GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Language and globalization – mapping the field

Ingrid Piller and Alexandra Grey

Communicating beyond the local

The fundamental question posed by the language-and-globalization research assembled in this collection is what it means to communicate beyond the local level: how is global communication achieved, what forms does it take, what contexts is it embedded in, and what are its consequences for our social life?

This remains a fundamental question for research because languages are highly diverse and the multiplicity of languages is a basic fact of life. Humans speak thousands of different languages and this means that communication outside the immediate group raises a communication problem: how to communicate with people who do not share a mutually intelligible language. The desire to overcome this language barrier and to communicate across large stretches of time and space has animated human interaction throughout history, not only in the current period of globalization. The Sumerian epic *The Lord of Aratta*, which dates to the twenty-first century BCE, even posited the desire to communicate beyond the confines of the local as an explanation for the invention of writing. In the story, Enmerkar, the King of Uruk, wishes to bring the Lord of "far-off" Aratta under his dominion and it is a written message that convinces the Lord of Aratta to submit (Gnanadesikan, 2009, p. 15).

Today, writing as a technology of wider communication has been complemented with digital communication technologies that now play a vital role in global communication, along with the age-old role in global communication of language learning, multilingual individuals, and in the advent of languages of wider communication.

This introductory chapter is intended to guide the reader through the vast and varied body of research about language beyond the local, by mapping the field. The task is not easy as the sociolinguistics of globalization sustains an incredibly vigorous and vibrant research and publication program. This can be seen from the simple quantitative fact that a Google Scholar search for "language" and "globalization" in April 2018 resulted in 1.63 million entries. More than 95 percent of these had been published since 2000. To navigate such a relatively new yet burgeoning field can be confusing for new scholars and seasoned academics alike.

The task is further complicated by the fact that there are a number of disciplines that produce work of relevance to our understanding of the relationship between language and globalization. To begin within linguistics, it is particularly anthropological linguistics and sociolinguistics that have concerned themselves with language and globalization. Additionally, relevant contributions come from applied linguistics, contact linguistics, bi- and multilingualism studies, educational linguistics, historical linguistics, language policy and planning, and second language acquisition. Outside linguistics, "globalization studies" constitutes a discipline in its own right, while research relevant to language-related issues also has disciplinary bases in anthropology, business studies, cultural studies, history, intercultural communication, and sociology. Bringing these multidisciplinary bases of language and globalization into conversation with each other has been one of our main selection challenges in editing this collection. Ultimately, we offer this collection of 69 articles from the existing literature, and this original chapter, as a guided reading program. We have included a topical selection of the most influential research with the aim of showcasing research from a wide range of geographical, regional, and historical contexts.

This introductory chapter is structured as follows. We begin by engaging with the definitions of globalization that prevail in the selected articles. Many of the articles collected here draw on Appadurai's (1990) influential description of globalization as a series of intersecting flows of people, media, technologies, finance, and ideas. We highlight that these flows are neither new nor uniform and emphasize the importance of a phenomenological approach.

This is followed by a section introducing Volumes I and II, which comprise studies that conceptualize the research problem of language and globalization broadly in relation to transnational multilingual communication. We highlight approaches that help us to engage with multilingual communication as embedded in global hierarchies of languages and speakers. Ultimately, these studies demonstrate that language in globalization is a facet of global social stratification.

While the research assembled in Volumes I and II is broadly concerned with globalization as a political and economic phenomenon, the articles in Volumes III and IV shift gear and shine the spotlight on cultural and technological globalization, particularly as embedded in new media and communication technologies. To frame those articles, the third section of this chapter homes in on globalization as a discursive construction and the tensions between local and global identities that emerge in the process.

We close this introductory chapter with suggestions for future research by returning to a number of themes that run through this collection, namely etic vs. emic approaches, universalism vs. specificity, English monolingualism vs. multilingualism, and singularity vs. interdisciplinarity.

Globalization – neither new nor uniform

One way to approach language and globalization is to focus on communication beyond the linguistic boundaries of mutual intelligibility. Such phenomena of wider communication have been around throughout human history, as our introductory example from an ancient Sumerian epic shows. As the example also demonstrates, the need to communicate outside the immediate group is often driven by imperial political and economic expansion. Where such projects succeed, they usually give rise to languages of wider communication that people learn alongside the language of their immediate community, as they did in ancient Mesopotamia, where the world's first lingua franca arose in the second millennium BCE (Harmatta, 1996). Lingua francas may be learned and used alongside local languages or, over time, may come to replace local languages that do not serve such purposes of wider communication. Either way, a global language emerges where there is an impetus to communicate across linguistic boundaries. A global language is a language that is spoken not only as a mother tongue but has sizeable numbers of speakers who use it as an additional language. In today's world, English is the paragon of such a language that, after centuries of expansion, has reached a truly global status.

If we take global communication as communication beyond the barrier created by linguistic non-intelligibility, we must keep in mind that mutual intelligibility is not an immutable state of affairs; it can be engineered into and out of existence. Mutual intelligibility can be created through standardization and education in order to bring previously non-intelligible varieties under the umbrella of one standard language. Conversely, national borders and orientation to different standard languages can eliminate mutual intelligibility where it may previously have existed on a dialect continuum. Extending the range of mutual intelligibility through language standardization has been vigorously pursued by the modern nation state and the article introducing Volume III examines nationalism as a force in linguistic expansion in detail (Johnstone, 2016).

The role of the nation state in lifting internal and creating external communication barriers means that it is impossible to understand the relationship between language and globalization without reference to the nation. Global communication, then, is no longer just communication beyond the local but, as the range of mutual intelligibility has increased through the processes of nation-building, it is mostly seen as transnational communication today. That is, global communication is primarily understood in the research literature as involving communication beyond national borders.

Another way to conceive of global communication is to see it as communication involving people "belonging" to one nation through descent and living in another; that is, the speakers are on the move, not just the languages. Such communication is associated with migration processes and, as far as possible, we have excluded research related to language and migration from the present collection. This exclusion does not indicate that we consider migration irrelevant

to language-and-globalization research. On the contrary, people flows clearly constitute a central aspect of globalization. However, language and migration has been treated separately in an earlier collection in this series (Piller, 2016c). The present collection constitutes a sequel to that earlier collection.

