

**English as a global language – English as a major factor for Globalisation,
in the case of neo-colonialism?**

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Table of content:

Introduction	1
1. Globalisation	2
1.1 Globalisation – historical overview and today’s situation	3
1.2 Supranational Institutions	4
2. English as a global language	5
2.1 Need for a global language.....	7
2.2 Spread of English	7
3. Colonialism	10
3.1 Decolonization.....	12
3.2 Neo-Colonialism – linguistic Imperialism	12
Conclusion.....	15
Bibliography.....	16
Statement of authorship.....	17

Introduction

“To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them.” (Gandhi, 1908)

“The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion [...] but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do.” (Huntington, 1997)

These two quotations are connected very closely, although nearly 100 years are between them, since they were made. The following work tries to show the close connection of these statements and wants to answer the question if the English language has influenced the process of Globalisation in our modern time and if there is some sort of Neo-Colonialism today, because of the global spread of the English language.

First of all, the clarification of the widely used term ‘Globalisation’ is indispensable for this academic paper. Later on, it is important to get an overview about the historical and today’s development of Globalisation. What are the main differences between the situation in the past and today? Are there commonalities and if yes, what kind of commonalities? After clarifying these points, the next step will be to highlight the consequences on today’s social and political structure, especially with regard to the formation and the function of supranational institutions.

Furthermore, the second chapter will be about the English language and its worldwide distribution. This chapter wants to show the necessity of a global language in an interconnected world and wants to discuss, whether English is a global language or if it is not. In this context, it is of major interest to examine the manner of the spread of English in modern society, over the last decades. Who uses English and under what circumstances is English used today and how did those English users acquire those language skills? These questions will be answered in chapter two.

At the end, the third chapter will connect the first two chapters and will show the correlation between Globalisation, the spread of English and a new form of Colonialism (Neo-Colonialism) today. After some background information and a short historical revision, chapter three is about the relation between the western countries and the less privileged countries in especially the eastern regions, as for example the Asian continent, as well. The last and very important question then will be, if there is some sort of Neo-Colonialism via language acquisition today? And are there any dangers resulting from this certain situation for modern society in terms of a new linguistic imperialism?

1. Globalisation

At present there are a lot of different situations, where people get confronted with the terms of Globalisation, Globality and Globalism. Today, the concept of globalisation occurs in the modern media, in politics, in society and way more fields, nearly every day. But what exactly is Globalisation? What is meant by Globalisation? The following chapter will answer these questions and will take a closer look at the influence and the connection of the English language and the worldwide interconnectedness. Firstly, it is fundamental to define the term of Globalization. Holger Rossow defines it in his book “Facets of Globalisation” as follows:

The term globalisation should only be used as a descriptive umbrella term for all those processes that lead to the emergence of a global social space or characterise that space but not as an explanation for those processes. This would not only turn our attention more strongly on the actual causes of globalisation and the responsible actors but also help to counter attempts to turn ‘globalisation’ into a scapegoat for a broad range of unwanted social developments and to avoid a reification of the concept. In view of the wide variety of the processes and phenomena that are subsumed under the term of globalisation and the numerous different conceptualisations any indiscriminate use should be avoided. It is always necessary to identify the specific dimension and aspect of globalisation, to name the actors and those who are affected. (Rossow 2016, 21)

As we can see in Rossow’s definition, Globalisation is a process, which never ends completely and where quite a few factors and aspects from different directions have to be summarized under the “umbrella” of globalisation, such as social, political, cultural and economic aspects. Globality instead, is more about the consequences of those processes, which is an emergence of an increasingly global social space (Rossow 2016, 21). The last term, which is often used in this context, is Globalism which Rossow describes as:

The term globalism [...] is connected to processes and phenomena of globalisation. The conceptualisation of globalism starts from the premise that discourses are not merely linguistic reflections of certain circumstances and processes but are placed in reciprocal relationship. With regard to the Relationship between globalisation on the one hand and discursive formation of globalism on the other mutually constitute and influence each other. (Rossow 2016, 22)

Secondly, with these definitions in mind, the next step is to get a specific imagination of globalisation in a social and linguistical context.

Therefore there are two different approaches. On the one hand globalisation with the function as an *explanandum*, which means that globalisation can be perceived as a result of specific historical processes and changes. In this case these processes have the capacity as a catalyst for the spread of a common global social space. On the other hand, globalisation can also be categorised as an *explanans*. If we understand globalisation as an *explanans*,

globalisation is mainly understood as the reason for the changes in modern society (Rossow 2019, 23).

