analysts should be able to draw lessons from the way English is impacting on different countries worldwide. The prestige attributed to English and structural favouring of it entail the risk of downgrading other languages. English is being transformed from a colonising language (North America, Australasia) and a language of empire (Asia, Africa) into the neoliberal (world) language. The disciplining of marginalised languages of colonial times is being rearticulated in the neoimperial world, but outcomes are unpredictable due to changes in the global economy and *de facto* diversity worldwide. What is happening in Europe is relevant for Asia and vice versa.

European Union member states (currently 27) are in principle committed to maintaining linguistic diversity, but there is a great deal of fluidity in language policies in Europe (Phillipson 2003, 2008):

- an unresolved tension between linguistic nationalism (monolingualism), EU institutional multilingualism, and English becoming dominant in the EU,
- competing agendas at the European, state (national), and sub-statal levels,
- increasing grassroots and elite bi- and multilingualism, except among the older generation in demographically large EU countries, and in the UK in particular,
- a rhetoric of language rights, some national and supranational implementation, and advocacy of linguistic diversity,
- a largely uncritical adoption of Englishisation, of English as the *lingua economica/americana/academica/bellica*.

The uncertainty is compounded by the fact that the EU is pursuing language policies that negate each other. On the one hand it proclaims a commitment to multilingualism and linguistic diversity. On the other, many of its working practices and policies strengthen English at the expense of (speakers of) other languages. This is, for instance, the case with the Bologna process, a key EU project with the very ambitious goal of integrating the research and higher education systems of 46 European countries (with Australia and the USA as observers, since higher education is big business for them) into a single, unified ‘area’, i.e. market. This ‘internationalisation’ is in theory committed, by the original Bologna declaration of 1999 ‘within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy - to consolidate a European Higher Education Area at the latest by 2010’. At the bi-annual ministerial meetings (most recently in Bergen in 2005, London in 2007, Leuven in 2009), the main focus has been on structural uniformity (a single BA, MA and PhD system), on quality control (nationally and internationally), student mobility, recognition of qualifications, and joint degrees – all of which are demanding tasks for most countries - and making European universities attractive enough to compete

with the USA and Australia. What is striking and shocking is that in the long communiqués from each meeting, there is not one word on language policy, on bilingual degrees or multilingualism in higher education. On the contrary, the impression is created that what internationalisation means is English-medium higher education.

Prior to the 2007 London meeting (and before the global finance and economic crisis), EU Commissioner Figel stated (press release IP/07/656):

Bologna reforms are important but Europe should now go beyond them, as universities should also modernise the content of their curricula, create virtual campuses and reform their governance. They should also professionalize their management, diversify their funding and open up to new types of learners, businesses and society at large, in Europe and beyond. [...] The Commission supports the global strategy in concrete terms through its policies and programmes.

In other words, universities should no longer be seen as a public good but should be run like businesses, should privatise, and let industry set the agenda. Education is no longer to be seen as a public good. This is a direct result of education being increasingly considered a service that can be traded, under the aegis of the World Trade Organization, and more specifically of GATS, the General Agreement on Trade in Services. The global market in 'international' students encourages a shift into English away from national languages. University management imposes systems of ranking of research productivity (bibliometric quantification, A and B journals) as one means of disciplining scholarship and scholars. Publication in English is privileged above publication in all other languages, and rewarded accordingly (as is currently the case in the Nordic countries, though governments are supposed to reverse this process). Ideally, academics in the 'knowledge society' are self-disciplined, keeping to 'safe' research topics. Freedoms of research and expression are under threat as a result of university management structures, evaluation procedures, commercially-driven English-medium universities, corporate research funding, top-down control of research topics and methods.

Ensuring balanced cohabitation with additive (as opposed to subtractive) English is a real challenge for higher education worldwide. Policies for strengthening competence in English must be one dimension of maintaining cultural and linguistic diversity, locally and globally, and resisting an unsustainable and undisciplined capitalist world 'order'. The disciplines of English Studies must ensure that the disciplining that English exercises over other languages is restrained maximally. There are a number of heuristic questions that one can seek answers to in any given context so as to clarify whether English is functioning locally and globally as a neutral, additive *lingua franca* or as an intrusive, subtractive *lingua frankensteinia*: is the expansion and/or learning of English in any given context additive or subtractive? Is linguistic capital dispossession of national languages taking place? Is there a strengthening or a weakening of a balanced local language ecology? Where are our political and corporate leaders taking us in language policy? Is English serving local needs or merely subordinating its users to the American empire project? There are many possible answers to such questions, many unresolved issues, many challenges for national language policy and for research. The disciplines of English, which thrive in academic freedom, should be contributing to this.

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ⁱ The website (<http://www.thatchercenter.org/>) states that it was established in 2005, following a substantial donation from the Margaret Thatcher Foundation to the Heritage Foundation. It claims to be the only public policy centre in the world dedicated to advancing the vision and ideals of Lady Thatcher. Its key aims are to focus on how the United States and Great Britain can lead and change the world, to strengthen the relationship between the United States and Great Britain, and link conservatives in the USA, UK and Europe who are committed to the transatlantic alliance and the cause of freedom across the world.

ⁱⁱ The university was founded in 1948. Its website states that in the first decade the primary academic focus was on political science, sociology, Eastern European Studies and American Studies, a clear statement of its priorities. The website has photos of the Henry Ford building (I recently also saw one at Koc University, Istanbul), and of John F. Kennedy, see http://web.fu-berlin.de/chronik/chronik_Home.html.

ⁱⁱⁱ The university was founded in Berlin in 1810, inspired by Wilhelm von Humboldt’s concept of a "Universitas litterarum" which would achieve a unity of teaching and research and provide students with an all-round humanist education. This concept spread throughout the world and gave rise to the foundation of many universities of the same type over the following 150 years. See http://www.hu-berlin.de/ueberblick-en/history/huben_html.

^{iv} I wrote an article with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas in 1994 entitled ‘English, panacea or pandemic’ (*Sociolinguistica* 8. English only? in *Europa/in Europe/en Europe*, 73-87). It expressed scepticism at the hubris of the way English was being marketed as a panacea in the post-communist world, along with the free market and human rights. English was conflated with democracy and all things good, backed up by fraudulent claims for what the language would achieve.

^v There will be a conference in Luxembourg in March 2010 (www.multilingualuniversities.net), at which one concern will be how far certain criteria need to be observed for a university to call itself bilingual. The theme is ‘Professionalising Multilingualism in Higher Education : Developing Plurilingual Individuals and Multilingual Institutions’.

^{vi} Cf. data on Malaysia in Asmah Haji Omar 1996.

^{vii} <http://www.norden.org/>.

^{viii} This British children’s nursery rhyme runs:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
 Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
 All the king's horses,
 And all the king's men,
 Couldn't put Humpty together again.

For visualisations and historical analysis, Google is a good starting-point.

^{ix} This is a 13-page document, that elaborates many points, among them:

- the right to education, teaching and research can only be fully enjoyed in an atmosphere of academic freedom and autonomy for institutions of higher education ...
- Recognizing the diversity of cultures in the world ...
- Teaching in higher education is a profession: it is a form of public service.

^x See Raymond Williams’ critique in Phillipson 2009.