Where globalization is seen as a process related to nationalism – extending the nation, connecting nations, or transcending the very idea of the nation – its origin is much more recent than suggested above. This kind of globalization only started in the early modern period when European capitalist and colonial expansion got underway. In the present collection, Kumaravadivelu (2008) provides a historical overview of globalization since the early modern period. However, other scholars narrow the time span of globalization even further and only refer to the latest phase in this process, which can roughly be dated from the end of the Cold War in the 1990s and the coinciding start of the rapid spread of digital communication.

The latter understanding – of globalization as a unique phenomenon of the present – prevails in our field. For instance, a definition of globalization that is frequently cited in sociolinguistics focuses precisely on novelty and innovation. It describes globalization as

> the *intensified* flows of capital, goods, people, images and discourses around the globe, driven by technological *innovations* mainly in the field of media and information and communication technology, and resulting in *new* patterns of global activity, community organization and culture.
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> (Blommaert, 2010, p. 13; our emphasis)

Our collection mirrors the prominence of research focused on the present. Even so, we have tried to provide some historical balance with research that illustrates that imperial expansion, the desire to trade across vast distances, the cultural pull of the metropolis and technological innovation have had linguistic consequences since time immemorial. For instance, Volumes I and II include analyses of the Roman Empire spreading Latin across Europe (Adams, 2003) and Islam doing the same for Persian in Asia (Fisher, 2012). Just like they do today, these processes raised questions of linguistic legitimacy and identity and language proved a terrain upon which group conflicts played out. The other historical studies included here examine these globalization processes in a variety of contexts (Bell, 2003; Csernicskó & Laihonen, 2016; Ergin, 2009; Si, 2009).

The focus on the present that characterizes most language-and-globalization research results in an ineluctable emphasis on English. Given how overbearing English has become as a global language in today's world, English sometimes seems to form the crux of the research problem in the sociolinguistics of globalization. Our collection mirrors this trend and could certainly give rise to the impression that linguistic processes, practices, and consequences of globalization hinge on English. However, it is necessary to stress that – despite its pivotal role in

global communication in today's world – English is not coextensive with global communication. In world history the advent of English as a global language is relatively recent and only began with British colonial expansion from the late sixteenth century onwards. To counteract the focus on English somewhat, we have included research related to other contemporary, transnational languages such as Arabic (Sharkey, 2012), Chinese (Ding & Saunders, 2006; Si, 2009), Hungarian (Csernicskó & Laihonen, 2016), Spanish (Mar-Molinero, 2008; Niño-Murcia, Godenzzi, & Rothman, 2008), and Russian (Pavlenko, 2008), in addition to the historical studies related to Latin (Adams, 2003) and Persian (Fisher, 2012) noted above.

Just like English, all these languages gained their status as global languages initially through projects of imperial expansion. In the same way that the relationship between language and globalization cannot be understood without reference to nationalism, it cannot be understood without reference to imperialism and colonialism. An overview of the linguistic consequences of different forms of colonization is here provided by Mufwene (2002), who stresses the variability of colonialism and, consequently, the heterogeneity of linguistic outcomes.

Colonization and, by the same token, globalization are obviously completely different processes in the metropolis and in the periphery. However, even the distinction between metropolis and periphery is a crude one and the variability of "centers" and "peripheries" across nations, regions, cities, institutions, and domains is immense.[1]

This means that a unitary phenomenon that could be called "language and globalization" does not, in fact, exist. On the contrary, what research into language and globalization needs to account for is precisely the variability and heterogeneity that are characteristic both of language and globalization and, even more so, their intersection. The challenge of our collection thus includes making sense of linguistic variation and heterogeneity that persists, and even increases, as the world globalizes. To this end, we have made every effort to showcase research from as many different contexts as possible and particularly to also include research from spaces that are often neglected such as Guatemala (O'Neill, 2012), Transcarpathia (Csernicskó & Laihonen, 2016), or Vanuatu (Willans, 2015).

Beyond striving for broad representation and being mindful of the contestation over that which globalization actually comprises, we have taken a phenomenological approach centered on political, economic, cultural, and technological aspects of globalization, all of which play out on the terrain of language. While these aspects are, of course, impossible to untangle and there is considerable overlap, Volumes I and II focus broadly on political and economic globalization while Volumes III and IV comprise of studies foregrounding cultural and technological aspects.

Global linguistic hierarchies

Questions of political and economic globalization are inevitably related to power relationships, which are often embedded in neocolonial hierarchies these days. An influential way to understand the linguistic consequences of global power scales has been put forward by De Swaan (2001), whose paper opens Volume I. De Swaan describes the global language system as pyramid-like. The vast majority of languages cluster at the bottom, which fills up most of the pyramid. These languages, which account for an estimated 98 percent of all the 5,000 to 6,000 languages in the world, are called "peripheral languages." Peripheral languages are the languages of local communication. Each has relatively few speakers and often lacks a written form. Above the huge layer of peripheral languages sits a thin layer of "central languages." Central languages are typically the official languages of nation states. They are used in elementary and sometimes secondary education, in the media, and in national politics and bureaucracies. De Swaan estimates that there are around a hundred central languages. The next layer is occupied by about a dozen "super-central languages," which serve in international and long-distance communication. Finally, the apex of the pyramid is occupied by one single language, English, as the "hyper-central language" of globalization.

Conceptualizing the global language system as a pyramid is intended to demonstrate communicative reach. Speakers of a peripheral language need to learn a central language to communicate outside their local community; speakers of a central language need to learn a super-central language to communicate internationally; and speakers of a super-central language need to learn the hyper-central language in order to communicate globally. The system is hierarchically ordered because the greater the communicative reach of a language, the more valuable the language is. While speakers of a peripheral language need to become multilingual in order to extend their opportunities beyond their narrow local group, a native speaker of English has the advantage that this one language is likely to fulfill all their communicative needs on a local, national, international, and global scale.

In the same way that the global language system can be conceptualized as centering on hyper-central English, varieties of English can also be modeled as a series of concentric circles, as Kachru (1985) does. Kachru's (1985) influential model posits that a native-speaker English in Great Britain and its settler colonies Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the USA constitutes the "inner circle" of English from which varieties in the "outer" and "expanding" circles derive. Outer-circle English is used in countries such as Ghana, India, or the Philippines, many of which are former colonies of the UK or USA, where English is learned as an additional language and plays an official role in the education and legal system, the political arena, and the media. Finally, the expanding circle basically comprises the rest of the world, where English is widely learnt as an additional language but does not play an official role.