1.1 Globalisation – historical overview and today’s situation

After the disambiguation, another very interesting aspect to look at is, if the process of Globalisation can be seen as a controlled voluntary or an unknowingly and involuntary process, which occurs automatically in modern society or is forced by the policymakers as well as in which way Globalisation has changed over the last centuries during the period of modern human civilisation.

If we look back into the 16th century, we will recognise that even in that time there had been a process which is comparable to our modern Globalisation. The next big step on this development is the industrial revolution in the 19th century, where basically the capitalist method of production was installed in the industry (Auernheimer 2019, 32). But in contrast to this statement, Hobsbawm says instead that there has been just a limited version of the world economy from 1848 till 1875 compared to today’s standards (Hobsbawm 2017c, 89).

However, the main difference between the process of Globalisation in the 19th century and today is, that back in the 19th century the focus was on the export of capital and goods and the looting of the colonies. But today’s form of globalisation is stamped by the worldwide interconnection of production processes. Nevertheless, one of the main reasons for this huge improvement has been the digital revolution over the last couple of decades, which made communication and coordination way easier for modern companies than before (Auernheimer 2019, 32). The German author Goerg Auernheimer says in his book “Globalisierung” from 2019 that there were, in his opinion, three drastic events or developments in 1990, which influenced the process of globalisation in a fundamental way:

1. The implosion of the Soviet Union
2. The new technology in communication and information
3. The neo-liberal politics, which was internationally regulatory by the “Washington Consensus” for the IWF, WTO and the World Bank

Especially Auernheimer’s second point, the development of technology is worth taking a closer look at. Equally important are two aspects which are generated of the new opportunities in communication and information technology. Firstly, a whole new market for a telecommunication sector and its companies arose. And secondly, the speed of data

transmission, which enables people and companies to transfer important information and deposits in no less than a few seconds. In addition to this progression the breakthrough of the internet was another big step into an interconnected world. From now on, people were able to paraphrase acoustic and visual movements into digital algorithms. Furthermore, the US government was very interested in supporting this new technology and was passing various guidelines. These guidelines were dealing with the accessibility and openness of the internet, which should be guaranteed for everyone. Moreover the US government appealed to international institutions such as the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) that they should not prevent the development of the internet by passing “unnecessary” laws and security guidelines and that they had to guarantee an unobstructed dataflow (Auernheimer 2019, 35). With this in mind, it is very well visible, that the USA is a big player in modern Globalisation. To sum up these points, Tony Blair, British Prime Minister from 1997-2007, said in his speech “Doctrine of the International Community” in 1999:

I believe the world has changed in a fundamental way. Globalisation has transformed our economies and our working practices. But globalisation is not just economic. It is a political and security phenomenon. We live in a world where isolationism has ceased to have a reason to exist. By necessity we have to cooperate with each other across nations. [...] We are all internationalists now, whether we like it or not. We cannot refuse to participate in global markets if we want to prosper. We cannot ignore new political ideas in other countries if we want to innovate. We cannot turn our backs on conflicts and the violation of human rights within other countries if we want still to be secure. (Blair, 1999)

This statement by Tony Blair, one of the most powerful men worldwide at that time, shows the importance of Globalisation and that the people must handle Globalisation very reasonably.

These cornerstones were highly necessary on the way to an interconnected world. The interconnection of states can very well be noticed if we regard our present economic system in Europe and worldwide. Therefore, it is reasonable to focus on these economic and political connected structures to have a better understanding of the world as a globalised system.

1.2 Supranational Institutions

In the first instance, we are going to take a look at the economic structures in Europe, after the Second World War. Back in 1951, the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community) was founded. The ECSC was a first association of European states to control the coal and steel production and their delivery. The founding members were Italy, France, Germany and the Benelux states. Just a few years later in 1957 the next association was founded, the EEC

(European Economic Community). The founding members were the same compared to the EGKS but till 1986, six more European countries joined the EWG. In the second instance the political structures and the resulting associations are important. In 1948, the BTO (Brussels Treaty Organisation) or also known as WU (Westunion) was founded by Great Britain, France and the Benelux states and was mainly a military association. As a result of the BTO, the WEU (Westeuropäische Union) was founded, i.e. the BTO members plus Italy and Germany. These different associations and unions were summed up into the EU (European Union) in 1992 that has played a very important role in worldwide economic and political issues since then.

