

ACTA International TESOL, Cairns, 2012

*TESOL as a global trade –
ethics, equity and ecology*

TESOL expertise in the empire of English

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Handelshøjskolen i Danmark

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Lecture structure

- Personal narrative through TESOL post-1945
- the **expansion of English** over three centuries
- causal factors in establishing TESOL as a profession and as a '*trade*', querying in what sense it can be considered as '*global*' and the discourses that serve to legitimate it
- challenges due to the **problematical** roles played by English and by the TESOL *expertise export business*, which interlocks with contemporary **empire**.
- Such issues are **professional** – to do with foundations of our *expertise* - but also deeply **political, cultural and ethical**, since they impact on *the ecology of language worldwide*.

British global English

A new career service is needed, for gentlemen teachers of English with equivalent status to ‘the Civil Service, Army, Bar, or Church’, an ‘army of linguistic missionaries’ generated by a ‘training centre for post-graduate studies and research’, and a ‘central office in London, from which teachers radiate all over the world’. The new service must ‘lay the foundations of a world-language and culture *based on our own*’.

R.V. Routh, 1941, The diffusion of British culture outside England. A problem of post-war reconstruction,
Cambridge University Press

RP

Commissioned into this army, 1964-73

By 1992 – *Linguistic imperialism* – deeply concerned about ”Professional and ethical aspects of ELT ‘aid’** ”, the section heading for pages 11-15, which cite**

- a Ford Foundation report which is extremely critical of language and education ‘aid’ projects,
- and a dozen individual language in education scholars, all of whom express serious concern and disquiet.

What has happened since?

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Advice to a 22-year-old?

Massive ethical problems

- Realize you are *under-qualified* – read!
- Learn a/the *local language*
- Don't assume your own *culture* is superior
- Do not engage in covert *Christian missionizing*.

Wong, Mary S. and Suresh Canagarajah (eds.) 2009.
*Christian and critical English Educators in Dialogue.
Pedagogical and ethical dilemmas.* Routledge.

TESOL formation: British Council Annual Reports

1958-59: Over the past years (1945-55 to 1959-60) the Council's gross annual income has almost exactly **doubled, from £3 million to £6 million**. Our income is drawn mainly, though not entirely, from **public funds**.

1961-62: Commonwealth Education Conference ... envisaged the **creation of a career service** for experienced and trained teachers from English-speaking parts of the Commonwealth to go overseas to train local teachers to teach effectively .. A year's preparation at Universities of London, Edinburgh, Leeds, Bangor.

1964-73 *Personal experience*

BC training 1964: behaviourist audiolingualism

Algeria 1965-68: English teaching

MA *Leeds* in Linguistics & ELT 1968-69: exploratory

Yugoslavia 1969-72: in-service English *teacher training*

London 1972-73: *European Unit, ETIC*

British Council Annual Report 2009-2010

- **We are the UK's international organization for cultural and educational relations.**
- **Turnover £705 million.**
- **We generated £2.50 for every £1 of public money received.**
- **We support the English language industry, worth £3-4 billion a year.**

Elsewhere the BC states that in higher education the British economy benefits by **£11 billion directly** and by a further **£12 billion indirectly.**

Naidoo & Jamieson's review of higher education identifies three major trends globally

1. the public university as a public good is under attack,
2. the tandem of GATS decreeing that education is a commodity and corporations converting this claim into reality,
3. eLearning is facilitating these processes; together these are 'resulting in the gradual commodification of higher education' (ibid.)

Ninnes, Peter & Meeri Hellstén (eds.) 2005. *Internationalizing higher education. Critical explorations of pedagogy and policy*, Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong, and Springer. p 44

- ?4. Expansion of 'English-medium' universities; foreign students at BANA universities; TESOL pre-sessional EAP

British Council 2011-15 Corporate Plan

the business strategy (English; education; the arts)

- increase English language policy work, teacher training and digital English
- further develop the impact and contribution which the English language makes to international development
- focus on teacher training in the UK and promoting the UK as an English language learning destination
- further develop digital and classroom content
- invest in the growth of our English and exams businesses in important markets and maintain their reputation for quality
- increase income by over ten per cent annually to over £500 million by 2014
- increase the number of exam takers by broadening our range of examinations
- further develop our services, including online, for exams awarding bodies, exam candidates and test users.

Director of the British Council's English strategic business unit, Mark Robson

... the new Executive Board post, in charge of the British Council's global set of English language and exams activities. Mark also sits on the British Council's **management board**, and currently chairs the British Council's **holding and trading companies** – BC Holdings United Kingdom Limited and BC Trading.

His professional career began with the **market research** agency MORI, before he moved in to **marketing management** with **Colgate-Palmolive**.

Most recently, Mark was **Vice-President Sales and Marketing** for **Georgia-Pacific's \$2 billion European paper products' business**.

Managers/directors' salaries are adjusted through annual bonuses.