Both the pyramid and concentric circles models reinforce the notion that linguistic diversity in the global realm is hierarchically ordered (for an in-depth exploration see Piller, 2016a). Furthermore, as desirable as global communication may be, the English of non-native speakers who have worked hard to overcome communication barriers through their learning of English as an additional language is valued the least, while the English of native speakers from the metropoles attracts the highest prestige.

The global language pyramid and the concentric circles model of English both offer us nifty tools to think about language and globalization. At the same time, like all models, they gloss over a large array of diversity, heterogeneity, local specificity, and even contradictions, which may locally invert the global center-periphery hierarchy. Thus, the studies assembled in Volumes I and II are intended to shine the spotlight precisely on the variety of local political and economic contexts in which struggles over the value of different multilingual repertoires play out.

A key discussion in the field has been whether the spread of English is the result of "linguistic imperialism" – i.e., the active imposition of English by UK and US institutions – or whether it derives from a grassroots demand where people around the world clamor for English because they recognize it as a way toward a brighter future. This collection features the work of well-known proponents of both positions, Robert Phillipson (2008) and David Crystal (2004), before presenting two studies that consider how both the notion of imposition and popular demand are best understood as discursive constructions (Demont-Heinrich, 2009; Ives, 2006).

Although seemingly opposites, it is ultimately the top-down and bottom-up positions in tandem that give us the best explanation for the global spread of English. Language learning desires and decisions do not arise in a vacuum but in response to existing structures of opportunity. In other words, the structural imposition of language policies by state institutions on the one hand and individual language choices on the other are dialectically related. The dialectic relationship between language policies favoring the spread of English and individuals' responses to these policies play out in myriad ways, as exemplified by research focused on contexts in Africa (Kamwangamalu, 2010; Mazrui, 1997; Pool, 1990), Asia (Bruthiaux, 2002; Hu & Alsagoff, 2010; Price, 2014), Latin America (Niño-Murcia, 2003), and the Middle East (Karmani, 2005).

For instance, Hu and Alsagoff (2010) examine how China's compulsory English language learning stands up as a public policy. Like many other countries, China has over the past two decades instituted compulsory English language learning as a high-stakes subject for university entrance based on the justification that having English-speaking citizens is essential for China to become globalized. However, as Hu and Alsagoff (2010) show, instead of opening the much-hyped opportunities of globalization up to every Chinese citizen and giving everyone access to the global power code, compulsory English language learning raises a number of problems. First, there is a practical feasibility problem as compulsory

English language learning is constrained by a severe shortage of qualified teachers, a lack of appropriate instructional materials, and the absence of a sociolinguistic environment in which English is meaningful. These implementation problems are aggravated when one considers the question of allocative effectiveness. The costs of teacher training, of hiring expatriate teachers, of developing suitable materials, and of creating the necessary infrastructure to teach English are high, yet the available evidence suggests that English language teaching in China, as elsewhere, has not been particularly effective. Furthermore, investing so heavily in compulsory English language learning has seen resources diverted away from other subjects. Hu and Alsagoff (2010) conclude that ultimately, the promotion of English has benefited only a relatively small number of students in well-resourced urban schools at the expense of the majority of students. Compulsory English in China as a supposed globalization strategy has thus benefitted Chinese elites while disadvantaging everyone else: "the English medium instruction initiative has not only perpetuated the unequal distribution of power and access but is also creating new forms of inequality" (Hu & Alsagoff, 2010, p. 375).

We presented above the dialectic between state institutions and their policies, and individuals' language choices. There is a third force in the dialectic: commercial entities. Their language policies, practices, and ideologies also affect which languages globalize, in what forms, and in whose interests. Acknowledging this interplay between states, commerce, and individuals, language-and-globalization research increasingly focuses on the political economy of language, and on economic doctrines, especially neoliberalism. "Neoliberalism" refers to the contemporary form of advanced or late capitalism. It is called neoliberalism because its basic idea is a resuscitation of nineteenth-century laissez-faire capitalism according to which the unregulated or "liberal" market constitutes the ideal economic model (see Piller & Cho, 2013, in Volume II for details). Indeed, neoliberalism is so dominant as to have come to be used almost as a synonym for present-day globalization. However, whereas globalization tends to refer to transnational connectedness in any sphere of life, neoliberalism usually foregrounds the economic sphere, so we prefer not to use them synonymously.

In light of the role of the political economy, many of the contributions to this collection engage with economic dimensions of globalization and some engage explicitly with globalization as a form of neoliberalism or marketization. These studies mostly draw on theories of capital and symbolic power derived from the eminent twentieth-century sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1991, 1993; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). This is because these theories suit the analysis of overlapping economic, linguistic, cultural, and other socially-constructed hierarchies of value well.

Distinguishing clearly between political and economic globalization is next to impossible given that political expansion as a form of globalization has inevitably had economic dimensions. Additionally, there is another reason why economic globalization has gained visibility in sociolinguistics in recent years. This is the fact that language has greater economic importance today than it probably

ever had before due to another facet of globalization: the expansion of the tertiary sector, particularly in "center" countries of the global north. There, the economy has increasingly become dominated by service and knowledge industries (known as the tertiary sector). In the tertiary sector, language work is much more visible than it is in economies dominated by the primary sector (agriculture and extraction) or the secondary sector (manufacturing and production). Many jobs in the primary and secondary sectors can be performed without much communication and so these workplaces have not been many language researchers' focus. Nevertheless, there can be fruitful studies on language-and-globalization in primary and secondary industries and we refer interested readers to Goldstein (1996), Kraft (2017), Piller and Lising (2014), or Strömmer (2016).

In the tertiary sector, by contrast, linguistic performance takes center stage. A large part of the work performed by any service or knowledge worker is, in effect, language work: think of tourism, teaching, and caregiving work. The prototypical service worker is a call center employee whose economic value rests precisely in their language skills. In the final chapters of Volume II, research by Mirchandani (2004) and O'Neill (2012) sheds light on this particular service industry, which has become emblematic of the intersection between globalization and language, as Kumaravadivelu (2008) argues in his contribution to Volume III.