On a wider scope, leaving the European continent, there is a very important Union connecting the interests of countries worldwide. Even during the Second World War in 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America and Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, were working on an international organisation to maintain peace. Later on, in 1945 the UN finally was founded as a supranational institution and 50 founding members were part of it. The UN does still exist today and has 193 members, which are interested in and obligated to maintain peace in the world. These unions and associations show how important the networking and interconnection of countries and states was and still is today to live in a peaceful and organised modern world. But at the same time, it is very important to have a common way of communication to avoid misunderstandings. As the USA and the UK were one of the main driving forces for these consolidations, the English language became more and more important in world politics.

After this short overview about the development of globalisation since the 16th century, the next important step is to light the role of the English language in this context. Which role did the English language play in the process of globalisation and which role does the English language still play in the present time? The following chapter is about to answer these questions and wants to give a wider comprehension why the English language plays such an important role in world issues.

2. English as a global language

The interconnection of our modern world and the existence of supranational institutions, as well as the predominance of so-called global players in various sectors of economy, are increasing the need for a common way of communication, the need for a global language. First

of all, it is important to analyse if English is a global language or not and what kind of characteristics a global language has to fulfil.

In his book “English as a Global Language” David Crystal defines a global language as follows:

A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. This might seem like stating the obvious, but it is not, for the notion of “special role” has many facets. Such a role will be most evident in countries where large numbers of the people speak the language as a mother tongue – in the case of English, this would mean the USA, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, several Caribbean countries and a sprinkling of other territories. However, no language has ever been spoken by a mother-tongue majority in more than a few countries [...], so mother-tongue use by itself cannot give a language global status. To achieve such a status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the world. They must decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers. (Crystal 2003, 4)

To become a global language, it is important to realize that it is not enough, that there are huge numbers of people using this particular language as their mother tongue, but at least it is just as well important to spread the language worldwide in different ways. This distribution of a language can be achieved in two different main ways.

1. Language as an official language of a country, language of communication (e.g. government, law courts, media, educational system)
 2. Language as a priority in foreign-language teaching
- (Crystal 2003, 4)

In the case of the English language, there are over seventy countries worldwide, where English is used as an official language, such as Ghana, Nigeria, Singapore and many more. Compared to other languages like German, French, Russian or Mandarin, just to mention a few, English is used by a distinct majority of other countries as their official language. The second point Crystal mentions is also very important, because especially schoolchildren grow up with a constant use of that certain language during their educational career. Today English is the language most widely taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries.

Besides the number of people who are able to speak this language, it is also very important who those speakers are to achieve the status of a global language. In other words, if we take a step back into the past, the best example for this phenomenon is the Roman Empire. Latin became an international language but not because of huge numbers of Romans in the world, but because of their hegemonic status and their superiority of power (Crystal 2003, 7).

In other words, the power of nations in matters of politics, economy and military, is a weighty reason for the development of their language as a global language.

2.1 Need for a global language

After pointing out that English is a global language, the next questions are, why do we need a global language and which kinds of global Englishes are known today?

First of all, why do we need a global language? As mentioned before in chapter 1, the world society is getting connected more closely. However, communication can also be a national problem. David Crystal describes this problem as follows: “But in communities where there are many languages in contact, as in much of Africa and South-East Asia, such a natural solution does not readily apply. The problem has traditionally been solved by finding a language to act as a *lingua franca*¹, or ‘common language’.” (Crystal 2003, 11) A very good example for this occasion is the state of Laos with 86 different languages. In such areas it is a basic requirement that people make terms to find a common language to communicate. Again, the power of certain ethnic groups or nationalities is a major factor for finding such a *lingua franca*. Back, on a wider scope, Crystal says:” The prospect that a *lingua franca* might be needed for the **whole** world is something which has emerged strongly only in the twentieth century, and since the 1950s in particular.” (Crystal 2003, 12). In this case, Crystal refers to the formation of the UN in 1945 and further supranational institutions as the UNESCO, UNICEF or the WHO. As shown above, English can be considered as a very important global language today, because of the improved mobility of people in a physical way as well as in an electronical way. Borders are getting more permeable, societies and nations become more and more blurred and people with different backgrounds and language skills have to be able to communicate with each other in various situations. But not only on a political level a common language is of major importance. A common way of communication is also highly necessary in, for example, science, medicine, technology or in international areas as an airport, shipping lanes, or in traffic control.