The vision

The British Council is a great British institution, and it is a global good. ...

Our total turnover will increase from £753 million in 2011 to £968 million in 2015, with the share of activity funded through paid services increasing from 73 per cent to 84 per cent.

The semantics of services: 16 core meanings of service and four more for services (*Encarta World English Dictionary*)

TESOL International and US Dept. Of State

new partnership to aid ELT worldwide, 14 .11 2011

- **Information and networking worldwide**
- **Support for ELT outside USA to improve ELT efficiency and capacity building**
- **”Work in coordination with U.S. companies, universities, publishers, and other ELT stakeholders to enhance their international outreach and operations; and**
- **Expand countries’ access to U.S.-based English language resources and expertise.”**

13.01.12, John Segota, spokesperson for *TESOL International*, cited in *The Guardian Weekly*

”We don’t see this as a challenge to the British Council, which is well established. Nor do we just see this as providing marketing. Our aim is to expand the reach of US expertise ...

(there is) no large-scale co-ordination of effort in the US analogous with the work the British Council does for the UK ELT sector”.

TESOL supply and demand: what's the problem?

Symptoms of *supply*: vast expansion in recent decades of

- TESOL teaching and research in 'English-speaking countries', in **higher education** and the **private** sector
- with **specialised sub-disciplines** and fashions in applied linguistics research (e.g. SLA, postmodernist intellectual speculation), English teaching and testing
- marketing and export of 'English-medium' universities, **CLIL**, **primary English**, **English as a universal need**

BUT the ***demand*** for English

- is orchestrated in **elite discourses** uncritically
- is seldom related within TESOL to **corporate and imperial globalisation**, the economy, neoliberalism, or even **education policy in general**
- results of meeting the demand **do not** indicate that increased TESOL activity is **an unmitigated success story**.

Zubeida Mustafa, Learning English supplement, The Guardian Weekly, 13.01.12

Language myth cripples Pakistan's schools

- "People believe that **English is the magic wand** that can open the door to prosperity.... .
- This language paradox has undermined our education standards. **With no well-defined language as a medium of instruction policy,** we have a fractured system that divides society."
 - Excellent *private* sector for a wealthy **elite, English-based schooling**
 - **(Lower) middle class,** cheaper *private* schools: 'strange **mix of languages** pretending to be English-medium'
 - *Public* schools in **indigenous languages,** 'dismal'.

Language policy history and challenges in Pakistan

Tariq Rahman

English serves to facilitate the entry of the rich and the powerful into elitist positions, while filtering out those who are educated in Urdu.

Naz Rassool

The use of English as the sole medium of higher education (for only 2.63% of the population) ensures the cultural alienation of the elite from the rest of the population ... an under-resourced educational system as well as unequal access to English as an international lingua franca, therefore, is counter-productive to national growth.

British Council report by Hywel Coleman concludes that English language teaching is frequently unsuccessful, that it does not help children in their educational careers and that it may actually be counterproductive.

*Denver Kisting, in The Guardian Weekly
Learning English Supplement, 13 January 2012*

“Language policy ‘poisoning’ children”

- **English** has been the medium of instruction in most of **Namibia**’s classrooms for nearly 20 years; *teachers* are **failing** in competency tests – 63% have a poor grasp of English - calls for change are mounting.
- **Poor exam results. 50% of *16-year-olds* fail.**

Such results tally with experience elsewhere.

Who is responsible for the policy?

Postcolonial language policy: the evidence

**”Namibian educational language planning:
English for liberation or neo-colonialism?”**

*Robert Phillipson, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas,
and Hugh Africa*

(AILA conference 1983, Zambia twice, article 1986)

- 1. English as an official language in Namibia will be assisted if Namibian languages are maximally used inside and outside the classroom.**

Namibian conclusions (continued)

- 2. Resistance to the use of the mother tongue is an expression of a colonized consciousness, which serves the interests of global capitalism and South Africa, and the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie who are most dependent on capitalist interests.**
- 3. Namibia should follow the example of those multilingual states which have alternative language programmes leading to bilingualism.**
- 4. Educational aid from "donors" should be long-term and explicitly accept Namibian multilingual goals.**

evidence of fundamental problems, identified by scholars in South Africa, the USA, and Australia

- **The ELT profession does not seem to problematize the relation between English and local languages ... the ‘hegemony’ of English does not seem to be an issue to be engaged with or debated. (Michael Joseph and Esther Ramani 2006: 187)**
- **For too long, a good deal of ELT pedagogy has been informed by an English-only discourse. (Sandra McKay 2010: 112)**
- **The dominant players, the donors and Australian universities hold the validated, most valued capital in the field. Symbolic violence underlies the projects’ delivery of ELT and EL teacher education. Host-country teachers and ministry officials’ skills, knowledge and interests are invalidated and stigmatised. (Jacquie Widin 2010: 185)**

Medium of instruction?