Where language becomes the terrain of economic activity, it inevitably becomes commodified and is traded between workers, employers, customers, and clients. Many processes of linguistic commodification have come to the fore in sociolinguistics precisely because the tertiary sector has expanded under globalization. Specific agents of economic globalization, such as multinational corporations operating in the tertiary sector or supplying that sector with products or a labor force, then adapt their language policies and language management efforts to their global business needs in order to maximize profit. These transformations are explored in detail in contributions by Duchêne (2011), Heller (2003), Luke, Luke, and Graham (2007), Park (2016), and Spring (2007).

Tourism is another tertiary industry of prominence in language-and-globalization research, not only as a language-skill-demanding industry propelled by economic liberalization but as a site of cultural globalization. A number of our selections in cultural globalization in Volumes III and IV therefore extend the first two volumes' exploration of language in economic globalization (Chen, 2016; Dlaske, 2016; Thurlow & Jaworski, 2006). In other words, tourism, while being a form of economic globalization, is simultaneously crucial to creating and propagating a global imagination.

Globalization as a discursive construction

Although processes of global interconnection have been around since time immemorial, over the past century these processes have produced a truly global imagination for the first time in human history. The emergence of a global

consciousness where humans identify our planet as our "local" home can be traced back to 1972, when NASA published the famous photograph of the blue planet taken by the spaceship *Apollo 17* (Jaworski, 2015). This conflation of the global and the local in some discourses is truly new and the current endpoint in the expansion of imaginations of belonging (we say "current" because intensifying discourses of Mars colonization and expansion into space suggest that the human imagination of where we belong is not done yet).

To put this differently, the meanings of the supposed opposites "local" and "global" are by no means fixed and globalization has resulted in an expansion of the local, as Adejunmobi's (2004) examination of the discursive construction of African identity demonstrates. To speak of an African identity in the nineteenth century would have been "to give to aery nothing a local habitation and a name" (Appiah, 1993, p. 174; quoted in Adejunmobi, 2004, p. 89). Yet by the twentieth century, Africa had become a potential site of local affiliation and a consciousness of a shared African identity had emerged for many people across the continent. Today, this process has gone even further and Earth itself has become such a potential site of local affiliation with many people partaking of a shared global identity.

The emergence of global imagined communities and identities matters because "the imagination is today a staging ground for action, and not only for escape" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 6). As Burawoy, a leading sociologist of the globalization of labor explains, "[g]lobal imaginations reconfigure what is possible, turning globalization from an inexorable force into a resource that opens up new vistas" (2000, p. 32). Collective imagination cannot exist without mediation through language; language is necessary to bring imagination into being. Volumes III and IV present studies that explore this role of language, asking how global identities are constructed in discourse and which spaces for action and participation they open or close.

A broad answer to these questions is provided by Norman Fairclough (2006), who has pioneered critical discourse analysis as an approach to studying globalization as a discursive construction. Like Fairclough (2006), Hasan (2003) highlights the role of ideology and inequality in discursive construction. Imagined communities based on global identities are not neutral but are, yet again, hierarchically ordered. Thus, while global identities based on ideas such as cosmopolitanism, hybridity, and liquidity feel liberating to some, they seem like yet another reincarnation of Western oppression to others. As a result, cultural globalization also becomes a site of linguistic contestation, as Blommaert (2007), Collins (2011), Kumaravadivelu (2008), and Silverstein (2015) explain.

Linguistically, language use itself may emerge as a site of contestation, where the use of global languages, particularly English, may come to be associated with submission to globalization. The use of small languages, by contrast, is oftentimes framed as an act of resistance to globalization and a celebration of the local. Nowhere are these tensions over language use and the identities they supposedly signal more apparent than in the domain of education, and so we feature

explorations of the way discourses of globalization are reshaping language teaching and mediums of instruction in various educational contexts (Cameron, 2002; Canagarajah, 2013; Kress, 1996; Lo Bianco, 2014).

In addition, some cultural forms are in themselves associated with globalization. This is true of art forms such as hip-hop music (Lin, 2008; Morgan, 2016; Pennycook, 2007) but also cultural practices such as tourism (Chen, 2016; Dlaske, 2016; Thurlow & Jaworski, 2006), advertising (Curtin, 2009; Jaworski, 2015), and elite sports (Baines, 2013). The mundane discourses examined in these studies enact globalization in everyday life. As such they can be considered discourses of "banal cosmopolitanism." The concept of "banal cosmopolitanism" is based on the better-known concept of "banal nationalism," which was first introduced by Billig (1995) and refers to the mundane discourses – flags, maps, national references, etc. – that enact national belonging in everyday life.[2] Similarly, banal cosmopolitanism refers to mundane discourses that enact globalization or transnational belonging in everyday life. Banal cosmopolitanism is apparent in the "mediatization and consumption of spatially distant places, signifiers of cultural diversity, and opening up of lifestyles to new experiential spaces and horizons" (Jaworski, 2015, p. 220). One linguistic form that banal cosmopolitanism may take is the abundant use in publicly displayed texts of new letterforms, punctuation marks, and diacritics as Jaworski's (2015) article on "Globalese" shows. Their use, particularly in brand and shop names, serves to create "novel, foreignized, visual-linguistic forms increasingly detached from their 'original' ethno-national languages" (Jaworski, 2015, p. 217). Detached from their national and local linguistic context, they point to somewhere else, somewhere in the realm of the global.

We have now linked cultural globalization through consumption back to economic globalization, which we had already connected to political globalization through (neo)colonial expansion. The remaining missing link, which intersects these three flows, is technological globalization, which enables and constrains the other flows in various ways. One of the most striking phenomena of the current phase of globalization has been the rapid development of new technologies of communication. Communicative globalization through digital media must therefore be considered a globalization phenomenon in its own right. New communication technologies have enabled novel linguistic practices and challenged existing language ideologies. New media fosters both specific forms of language use as well as specific discourses about language.

By specific forms of language use we mean that online communication networks create communities who use dialog and interaction in the medium of a particular language variety to build community affiliations and to police community boundaries. In our selection, it is particularly Androutsopoulos (2013) and Dor (2004), who speak to the political economy of language in new media. Androutsopoulos (2013) introduces the concept of "networked multilingualism" to refer to transnational linguistic practices that emerge in digitally connected global networks, while Dor (2004) considers how multilingual proficiencies may

replace English as the most valuable part of a linguistic repertoire for global online communication.