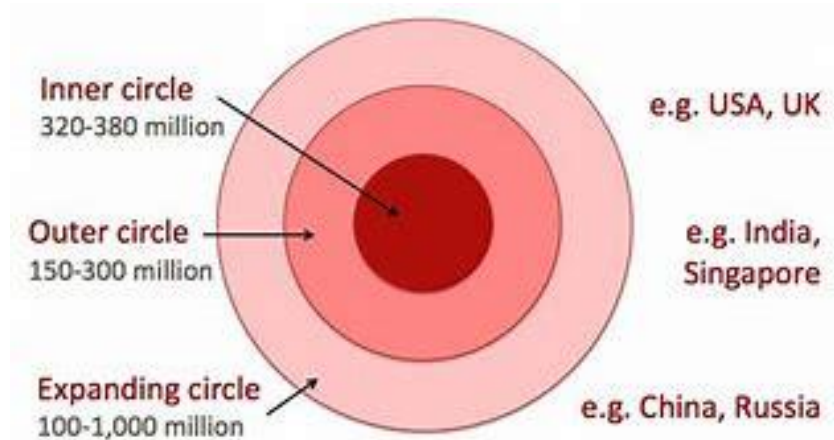
2.2 Spread of English

As mentioned in the chapters before, we are living in a globalised world with the need for a homogenous way of communication. But the question which appears is, why English is

¹ *lingua franca*: a language used for communication between groups of people who speak different languages (Camebridge Dictionary)

the language of choice? What are the main reasons for the global spread of the English language? This part of the second chapter tries to answer these questions.

First of all, it is important to get an overview of the numbers of people who are able to use English in their daily routine. There are around 380 million people using English as their mother tongue today. Furthermore, around 150-300 million people use English as their second language and additionally 100 million – 1 billion people who have learned English at some point in their life and are able to communicate in English. Kachru (1985) developed a model to visualize this situation. The following graph shows a modified version of Kachru's original model.



Graph 1: Krachu's 3 circle Model (<http://www.tesoltraining.co.uk/blog/wp-content/uploads/English-around-the-world.png>)

This graph shows 3 concentric circles with the distribution of people using English today. The 'inner circle' refers to the countries using English as their mother-tongue as for example the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (English as first language-L1). The 'outer circle' deals with nations and their inhabitants, which were mainly colonies of English-speaking countries, as for example Malaysia, Singapore, India, Ghana or Kenya. Especially the USA und the UK were the driving forces during the time of colonialism and were responsible for the spread of English in non-native settings, but where the language has become part of the country's culture. The last circle – the expanding circle – is about the people who have learned English as a foreign language, without any colonial background or other connections to the countries from the inner circle. The expanding circle, for example, includes countries such as China, Russia, Germany, Austria and Poland. Summed up, regarding to this graph and its numbers, we are counting around 1.5 billion people using English worldwide. However, this graph has to be interpreted as a dynamic model because there are also countries which cannot be classified exactly to one of those circles, as for instance

Jamaica, so it is important to understand this model as a dynamic structure with open boundaries.

The next point to clarify is, why English has achieved this kind of pre-eminence in our present time. To understand this pre-eminence, it is necessary to go back into the past. Until the 1600s English was spoken by quite a few people living on the island of Britain, although the actual language was the Celtic language (which still exists today in form of Welsh). The primal spread of English began in the 17th century. Essential for this spread was the arrival of English speakers in North America, Bermuda, Bahamas and the Caribbean (Trudgill & Hannah 2002, 4). For a better understanding of the different varieties of the English language and the distribution worldwide, Trudgill & Hannah write:

[...] [T]here are very many similarities between Scottish (ScotEng) and northern Irish English (NIrEng). NAmEng and the English of southern Ireland (SIrEng) also have many points of similarity. And the English varieties of the Southern Hemisphere (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Falklands), which were transplanted relatively recently from the British Isles, are very similar to those of the south-east of England, from where most immigrants to Australasia and South Africa came. They are quite naturally much less different from the English of England than are the varieties spoken in the Americas, which were settled much earlier. Welsh English (WEng), too, is structurally very similar to EngEng, although the influence of Welsh has played a role in its formation (Trudgill & Hannah 2002, 4ff.)

With this in mind, it is very obvious that the time of colonialism had a huge impact on English as a world or global language and can be considered as the catalyst for the spread of the language. The importance of the colonialism for the English language is dealt with, necessarily at greater length, in chapter 3.