UNESCO 1953, *The use of the vernacular languages in education.*

UNESCO 2003. *Education in a multilingual world.*

Pinnock, H. 2009. *Language and education: the missing link. How the language used in schools threatens the achievement of Education for All.*

Save the Children's report for the Centre for British Teachers, www.cfbt.com.

Factors influencing language in education policy

- **the US and UK governments** working through the **British Council, the World Bank, etc.**
- **complicit local elites** (e.g. Pakistan, Namibia)
- **ignorant decision-makers** (e.g. EU heads of state recommending two foreign languages in primary schools)
- **TESOL professionalism and applied linguistics** construing themselves as divorced from over-arching political and economic agendas and adhering to false principles (e.g. the five fallacies) and
TESOL here does not refer to or include EFL (e.g. in school education and universities in continental Europe)

TESOL pedagogy?

The *five tenets* (Phillipson 1992, chapter 7)

- English is best taught monolingually
- The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker
- The earlier English is taught, the better the results
- The more English is taught, the better the results
- If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop

which are in fact *fallacies*: the monolingual fallacy, the native speaker fallacy, the early start fallacy, the maximum exposure fallacy, the subtractive fallacy.

These combine with

- **Political disconnection**: failure to situate ELT in a wider educational perspective
- ELT as **narrowly technical** training (ibid., 250-262)
- which may facilitate **linguistic imperialism**

Current trends that impact TESOL

- The **language ecology** worldwide is influenced by the **corporate world**, and **international organizations and funding** (EU and regional networks elsewhere, OECD, IMF, World Bank, etc).
- **Publishers** influence language policies.
- **Higher education** is influenced by the increasing use of English as a *lingua academica*, structural hierachisation affecting esteem and career prospects
 - **publications** in English (A) journals
 - **international conferences** privilege English users
 - **Bologna process** and **university rankings** are biassed
- **National languages** may be being downgraded
- Learning of **other foreign languages** is falling
- **Academic freedom** is being restricted

From linguistic imperialism to linguistic neoimperialism

- **neo-colonialism in South countries**
- **cultural cold war activities in Europe, east and west**
- **economic, financial and educational McDonaldization**
- **a neoimperial world order largely constituted through English builds on English linguistic capital accumulation and the marginalisation and dispossession of other types of linguistic capital**
- **contested and resisted.**

Educational 'aid' to Sri Lanka

World Bank funding for education has systematically neglected local languages, and created openings for ELT in many former colonies: 'The vast amount of money that was made available for universities in Sri Lanka would not have been possible outside of a context of coercion by the World Bank and other interested parties (such as the USA) to regress to English Only education in a multilingual country' (Perera and Canagarajah 2010: 116).

European Union integration: a Franco-German agenda, or ...?

The process of European integration might never have come about had it not been imposed on Europe by the Americans.

**Erik Holm, 2001. *The European anarchy. Europe's hard road into high politics.*
Copenhagen Business School Press**

Pascaline Winand, 1993. *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe.* New York: St Martin's Press.

Annual USA-EU summits agree on the integration of economic and foreign policy.

Since 1973 English has gradually become the default in-house language in EU institutions.

The Bologna process

to establish **a single European higher education and research area by 2010**

- implements structural **synchronisation**,
- endorses **neoliberalism**,
- advocates **privatisation** of university funding,
- wants accountability to the **corporate** world
- is being expanded from Europe to cover the rest of the world.

Lisbon treaty: **a single European research area by 2014**

The **communiqués** from the bi-annual meetings of Ministers of Higher Education and Research never refer to language policy. Implicitly this means that '*internationalisation*' is seen as '*English-medium higher education*'.

Linguistic imperialism

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

Empirical questions

- Which types of **linguistic capital** are being invested in during corporate-driven, imperial globalisation?
 - School foreign language policy
 - Minority language policies
 - University language policies
- How is **regional integration** (EU, ASEAN) affecting the language mosaic **nationally** and **internationally**?
 - Commercial language use
 - Promotion of 'international' languages
 - Interfaces between EU/ASEAN institutions and member states
- Is **linguistic capital accumulation additive** rather than **subtractive**? Is a dispossession of linguistic capital in other languages taking place ('domain loss')?
 - Medium of instruction in higher education
 - Scholarly publications
 - Corporate language policies

Iraqi re-education: a task for a former president of a college in New Mexico

John Agresto envisaged ‘the remaking of Iraq’s system of education from scratch. In that context, the stripping of the universities and the education Ministry was, he explained, “the opportunity for a clean start” ... He knew nothing of Iraq, he had refrained from reading books about the country ... Like Iraq’s colleges, Agresto’s mind would be a blank slate... before the sanctions strangled the country, Iraq had the best education system in the region, with the highest literacy rates in the Arab world – in 1985, 89 percent of Iraqis were literate. By contrast, in Agresto’s home state of New Mexico, 46 percent of the population is functionally illiterate’

Naomi Klein, *The shock doctrine. The rise of disaster capitalism* 2008, 338.