Despite the multilingual practices that Androutsopoulos (2013) and Dor (2004) stress as characteristic of digital communication, they also acknowledge that the language chosen on global communication networks is oftentimes English. However, the medium of globalization does not necessarily imply a message of globalization: English, the language of globalization par excellence, may well empower communities of resistance against globalization.[3] In order to put the tensions between language choice and identity construction in the media under the microscope we have selected studies located both in the increasingly important Sinosphere (Leibold, 2015; Premaratne, 2015) and small peripheral communities (Hasanen, Al-Kandari, & Al-Sharoufi, 2014; Pietikäinen, 2008; Sharma, 2014; Sultana, Dovchin, & Pennycook, 2013; Velghe & Blommaert, 2014).

The collection closes with two articles addressing large-scale changes in recent decades that point away from the Anglo- and Western-centric forms of globalization that underlies much of the research collected here, namely the dissolution of the USSR and the rise of the People's Republic of China (Ding & Saunders, 2006; Pavlenko, 2008). These events have significant implications for language in globalization, both related to the retreat of a global language as well as to the emergence of a new one.

Where to from here?

As we highlighted at the beginning, the literature on language and globalization is vast. What we have attempted to do is offer a selection of the best work in the field that will expose readers to the key conceptual debates and methodological approaches while striving to represent a broad variety of historical, geographical, and institutional contexts. Despite the breadth of language-and-globalization research, a number of gaps and blind spots became obvious to us as we surveyed the field. We therefore close this chapter by identifying directions for future research. These include "emic" approaches to globalization in sociolinguistic research, questioning universalism, reflexivity with regard to English as the medium through which most language-and-globalization research is conducted, and the continued need for interdisciplinarity.

Emic approaches consider what language and globalization mean to social groups rather than taking a top-down approach which assumes their meaning. Given the indeterminacy of the term "globalization," the latter approach means that almost any kind of sociolinguistic research problem can be labeled "language and globalization." We fear this is jeopardizing the coherence of the field and that drawing out a common research problem would be beneficial. It is worth comparing the consequences to another field which has had a similar experience of almost any research problem being subsumed under its heading. This is the field of "intercultural communication," which also happens to overlap extensively with language-and-globalization research. In intercultural communication

research, the indeterminacy of the foundational term "culture" is similar to the indeterminacy of "globalization." The result of using a great many different understandings of culture has been that intercultural communication research has a poor reputation as an academic field for lacking rigor. One way to turn its fortunes around has been to emphasize an emic approach which treats "culture" as the key research problem in itself, rather than as an objective contextual descriptor. The foundational research problem then becomes "who makes culture relevant to whom in which context for which purposes" (Piller, 2017, p. 1). We suggest that if language-and-globalization research is to become a coherent field, it will need a similar foundational research problem that eschews a priori definitions of globalization and asks how the local and the global are made relevant by whom in which context for which purposes.

Second, because globalization means many things to many people, those globalization phenomena that are most salient to the researchers shaping the field predominate as research topics. As is true of most academic subjects, the most influential sociolinguists of globalization are based in institutions of the global north and, consequently, that is where most globalization phenomena appearing in the literature have been located. When reviewing the field and compiling our selection, we were reminded of Chinua Achebe's remark back in the 1970s that European literature was automatically considered of universal relevance while African literature was always seen as particular:

> In the nature of things the work of a Western writer is automatically informed by universality.… I should like to see the word *universal* banned altogether from discussions of African literature until such a time as people cease to use it as a synonym for the narrow, self-serving parochialism of Europe, until their horizon extends to include all the world.
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> (Achebe, 1975, p. 9)

While we are not advocating that the use of the word "global" be banned in sociolinguistics (not least because this would seem a futile undertaking), we suggest that there is a need to systematically address existing biases in language-and-globalization research and to encourage researchers who draw attention to globalization phenomena in the global south. For instance, a focus on south-south globalization constitutes a striking absence in much of the existing research, and the limited research effort related to the emerging role of Chinese in global communication is highly disproportionate to the fact that China has become "a cultural lodestone in the early 21st century" (Ding & Saunders, 2006, p. 3).

Third, and related to our previous point, the academy is a globalized space in itself and constitutes a domain where the role of Standard English as the language of wider communication is particularly entrenched. The dominance of Standard English as the global language through which we conduct and publish our research into language and globalization inevitably shapes our ways of

seeing language and globalization. Therefore, we stress the importance of a reflective approach to the Standard-English-centric ways of seeing in our field. These ways of seeing language and globalization entail a very peculiar perspective, which "disguises its peculiarity as general and universalistic" (Piller, 2016b, p. 28).

Fourth, for the field to move forward interdisciplinary research will have to become a sine qua non. Dell Hymes pointed out more than half a century ago that "linguistics needs the sociologist" (Hymes, 1967, p. 632) and his call is still resonant. In fact, language-and-globalization research needs not only sociology but also history, political science, philosophy, law, economics, information technology, and other disciplines. While many of us (and our institutions) speak positively of interdisciplinarity, many obstacles remain in transforming interdisciplinary research from a desideratum to a reality. We suggest that a commitment to methodological pluralism and a focus on intersectionality is a way forward. With regard to methodological pluralism, language-and-globalization research is dominated by ethnographic and discourse analytic methods. While we agree that these qualitative approaches are appropriate to the subject matter (as we discuss in Grey & Piller, forthcoming), we suggest that a systematic combination of macro and micro data or data from public and private domains is essential for progress in the field. To understand the ways in which language ideologies play out in interactions between people or between states, companies and people, and shape practices, it is imperative to systematically combine data from a variety of sources and domains.

"Language and globalization" labels a complex set of phenomena in flux and basing universal pronouncements on their relationship on small, particularistic datasets inevitably puts us in the same position as the proverbial blind men who make pronouncements on the shape of the elephant depending on whether they are touching its tusk, trunk, ear, leg, or tail. To understand globalization, as the elephant, the various studies and observations need to be connected.

Notes

1 For a detailed case study we refer the reader to Steinmetz' (2008) meticulous examination of German colonial policy in Southwest Africa, Samoa, and Qingdao.
2 For a detailed discussion of banal nationalism in intercultural communication, see Piller (2017).
3 For a detailed case study of the use of colonial languages in anti-colonial struggles, we refer the reader to Adejunmobi (2004).

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1

INTRODUCTION

The global language system

A. De Swaan

Source: Words of the World: The Global Language System (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2001), pp. 1–17, 225–243.