Besides the rise of the British Empire, the development of Northern America as the most powerful nation in the world stabilized English as a global language as well. Especially the development of the modern media technology, including the formation of the world wide web with the USA as the leading force in this sector, as already mentioned in chapter 1, spread the English language worldwide in a very short time. Additionally, the predominance of the USA regarding the production of music, TV series and movies, especially produced in Hollywood, supports the spread of the English language, because there are just a few countries with dubbed soundtracks. Holger Rossow sums up these developments in his introduction to his chapter “Virtual English - Global Spread”.

Most research on the global spread of English agrees that neither economic globalisation nor the exchange of information of cultural influences across continental, national and regional boundaries promoted by it is new in the history of mankind. What is especially remarkable today is the speed and scale at which these processes are developing. World-wide trends like international mobility and expansion of electronic communication via the internet have furthered the need for a shared global language. It is generally

assumed amongst experts that it is English that has become such a predominant global language for most people all over the world (Rossow 2016, 100).

Given these points, the English language can be considered as a global language. English has had a very long journey over the last nearly 500 years to become that important as it is today. English language mainly was stamped by Globalisation, modernisation, technological progress and the colonial period. All these factors together were important to become the world's first language.

3. Colonialism

In the following chapter, four important terms will occur. Therefore it is reasonable to define these terms clearly, right at the beginning: (Western) Colonialism², Neo-Colonialism³, Post-Colonialism⁴ and Imperialism⁵. The relevant frame for the clarification of these terms is the Britannica encyclopaedia. Furthermore, the chapter wants to show the development of colonialism over the last centuries. What are the main characteristics and what are the implications on today's society and today's politics, especially regarding to the Asian continent?

First of all, it is important to understand that (Western) Colonialism was stamped by the European maritime nations, as there were especially Spain and Portugal in the early beginnings, later on the Netherlands, France and England as well (~1400-1800). These nations were the most powerful nations at that period and were pursuing European expansion policies (Schumann 2016, 22 ff.). This expansion policy led to a global distribution of nations and regions between the above-mentioned European nations. Their aim was to conquer, to exploit

² [A] political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world (Britannica)

³ [T]he control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means. [...] The term is now an unambiguously negative one that is widely used to refer to a form of global power in which transnational corporations and global and multilateral institutions combine to perpetuate colonial forms of exploitation of developing countries. (Britannica)

⁴ [T]he historical period or state of affairs representing the aftermath of Western colonialism; the term can also be used to describe the concurrent project to reclaim and rethink the history and agency of people subordinated under various forms of imperialism. Postcolonialism signals a possible future of overcoming colonialism, yet new forms of domination or subordination can come in the wake of such changes, including new forms of global empire. Postcolonialism should not be confused with the claim that the world we live in now is actually devoid of colonialism. (Britannica)

⁵ [S]tate policy, practice, or advocacy of extending power and dominion, especially by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas. Because it always involves the use of power, whether military force or some subtler form, imperialism has often been considered morally reprehensible, [...]. (Britannica)

and to subdue (Schumann 2016, 42). A very good example for this course of action is the conquest of America by Christoph Columbus in 1492. Gerd Schumann (2016, 44) wrote in his book “Kolonialismus” that the keyword in Columbus’ diary during his stay in America was ‘gold’. Besides the material resources, the original inhabitants were getting more and more into the focus of the conquerors. Slaves were needed in their home countries and on their ships. They were held in inhuman conditions. Murder, mutilation and suicide en masse were part of colonialization. But colonialism did not just happen in America. Africa and Asia were also confronted with European conquerors more and more. Even 50 years before Columbus stepped onto the American continent, Portuguese seamen had displaced ten black Africans to Lisbon. This can be seen as the beginning of the slave trade, which should exist for hundreds of years. With the beginning of the 17th century, about one million black people from Africa were displaced overseas to the Caribbean, into Spanish or Portuguese colonies, or to North America (Schumann 2016, 46). These numbers clearly show the apparent arrogance of the European people against other cultures and the implicitness, with which they were acting.