Iraqi land could not be treated as *terra nullius*.

Iraqi brains could be seen as *cerebrum nullius*.

Examples of recent English/TESOL expansion

- **ESP: English for military purposes ('peace-keeping', NATO post-communist expansion)**
 - **Upgrading English skills in Iraq and Afghanistan**
 - **Donations of books to Iraq higher education by the British Council after Iraqi libraries had been firebombed by the US and UK**
 - **Iraqis in universities in the UK**
 - **etc.**
- (Ahmed Kabel & RP, submitted to *Applied Linguistics*)**

Charles Alderson (ed.) 2009 *The politics of language education. Individuals and institutions*

- ”much aid was political in the sense that it was intended not simply to **alleviate poverty** (since then an international byword) but to **benefit Britain**, the British taxpayer, British companies and institutions and incidentally British individuals like me, as well as those who lived overseas as Education Development Officers, as key English Language teachers and more.” (p. 223)
- ”Language education is **an international business and activity**” (p. 25)

The book aims at revealing the role of individual participants (**micropolitics**), and ignores the **macropolitical**, including

- whether the expertise was appropriately qualified,
- the myth that ELT professionalism is universally relevant in a dynamic multilingual world,
- the limitations of monolingualism in teaching and testing.

See my review article in *Language and Education* 2010/2, 151-169

to alleviate poverty?

”It appears to be a widely held assumption that Britain (and indeed the Western states as a whole) promotes certain grand principles – peace, democracy, human rights and economic development in the Third World – as natural corollaries to the basic political and economic priorities that guide its foreign policy. ... The concept of Britain’s basic benevolence is, however, unsustainable in view of the historical and contemporary facts of the real world. ... **the mass poverty and destitution** that exist in the much of the Third World are direct products of the structure of the international system ... **the world’s powerful states have pursued policies with regard to the Third World which knowingly promote poverty.**”

Curtis, Mark 1995, *The ambiguities of power. British foreign policy since 1945.* Zed Books.

2003, *Web of deceit. Britain’s real role in the world.* Vintage.

Contributions to Alderson's anthology

document

- massive **failure to achieve project objectives**, in Nepal, Bangladesh, China, and in post-communist NATO training
 - **test development** in Hungary, Spain and Slovenia **failing**
 - language **test development** subordinating **quality** to **commercial constraints**
 - commercial pressures **constraining university freedom of research and ELT professionalism** in the UK: “Language education is clearly the victim of academic politics and snobbery, as well as of the increasing **commercialisation** of UK universities” (5)
 - **censorship** by editors of academic journals
- RP: examples of the workings of **linguistic imperialism**.

Jacquie Widin's study (2010)

of Australian projects in two Asian contexts,

Illegitimate practices. Global English language education

With inspiration from critical applied linguistics and Bourdieu, Widin analyses **ELT projectisation** - where the fields of education, political power, and commerce overlap - so as to explore hegemonic understandings of 'aid', and how the supplanting of local knowledge by the imposition of Australian methods and content deprives 'partners' of legitimacy, and **serves Australian rather than local interests**. "Symbolic violence underlies the projects' delivery of ELT and EL teacher education. ... Bilingual host-country teachers are denied the opportunity to accumulate linguistic capital. ... deep problems with the project approach". She explores what success there might be, and for whom ... the struggles in language and discourse ... the problematical role of the 'native speaker' ignorant of the host culture, etc.

How?

- **How did this problematical state of affairs arise: a profitable and profit-seeking global **trade** of dubious benefit to others?**
- **How did We get Them, the Other, the Periphery, into this kind of **inequitable** subordination, and ultimately **unethical** exploitation?**
- **We need a fuller **historical perspective**.**

Tacitus, A.D. 97



- **Who the first inhabitants of Britain were, whether natives or immigrants, remains obscure: one must remember we are dealing with barbarians.**

European colonization has deep roots: *Tacitus* on cultural and linguistic assimilation

Agricola trained the sons of the chiefs in the liberal arts... The result was that in place of distaste for **the Latin language came a passion to command it. In the same way, our national dress came into favour and the toga was everywhere to be seen. And so the Britons were gradually led on to the amenities that make vice agreeable – arcades, baths and sumptuous banquets. They spoke of such novelties as ‘**civilization**’ when really they were only a feature of **enslavement**.**

Monolingualism in the British Isles

The 1536 Act of Union with Wales entailed subordination to the ‘rights, laws, **customs and speech of England**... it was thought prudent to ensure that a monoglot Welsh people living in “rude” and “dark” corners of the land should become familiar with the language and mores of the “civilising” English world’.