The human species is divided into more than five thousand groups each of which speaks a different language and does not understand any of the others. With this multitude of languages, humankind has brought upon itself a great confusion of tongues. But nevertheless, the entire human species remains connected: the division is overcome by people who speak more than one language and thus ensure communication between different groups. It is multilingualism that has kept humanity, separated by so many languages, together. The multilingual connections between language groups do not occur haphazardly, but, on the contrary, they constitute a surprisingly strong and efficient network that ties together – directly or indirectly – the six billion inhabitants of the earth. It is this ingenious pattern of connections between language groups that constitutes the global language system. That is the subject of this book.

This worldwide constellation of languages is an integral part of the 'world system'. The population of the earth is organized into almost two hundred states and a network of international organizations – the political dimension of the world system; it is coordinated through a concatenation of markets and corporations – the economic dimension; it is linked by electronic media in an encompassing, global culture; and, in its 'metabolism with nature', it also constitutes an ecological system. The idea of a global human society which indeed constitutes a system on a world scale has regained much attention in recent years. However, the fact that humanity, divided by a multitude of languages, but connected by a lattice of multilingual speakers, also constitutes a coherent language constellation, as one more dimension of the world system, has so far remained unnoticed. Yet, as soon as it has been pointed out, the observation seems obvious.[1]

The global language constellation will be discussed in this book as an integral part of the world system. This implies that language constellations are considered as a – very special – social phenomenon, which can be understood in

terms of social science theories. This, too, is new, albeit not entirely without precedent.[2] Rivalry and accommodation between language groups will be explained with the aid of the political sociology of language and the political economy of language. The former focuses on the structure of the language system and its subsystems, and looks at 'language jealousies' between groups, at elite monopolization of the official language, at the exclusion of the un-schooled, and at the uses of language to achieve upward mobility; the latter approach analyses how people try to maximize their opportunities for communication, how this confronts them with dilemmas of collective action that may even provoke stampedes towards another language and the abandonment of their native tongue, and what occurs in the unequal relations of exchange between small and large language groups. Many of these notions from sociology and economics have never before been applied to languages or language groups.[3] Together they constitute a coherent theoretical framework that can explain events in such disparate language constellations as India and Indonesia, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa, or the European Union.

That language has emerged at all is a cause for marvel; its evolution into innumerable, mutually unintelligible languages is an equally amazing testimony to human ingenuity. As languages grew apart in the course of collective transmission and transformation, new forms of pronunciation must have emerged, thousands of new words appeared and hundreds of grammatical and syntactical rules (and as many exceptions) evolved. All of this was the result of human action and almost none of it was the outcome of human intention.

It seems increasingly likely that all languages that are currently spoken on earth are related and have developed from a common predecessor, roughly following the evolutionary path of present human beings from a common genetic stock in the course of some hundred and twenty thousand years. Evolutionary genetics, comparative linguistics and archaeology are now producing a quickly growing body of evidence for this shared origin.[4] But even if it turns out to be the case that the human species and its languages come from several, diverse origins, there is no doubt that at present all human groups constitute a single interdependent whole, and that their languages together form a global constellation that represents one dimension of the modern world system.

Five or six thousand languages are spoken on earth. The number cannot be specified more exactly, because languages are not always countable. In this respect they resemble clouds: it is hard to tell where one begins and the other ends, and yet most clouds and languages are obviously distinct, with a clear expanse separating them.

In their inexhaustible variety and almost impenetrable complexity, languages are best compared to that other most complex and variegated phenomenon, life itself. Much as a biological species is defined by the capacity of pairs of male and female members to reproduce, a language may be defined by the capacity of

any two speakers to understand one another. Two languages are considered distinct if the speakers of one and the other are mutually unintelligible. Just as species are subdivided into many varieties that can indeed interbreed, within languages various mutually intelligible dialects are discerned. Biological varieties of one species shade into one another as do dialects of the same languages, and that is why, in both fields, classification is so often controversial.[5] Indeed, cognate languages can be very hard to tell apart. Where in biology the proof is in the mating, in linguistics it is in the understanding. But mutual intelligibility is not simply a characteristic of the two languages involved; not entirely unlike interbreeding, it also depends on the individuals involved. They may have greater or lesser skills in understanding strangers, they may be more or less eager to communicate with one another, and the context of their encounter may be so structured as to facilitate mutual comprehension or hinder it.

There is no doubt that Chinese and Dutch are two entirely different languages, but it is a matter of controversy whether German and Dutch are indeed distinct languages,[6] while almost everybody would agree that Flemish and Dutch are two varieties of the same language (since their respective speakers would have no trouble at all explaining to one another, each in their own idiom, how insuperable the differences between the two are). Granting the cloudy nature of languages, nevertheless most of the time they are discussed here as if they were distinct entities, separated by barriers of incomprehensibility.

1.1 The global language system: a galaxy of languages

Mutually unintelligible languages are connected by multilingual speakers, but not at all in random fashion. In fact, the scheme of all the world's languages and of the multilinguals that connect them displays a strongly ordered, hierarchical pattern, quite similar to those reversed tree-structures that the French call 'organigrammes', charts used to depict the organization of armies or large bureaucracies.

The vast majority of the languages in the world of today, some 98 per cent of them, are situated in the lower part of this chart: these are the 'peripheral languages' and although there are thousands of them, all together they are used by less than 10 per cent of humankind. Very little of what has been said in all these languages has ever been recorded, be it on clay, stone, papyrus, paper, tape or disk. They are the languages of memory, and whatever was uttered in these languages could only endure because it was heard and remembered, repeated, understood and memorized again.[7] Rather than being defined by what they are not, as 'unwritten' or 'scriptless' languages, these languages deserve to be identified by what constitutes their strength: they are the languages of conversation and narration rather than reading and writing, of memory and remembrance rather than record.

Any two peripheral groups are mutually connected through members that speak the languages of both. But on the whole such ties tend to be scarce. Or

rather, they are becoming scarcer since communication between the inhabitants of adjacent villages has become less important, as they increasingly come to deal with traders and administrators in the district capital. As a result, members of the various peripheral groups are more likely to acquire one and the same second language, one that is therefore 'central' to these groups. All or most communication between the peripheral groups occurs through this central language. The peripheral languages, grouped around the central language, may be compared to moons circling a planet. There may be about one hundred languages that occupy a central or 'planetary' position in the global language system.[8] Together they are used by some 95 per cent of humankind. The central languages are used in elementary education and usually also at the level of secondary and higher education. They appear in print, in newspapers, in textbooks and in fiction, they are spoken on radio, on cassettes and increasingly on television. Most of them are used in politics, in the bureaucracy and in the courts. They are usually 'national' languages, and quite often the official languages of the state that rules the area. These are the languages of record: much of what has been said and written in those languages is saved in newspaper reports, minutes and proceedings, stored in archives, included in history books, collections of the 'classics', of folk tales and folkways, increasingly recorded on electronic media, and thus conserved for posterity.