After this short general overview of the beginnings of colonialism in Europe, the focus is now back on the United Kingdom and its colonization in the eastern areas and especially the associated spread of the English language. In fact, today India is third in terms regarding the number of English speakers worldwide, right after the USA and the UK. Most of these people had the chance to learn English as their second language and are able to use English in official situations. This occasion has its origin back in the year 1600, when Queen Elizabeth I granted the foundation of the British East India Company. In addition, Andreas H. Jucker explains in his book ‘History of English and English Historical Linguistics’:

From 1765 until 1947 India was under British rule. Today English is recognised as an associate official language with Hindi, the official language. The variety of English spoken in India is called South Asian English, which is also used by a sizeable number of speakers in the other five countries of the region i.e. Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan. There are many more areas where English plays an important role as a national language, the language of administration, or the language of education. These include the former British colonies in Africa and in South East Asia (Jucker 2002, 64).

Despite the British colonialism in the Asian areas, another very important step on their way to a colonial power were the settler colonies in Australia and New Zealand. James Cook, a former British captain, played a major role for these settlements. In 1770 Cook took possession of the Australian East Coast under the rule of the British crown. After the independence of the USA, the British Empire was looking for some new areas of influence, so they shipped settlers and especially prisoners to the new continent. In comparison to the Spanish occupation of America,

the British colonists did the same thing to the aboriginal people in Australia and treated them in a very hard and cruel way, with murder, prosecution and slavery. Correspondingly to the Spanish conquerors on the American continent, finding gold was another big factor for the increasing afflux of British people to Australia. Same things happened in 1769, when James Cook landed in South-West New Zealand. In 1840, after years of terror, war and illnesses, London annexed New Zealand officially. With the foundation of the New Zealand Company in 1839, thousands of British immigrants came to the new islands (Schumann 2002, 51 ff.).

3.1 Decolonization

After years of exploitation and repression of indigenous people, European colonialism apparently ended with the end of the Second World War. European states were financially, militarily and politically not able to continue with colonialism. After giving up their first colonial possessions, especially in Asia in the 1940s, the area-wide decolonization of Africa began in the 1950s. It took a few more years until the last Portuguese colonies declared their independence and the Seychelles, Djibouti and Zimbabwe were no longer part of France and respectively England (1976-1980) (Henrich-Franke 2019, 16). Western colonialism, as it was known before, came to an end and so the idea of ‘post-colonialism’ came up.

The independence of the Asian and African states led to an increase of the UN. As there were about 80 members part of the UN at the end of the 1950s, there were 159 official members in the UN until the end of decolonization. The developing nations organized themselves in smaller groups and so the balance of power worldwide changed significantly. With the change of the balance of power on a worldwide level, the topics in the UN, which were of major importance changed as well. For example, development assistance programs were created, but the problem was that the European countries focused on their own way of industrialisation. As a result, the needed sensibility for the special needs of the new members of the UN got lost and the programs were not constructive enough (Henrich-Franke 2019, 17). With this in mind, the awareness for the need of a global governance rose. Therefore, as mentioned before in chapter 1, supranational institutions were founded, as for example the OECD, WTO and especially the IMF and the World Bank.

3.2 Neo-Colonialism – Linguistic Imperialism

As a matter of fact, the IMF and the World Bank, which are very important institutions today. They are in charge of the regulation and the coordination of all countries, especially

countries with a developing background acting under the management either from the USA or the EU. Those two imperialistic leading powers, the USA and the EU, are in possession of 39% of the shares worldwide (Schumann 2002, 100). Among other things, this distribution of the financial resources was a major reason for the beginning of the process of recolonization. Thus, the period of neo-colonialism has started. In comparison to (Western) colonialism, the focus has changed a little bit nowadays, the military and violent approach luckily had come to an end, but the exploitation and the unfair distribution of resources is still very present.

Furthermore, the skilled handling of the English language is therefore a basic requirement to keep up with the ruling nations, where the official language, or at least the language of communication in various institutions, is English. For the same reason, leaving the political level and looking at a more individual and personal level, the English language gets more and more important for people in developing countries or in newly industrialising countries. To achieve a good education and to get proper job, lots of people in those countries rely on learning English to increase their chances for a good degree and their possibilities in the worldwide job market.

As a result of this situation, the leading nations developed different programs to support the English language acquisition especially in Africa and Asia. A very good example for such a program is the “Bridge-Program” with its origin in the USA. The main idea of this program is to teach children English in developing and newly industrializing countries, as for example India, in a standardised way with prepared lessons via e-readers (Bridge international academies). That a proper English language acquisition is needed and is in the interest of the western civilization, is demonstrated by the support of the World Bank and the British Department for International Development (DfID) for this certain program.