Despite an elite which gradually substituted English for Welsh, the Welsh language survived because a 1563 Act decided that **the Bible** should be translated into **Welsh**. This played a decisive role in Christianising Wales and spreading literacy. **Over 2,600 books** were published in Welsh in the eighteenth century, whereas in **Ireland and Scotland**, Protestantism was propagated in English and the imposition of English was more thorough: ‘**only 70 titles** were published in the Scottish **Gaelic** language before 1800’.

Geraint Jenkins, *A concise history of Wales*, Cambridge UP, 2007.

Matthew Arnold

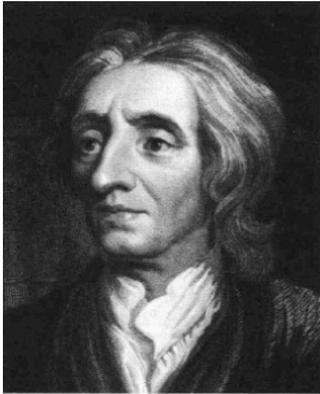
His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, 1853



Whatever encouragement individuals may think it desirable to give to the preservation of the Welsh language on grounds of philological or antiquarian interest, it must be the desire of a government to **render its dominions**, as far as possible, **homogeneous**, and to break down barriers to the freest intercourse between the different parts of them. Sooner or later, **the difference of language between Wales and England will probably be effaced**, as has happened with the difference of language between Cornwall and the rest of England.

John Locke, Second treatise of government.

Chapter 5: On Property, 1698



God has commanded Man to labour. He gave the use and **title to the land** to the Industrious and Rational. Since the indigenous Nations of America have **failed to labour**, *‘they are rich in Land, and poor in all the Comforts of Life... [and] have not one hundredth part of the Conveniences we enjoy: And a King of a large and fruitful Territory there feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day Labourer in England’.*

‘In the beginning, all the World was America, and more so than that is now; for no such thing as Money was any where known’. The fruits of labour can be converted into gold, silver, or money, serving to legitimate *‘disproportionate and unequal Possession of the Earth’*, this inequality being *‘tacitly but voluntarily’* agreed on by society.

terra nullius = global americanisation
Aboriginals have no ‘title to the land’

The USA: an empire, articulated since 1786



From the time of the USA declaring its independence, it has seen itself as a model for the world, with a divine mission to impose its values. George Washington saw the United States as a ‘**rising empire**’, and ‘in 1786 wrote that, “However unimportant America may be considered at present ... there will assuredly come a day when this country will have **some weight in the scale of empires**”. The address was read out in its entirety in Congress every February until the mid-1970s’.

English in colonial America, the British empire, and corporate 'Empire'

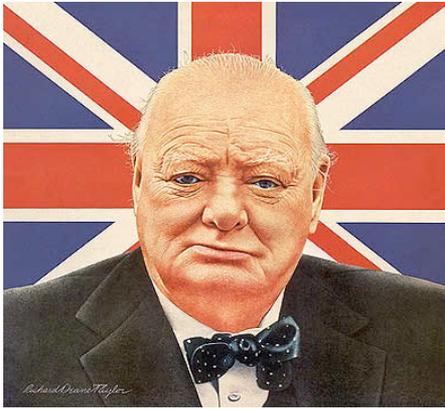
English is destined to be in the next and succeeding centuries more generally **the language of the world** than Latin was in the last or French in the present age.

John Adams to Congress, 1780

Continuous investment since then in the **linguistic capital** of English: UK, USA, British dominions and colonies, post-1945 Europe, global elites, and mass education.

Does English **linguistic capital accumulation** entail the **dispossession** of the linguistic capital of others?

Winston Churchill



- **the British Empire and the United States who, fortunately for the progress of mankind, happen to speak the same language and very largely think the same thoughts.**

House of Commons, 24 August 1941

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

Harvard University, 6 September 1943

Global = American

manifest destiny of Anglo-Saxon culture
to spread around **the world**

1830

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

Americanisation and **'Global' English** are **projects** not
realities: its **processes** and **products** are promoted to
serve particular interests. The same is true of the
unfinished project of creating a **European 'Union'** (the
United States of Europe?) since the early 1940s

British government policy 1954 (Drogheda Report)

National propaganda overseas was needed:

- **to support our foreign policy**
- **to preserve and strengthen the Commonwealth and Empire**
- **to increase our trade and protect our investments overseas (p. 4)**

... the work of the British Council, especially in regard to the teaching of English in Asia, will be highly beneficial to our overseas trade. (p. 29)

(The BC was not then active in Africa.)

Discourses of English as a 'world' language

Carnegie Foundation funding for

- 1934 conference in New York on *The use of English as a world language*, explicitly to establish English as world language on a basis of UK-US collaboration.
- 1935 follow-up in London at the Colonial Office.
- EFL course at Institute of Education, University of London, modelled on Teachers College Columbia University, NY.