Many of the speakers of a central language are multilingual: first of all, there are those whose native speech is one of the satellite, peripheral languages, and who have later acquired the central language. In fact, everywhere in the world the number of this type of bilinguals is on the increase because of the spread of elementary education and the printed word, and through the impact of radio broadcasting. The second type, on the other hand, that of the native speakers of the central language who have learned one of the peripheral languages, is much less common. Apparently, language learning occurs mostly upward, in a 'centripetal' mode: people usually prefer to learn a language that is at a higher level in the hierarchy. This again reinforces the hierarchical nature of the world language system.

If the mother-tongue speakers of a central language acquire another language, it is usually one that is more widely spread and higher up in the hierarchy. At this next level, a number of central languages are connected through their multilingual speakers to one very large language group that occupies a 'supercentral' position within the system. It serves purposes of long-distance and international communication. Quite often this is a language that was once imposed by a colonial power and after independence continued to be used in politics, administration, law, big business, technology and higher education. There are about a dozen of these supercentral languages. Their position in the global language system resembles that of so many suns surrounded by their planets, the central languages, which, in turn, are encircled by their respective satellites, the peripheral languages. The supercentral languages are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Malay, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Swahili. All

these languages, except Swahili, have more than one hundred million speakers and each serves to connect the speakers of a series of central languages. In subsequent chapters a number of regional constellations will be discussed, each centring on one or more of these supercentral languages, such as the Indian constellation around Hindi and English; the Indonesian constellation around Malay (*bahasa Indonesia*); the French-centred constellation of 'francophone' West Africa and the East African constellation that hinges upon English; the South African constellation, where English and Afrikaans compete; and, finally, the constellation of the European Union, where a dozen national languages are increasingly linked by English, less and less by French and hardly any more by German.

If an Arab and a Chinese, a Russian and a Spaniard, or a Japanese and a German meet, they will almost certainly make themselves understood in one and the same language, one that connects the supercentral languages with one another and that therefore constitutes the pivot of the world language system. This 'hypercentral' language that holds the entire constellation together is, of course, English.

In the present world, English is the language of global communication. It is so to speak at the centre of the twelve solar language systems, at the hub of the linguistic galaxy.[9] English has not always held that position. On the contrary, it has now done so for only half a century or so and one day it may lose its hypercentral functions again, but in the next decades it is only likely to reinforce its position even further.

If the origins of language correspond closely to the origins of the human species, the spread of languages across the globe is intimately connected with the history of humanity. For scores of millennia, languages spread with demographic expansion and migration. In historical times, they followed in the wake of conquest, commerce and conversion. It is only since a century ago at most that languages spread more frequently through formal schooling than in any other way. But the educational system certainly does not operate independently of the political, economic and cultural context, which continues to shape the patterns of language acquisition.

1.2 A historical atlas of the world as a language system

The best way to visualize the evolving global language constellation is through a series of maps of the world.[10] Quite probably, in prehistoric times, as the human species scattered across the continents, small bands must time and again have left their main group, crossed mountains and seas, to settle in areas that were quite distant from the next human population. There, in isolation, and in the absence of any written texts, their languages may have changed rather quickly, reaching unintelligibility with respect to the original language in the span of a few dozen generations.[11] Encounters with other human groups and the ensuing language contacts produced new amalgamations. Thus an imaginary map of the

prehistoric distribution of languages would render language areas as fairly small circles, extending and elongating as language groups spread and trekked across new territory, stretching to the breaking point, when a separate circle would indicate the emergence of a 'new' language in that location.

Thus, the hypothesis of 'monogenesis', the evolution of all languages from a single predecessor, does not at all contradict the existence of a great many, mutually unintelligible, languages, once the human species had scattered across the continents. The early distribution of human languages was much more fragmented than the present world language system. Yet it is quite likely that bands in adjacent territories traded and intermarried and some people learned the language of the next group. The circles, no matter how small, may have shown some overlap in the more densely populated areas. As people settled and began to work the land, they must have developed a language for communication between adjoining villages: an early lingua franca, which appears on the map as a dotted line, enclosing the entire area where the linking language is used. That is where the pattern of language distribution is regaining some coherence.

The early 'military-agrarian' regimes, based on military conquest of agrarian communities, demanded the payment of tribute for protection (against other warriors and themselves).[12] With their dominion, they also usually imposed their religion, and their language. Thus the first 'central' languages emerged, linking the peripheral languages of the conquered communities through bilingual speakers to the language of the victors: the language of conquest, conversion and commerce. On the language map, the territory of such regimes would be rendered in a solid but rather pale colour, indicating its wide extension and relatively low density. The circles of the peripheral languages would still clearly show through in their respective areas.

The next stage of integration of the language system occurred with the formation of empires. Marching armies laid one people after another under tribute, maintained roads and harbours, and protected trading routes across the territory. The map of the language constellation in the year 1 shows several such 'world empires'. Not much is known about the western hemisphere or Africa, in that period, but on the Eurasian continent plenty of written records have survived. At least three languages had already spread along very long, but very thin lines. First of all, Latin, emanating from Rome all along the Mediterranean coast, stretched across the southern half of Europe and, more sparsely, further to the north, into the Germanic and Celtic lands. Latin was a spoken and a written language; it served to administer the conquered areas, to carry out diplomatic missions and trading ventures, and to spread new knowledge and technology. Soon, moreover, it was to be the vehicle of Christian expansion. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Latin served for another fifteen hundred years as a major European linking language. But in all the many language groups of Christendom there were only a few individuals, clergy usually, who had learned the language of the church and hence could communicate with their peers all over the continent. They served as translators and mediators to connect their communities with

the continental network. Until the Renaissance, Latin hardly had competitors as the language of learning and long-distance communication. The connecting web may have been extremely tenuous, the Latin speakers very few in number, but in the domains of scholar-ship, law and religion it held together until the nineteenth century. Thus, Europe, with Latin as its supercentral language, already constituted a coherent, if precarious, language system more than two thousand years ago. The language map of the era would have displayed the supercentral presence of Latin by a pattern of rays in a single colour, extending from Rome in ever thinner lines across the continent and overlaying the solid patches of central languages with the circles of the peripheral languages still visible underneath.