Besides the advantages Bridge has for the people in Africa and Asia, there are also some critical points that have to be mentioned. For instance, the creators of the lessons and their concepts are located in the USA and do not have enough knowledge about territorial specifics, where the program is executed. Another fact is that the costs rise during the program for the participants, so that poorer people have no chance to be part of it anymore, as the program continues. Additionally, the skills which were taught in this program are not very constructive and functional for the pupils (Pawelec 2018). Summing up these points, the basic idea is definitely a good one, but the implementation is based on further profit and control for, in this case, the USA. In other words, the “old” Western Colonialism now makes room for a “new”

(Neo-) Colonialism or a linguistic imperialism. The main goals are comparable to each other, staying on top and increasing the power, but the realization is different nowadays, as mentioned before, away from military power, towards linguistical superiority under the umbrella of language acquisition and the spread of English.

But nevertheless, especially in Asia, English is important for many sectors of life. The people living there are dependent on good English skills. In South-East Asia, for example, English is the official working language and fundamental for politics as well. All things considered, the need for a global language is present in our daily lives in a globalised world, but the implementation of a certain global language will lead to an unfair distribution of power, because native speaking countries will therefore always enjoy major advantages.

The final step is to take a look at further dangers of a global language, as it is English today and to try to give a possible forecast for the development of English in the future.

Perhaps a global language will cultivate an elite monolingual linguistic class, more complacent and dismissive in their attitudes towards other languages. Perhaps those who have such a language at their disposal – and especially those who have it as a mother-tongue – will be more able to think and work quickly in it, and to manipulate it to their own advantage at the expense of those who do not have it, thus maintaining in a linguistic guise the chasm between rich and poor. Perhaps the presence of a global language will make people lazy about learning other languages, or reduce their opportunities to do so. Perhaps a global language will hasten the disappearance of minority languages, or – the ultimate threat – make **all** other languages unnecessary (Crystal 2003, 14 ff.)

David Crystal mentions some interesting and important points with this statement. The risk of some kind of superiority, because of being a native speaker of such a world language, is highly given. Also, the risk of neglecting other ‘inferior’ languages is definitely present. Unfortunately, it is not possible to exclude such a development, if there is a common global language. Though, compared to other sectors of life, fairness, helpfulness and a respectful contact are here the keywords in this case. Therefore, it is very important to appeal to the humanity of people, not just on a linguistic level. Minor cultures also have their need for identity, which is often strongly connected to an own language, so the need for a global or a world language is surely given, but not at the expense of other languages or cultures.

Given these points, the very last question is: What are the expectations for the future of the English language? It is very difficult to give any predictions about the future of English as a global language. In the near future English will continue to grow. But as mentioned before, Latin had been the world language for hundreds of years in various parts of life, but barely

exists in modern society today. Although a decline of English is not foreseeable at our present time, the certainty that English will remain forever as a global language cannot be given as well.

Conclusion

Altogether, it is very easy to say that the English language plays a major role in our modern society. The expansion of the British Empire, as well as its history of colonization, plus the role of the USA in world politics in the past and today, had and still has a major impact on the spread of English today. By these reasons, a lot of varieties of English gradually arose. Furthermore, there is no doubt about that we need a common way of communication, but the fear of linguistic Imperialism is always connected to a global language, such as English nowadays. In fact, English still is one of the official languages in most of the former colonies or countries of the British Empire. In addition, English is also the predominant language in supranational institutions, which shows the importance of this language. English still is an important factor on our way to an interconnected, globalised world with lots of advantages.

But in contrast to the need of a global language, English endangers the existence of other languages by being a global language and the linguistic and cultural diversity suffers from this fact. Furthermore, the teaching and spread of English can be interpreted as a new form of colonialism via the language – a so called Neo-Colonialism. Connected to the spread of English, the spread of western ideas, lifestyles and products also takes place, which is another indicator for Neo-Colonialism. Besides the indisputable importance of English today, people have to be aware that English and its distribution on, for example the Asian continent, can also be used to oppress other cultures with their languages and to exploit people with a poorer background, who are dependent on learning English. Therefore, it is important to raise the awareness of this particular situation and to encourage people to learn as many languages as possible to maintain a coloured diversity of languages and cultures in our modern world.

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Abbildungsverzeichnis:

- Graph 1: „Krachu's 3 circle Model“ (<http://www.tesoltraining.co.uk/blog/wp-content/uploads/English-around-the-world.png>) (accessed Aug 14, 2019).

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