RP, *Linguistic imperialism continued*, pp. 112-131

Joan Roelofs 2003. *Foundations and public policy. The mask of pluralism*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Global English is a myth

- A **demographic** falsehood.
- A **project** behind which there are identifiable forces, **processes** and **products**, including academic marketing of global English overtly (e.g. Crystal, ELF) and covertly (passivity).
- The **legitimation** of '**world**' or '**global**' English, as though it serves all equally well, ignores its connection to the British empire, the American empire, and the financial, economic, military, and cultural forces that have established and maintain the dominance of English in a fundamentally **inequitable** world order that **ethically** indefensible hierarchies of language are an integral constituent of.

globalisation

- **Capitalist**
 - **communist/third world**
 - **European expansion worldwide (territorial, mental)**
 - **trade, wars, media, technology, consumerism, etc.**
 - **neoliberalism: the expansion of market 'logic'**
 - **UN, World Bank, IBM, NATO, WTO, Rio, etc.**
 - **regional alliances**
 - **European Union: 23 official and working languages**
 - **ASEAN: English the sole language**
 - **African Union: mainly ex-colonial languages**
- English dominant**

terra nullius; res nullius; lingua nullius?

terra nullius

A Latin term from Roman law meaning

land belonging to no-one

and by extension in international law,

land over which there is no sovereignty

res nullius

An *object owned by no-one*, e.g. animals in the wild

(water?)

lingua nullius

Is English now a 'global' language, *no-one's property*?

(Widdowson, Pennycook, Makoni)

English a *lingua franca*

There are major risks in considering that ‘international’ English is detached from social forces.

“English being disembedded from national cultures can never mean that it floats culture-free (... or) is culturally neutral. The point may be simple, but it is often elided; and this elision constitutes a politics of English as a global language which precisely conceals the cultural work which that model of language is in fact performing.” (*Martin Kayman* 2004, 17)

Filius nullius ... lingua nullius

Advocates of fluctuating non-normative forms of English – English as a global *lingua franca* (the ELF bandwaggon) - seem to be treading in the steps of Locke.

Martin Kayman (2009) draws on the concept in English law of *filius nullius*, a bastard child with no legal right to inherit property, and considers that English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is erroneously conceptualised as an analogous parentless linguistic offspring in the global cultural *terra nullius*.

Are we now *all linguistic Americans*, occupying more and more of the globe's linguistic territory, which we treat as a *global linguistic terra nullius*? Is English seen as a de-territorialised *lingua nullius*?

Upside down world?

Counteracting indefensible hierarchies of language means that we need in our teaching and writings to be critically and historically alert, avoiding the unreflective positivism and exhibitionism denounced by **Max Weber a century ago, or merely self-referential, exhibitionist research (Weber and **Angel Lin** cited in Phillipson 2010, 209-210).**

One example of the TESOL trade that is attempting to influence the language ecology of a former colony in unprofessional and unethical ways, *English-next India*, by **David Graddol for the British Council.**

The continuities in imperialist discourse

- *Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education* for the Governor General, Lord William Bentinck, 1835
- *David Graddol's English Next India*, 2010.

Trevelyan, Macaulay's brother-in-law:

‘our language, our learning, and ultimately our religion in India... India as a base of operations, that afterwards may be applied ... to the surrounding nations’ (to *Lord Bentinck*, 1834).

From the gospel of Christ and Mammon to ...?

Macaulay

Graddol



Macaulay: education to create ‘interpreters between us and the many millions we govern’

Gandhi: ‘To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave us. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us.’

Thiru Kandiah: ‘a recipe for the permanent calibanisation of the colonial Other’

Macaulay 1835

Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations... the literature now extant ... is of far greater value than all the literature which 300 years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together.

Graddol 2010

English is now seen as a 'basic skill' which all children require if they are fully to participate in 21st century civil society.... It can now be used to communicate to people from almost any country in the world ... We are fast moving into a world in which not to have English is to be marginalised and excluded.

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Current myths that Graddol draws on

- **English as a global language**
- **English ‘the language of business across Europe’**
- **European universities are shifting from local languages to English**
- **There is a global consensus on how English should be learnt**
- **The early start fallacy**
- **The UK has the solution to India’s educational challenges.**

Macaulay

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

Graddol

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

Linguistic neoimperialism

The Sun, 18 January 2008

Gordon Brown will today pledge to export the English language to the world – and boost our economy by billions. Mr Brown believes teaching English will quickly become one of Britain’s biggest exports. It could add a staggering £50billion a year to the UK economy by 2010.

Assessing or orchestrating demand?

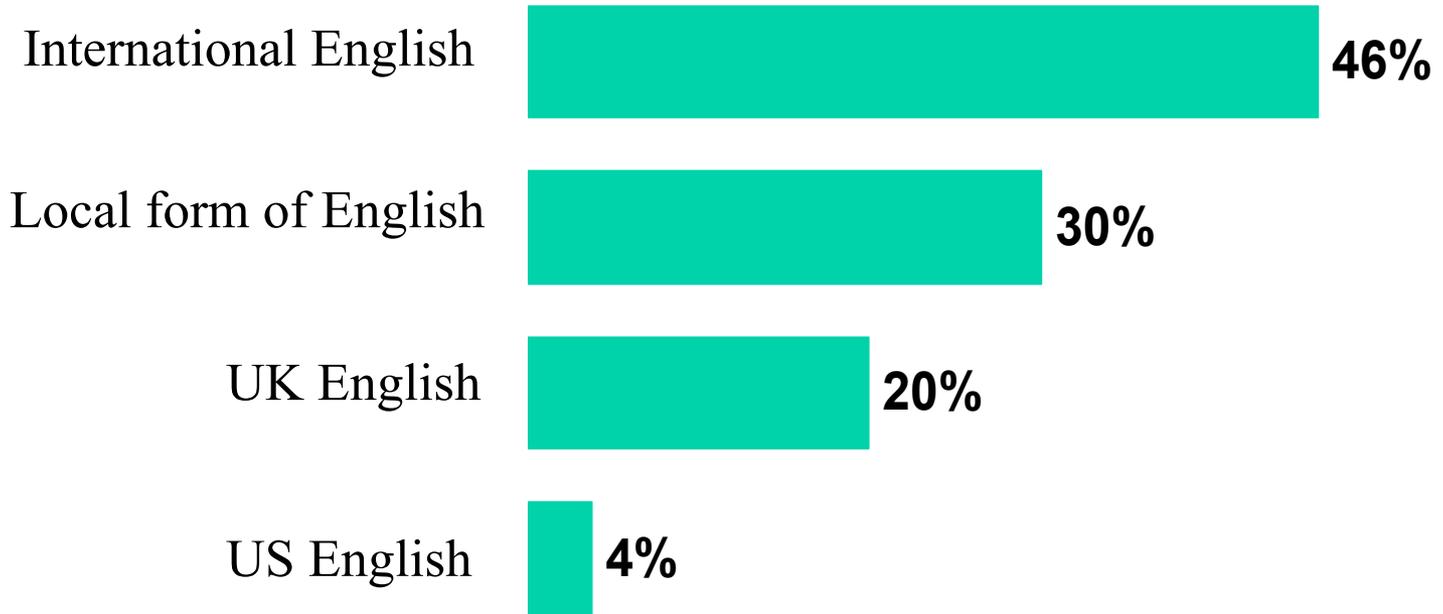
Director-General of the British Council

- *English Next India* tells us that from education to the economy, from employability to social mobility, the prospects for India and its people will be greatly enhanced by bringing English into *every classroom, every office and every home*. (italics added)
- We know that right around the world young people want access to English language to give them the skills they need to take part in the *globalising economy* but also to get *access to all the knowledge and understanding that we have in this country*. And our ambition, as an organisation, is that every learner and teacher of English right around the world should have *access to the best of English language teaching from this country*.

Study by the market research agency Ipsos MORI for the British Council in 2009, *Demand for English language services – India and China* (on BC website – 72 PP slides on India).

International English most popular, except among current adult learners

Which if any of these different types of English would you choose to learn/for your child to learn?

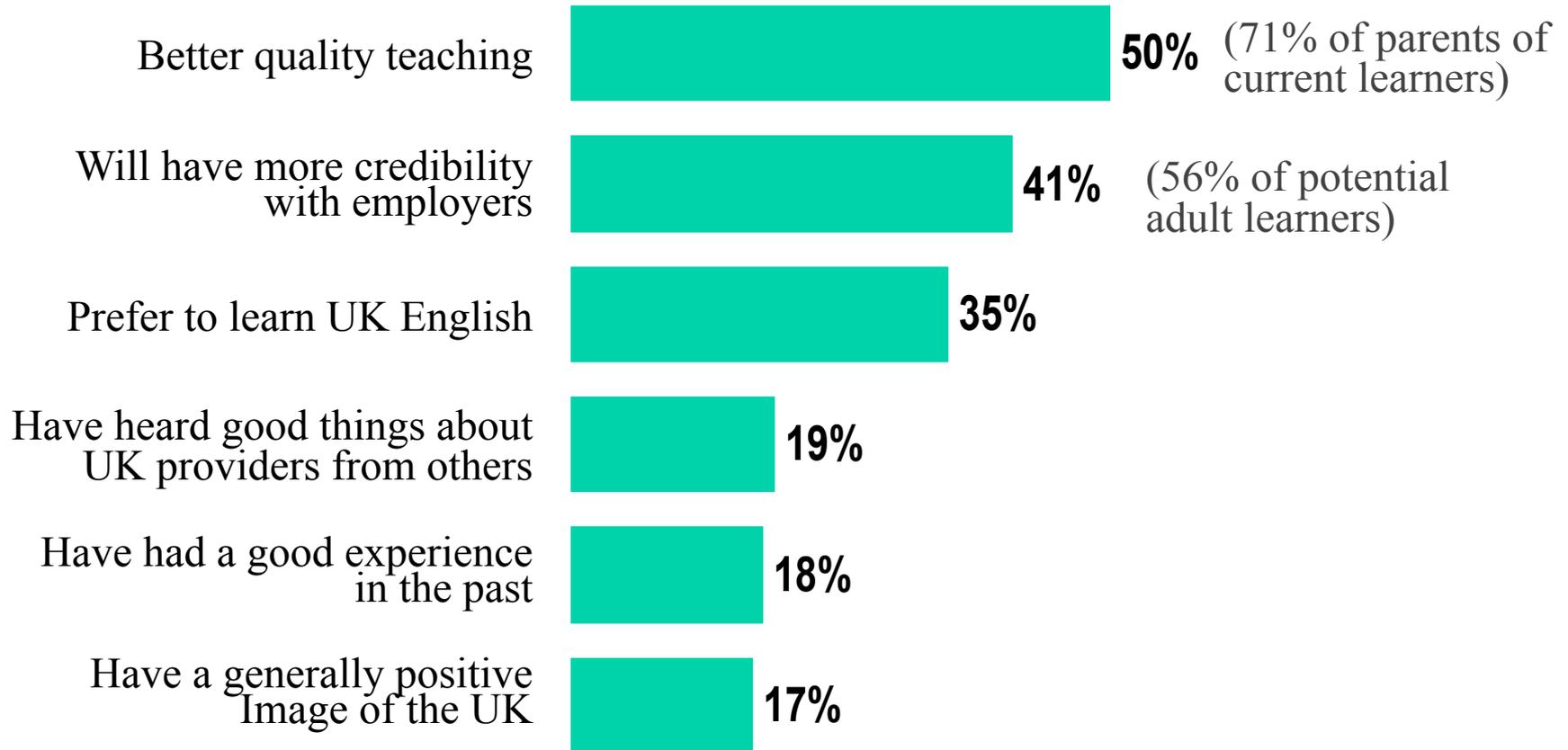


	Adult learner	Adult potential learner	Parent of current learner	Parent of potential learner
International English	12%	60%	56%	54%
Local form of English	54%	21%	26%	18%

Better quality teaching, credibility and UK English = key reasons

Why do you say you/your child would study at a UK English language institute?

Top mentions



Base: All likely to study at a UK ELT in the next 2-3 years, India (135), potential adult learner (36), parent of current learner (31)

Continuities

- **Lord William Bentinck**
- **Macaulay's *Minute***

- **English as 'universal'**
- **Limited budget**
- **Good business**
- **Major impact**
- **Covert political economy**
- **Imperial hubris**
- **Linguistic imperialism**

Martin Davidson, BC
Graddol's *English next*
India

English a 'basic skill'
Limited budget
Good business
Impact?
Covert political economy
Cultural pathology
Linguistic neoimperialism

Ongoing processes of linguistic neoimperialism

- *Such marketing is unethical*, as are some types of the export of TESOL expertise.
- Discourse that claims that English is needed universally or assumes that English serves all equally well evinces a shift from *terra nullius* to a *lingua nullius*.
- The dominance of publishing in English is *restricting* publishing in other languages. It is *inequitable*.
- Academic productivity is increasingly measured by bibliometric *quantification* that is supplanting *quality*, and restricting academic freedom. It is also *inequitable*.
- The unequal investment in linguistic capital is buttressed by largely unquestioned ideologies, processes and structures that serve to sustain and consolidate linguistic neoimperialism and are harmful for the global linguistic *ecology*.

Resistance

If we are to avoid the emergence of global linguistic apartheid, active language policy measures to sustain diversity and increase social justice are needed.

Studies in the Nordic countries of whether English represents a threat to Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, etc. have led to a Nordic Declaration and to legislation in Sweden, and the elaboration of language policies by some universities.

Nordic Declaration of Language Policy, 2006

- to ensure that Nordic languages remain fully viable,
- and function in parallel with English for certain purposes,
- that competence in other languages is promoted,
- that policies are evolved for achieving these goals,
- and that public awareness of language policy issues is raised.

Published in Danish, English, Faeroese, Finnish, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Norwegian, Saami, and Swedish, and aims at strengthening all these languages.

Other languages plus English

I have nothing against *anyone* becoming maximally competent in English. This is logical given the global linguistic mosaic. The question is *how this should be achieved*, and in what sort of a *balance* with competence in other languages. This issue needs to be addressed at all levels of *national education*, in *companies*, in the *media*, in *international organizations*, in the *home*, and in *TESOL organizations*. All of us who function multilingually in our domestic and professional lives know that it can be achieved when certain conditions are met.

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