The second imperial language of that era was of course Chinese. In the core area of contemporary China, a 'pre-classical' version of Han Chinese already functioned as the language of long-distance communication, spoken and written by clerics and scholars, and used in court as the language of rule and administration. In South Asia, learned and religious men used Sanskrit for the same purposes and an equally fine and extended grid overlaid the language map of that subcontinent. If they had strictly limited their encounters to their peers, clergy and courtiers, at the time, might have travelled all across the Eurasian landmass, using only Chinese, Sanskrit and Latin (and maybe some Persian or Greek). But with the common people, the innkeepers and the traders, let alone peasants and soldiers, these languages would have been quite useless.

One thousand years later, the great classical languages had spawned vernacular versions all over their respective regions. Yet they continued to serve for long-distance communication in the fields of administration, diplomacy, religion, science, literature and trade over an area that had grown even larger in the meantime. Right at the centre of the Afro-Eurasian land mass, a fourth language had been spreading for some time: Arabic, originating in the Arabic peninsula and extending its lines across northern Africa to the southern tip of Spain, along the East African coast and deep into Central Asia.

Clearly, the regions of the classical languages more or less coincided with the areas of the great religions, Islam, Christendom, Hinduism, Confucianism and Buddhism (the last of which overlaps with the preceding two). The supercentral networks were vast, but still very thin, as so few people could understand, and even fewer could read or write, the corresponding languages.

Another five hundred years later, at the 'dawn of the Modern Era', around 1500, the pattern of long-distance communication had begun to change perceptibly. First of all, the vernaculars that had sprouted from the great classical languages were coming into their own: they were crafted into standard versions by poets, writers and scholars, increasingly used in trade, science, law, administration and, in the West, also in religion and at princely courts.[13] In Europe, among the many popular languages that derived from Latin, Italian became a literary language early in the fourteenth century. It soon developed into a language of scholars, courtiers, politicians, artists, scientists and the military.[14] From the

flourishing Italian city states it spread over southwestern Europe as a vehicular language of diplomacy and learning.

The other vernaculars that derived from Latin each also spread over broad territories of their own, helped by a vast increase in the circulation of their written versions through the new printing presses. Increasingly, they were used at the royal court and in the courts of law, in parliament, in the schools and academies. As will appear later, they succeeded in driving out the peripheral languages (or the marginalized, formerly central languages of conquered territories), in the process each becoming the hegemonic language of its realm.[15] A similar development rendered Russian and German hegemonic in their respective territories. The language maps of the epoch for Europe increasingly show closed, single-coloured areas of a more and more intense hue, while the patches of the peripheral languages slowly fade away. These processes of national language unification that occurred throughout Europe represent another stage in the integration process, this time on a smaller scale but with much greater density than in the preceding empires.

The new European vernaculars travelled overseas with the explorers to Africa, Asia and America, where they initially found a tiny niche near estuaries or on islands near the coast. Thus began their long career on distant continents as the languages of rule, trade and conversion.

Around this time, Arabic reached its zenith as a world language. But the language of the Koran was to be conserved in its unadulterated form; any divergence could only spell degeneration. Hence, the vernaculars it engendered never developed into distinct, acknowledged languages as did the descendants of Han, Sanskrit and Latin.

The overseas expansion of Chinese was brought to a halt, once the Ming rulers suspended maritime trade and exploration in the early sixteenth century. As a result, henceforth their language could only spread over land, albeit across a vast expanse. In India, in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Mughal kings extended their rule ever southward, at a time when the vernacular languages (the *prakrits* in the north, Dravidian languages in the south) had established themselves, each in its own area. One of those, the version of Hindi that was current in the Delhi region, finally became the vernacular and the vehicular of the Mughal realm.

The Russians had conquered a good part of what is known today as ‘Russia’ in the seventeenth century and were laying the groundwork for an expansion towards the east that would continue for centuries, until all of Siberia, and most of central Asia, had been conquered. Throughout this vast area, Russian functioned as the supercentral language, taught increasingly in the schools as the first ‘foreign’ language.

The Modern Era was very much the period of the expansion and imposition of European vernaculars across the globe. Portuguese, Spanish and English between them almost entirely covered the western hemisphere; English became the dominant language of the Australian continent; French prevailed side by side

with Arabic in northern Africa. Russian came to dominate all of northern Asia. All these new territories were settled in large numbers by colonists from the European 'mother' country.

In Sub-Saharan Africa and in most of South and South-East Asia, English, French and Portuguese had spread with colonial conquest, and functioned increasingly as media of administration, trade, higher education and long-distance communication, but they never eliminated the indigenous languages. One reason was that Europeans migrated to those lands in much smaller numbers. But in almost all the former colonies, the European language continued to serve key functions, even after the departure of the colonizers, and still do after half a century of independence. The end of this worldwide presence of European languages is not yet in sight. And one of these vernaculars, English, is still increasing its hypercentral prominence almost everywhere on the globe.

A map of the present global language system looks quite like a composite of political maps from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It shows how much language constellations are determined by political events, but also how they often survive long after this political base has disappeared. Thus, Spanish and Portuguese came to the southern part of the western hemisphere as colonial languages, and so did English and French in North America. And although almost the entire continent became independent of the European mother countries between the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth century, the languages of the former colonizers, English, Spanish and Portuguese, still prevail there.

Equally, by the end of the nineteenth century almost all of Africa had been divided between the West European powers. After World War I, Germany was divested of its African possessions. Today, three or four decades after independence, the former colonial languages, English, French and Portuguese, still function throughout Africa; the linguistic map does not look very different from the political map of, say, 1920.

Nor has the map of European languages changed much when compared to the political map of, say, a century ago. The central languages of many European countries coincide with the state borders (although a more detailed map would reveal incongruities in almost every country). But this apparent stability hides great upheavals that occurred in the twentieth century.[16] German spread with the Nazi conquerors, and receded as soon as they were defeated. Russian was imposed on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and swiftly abolished after the Transition. Likewise, Japan expanded in the past century from Manchuria to New Guinea, and Japanese followed the paths of conquest, only to disappear almost entirely after the defeat of Japan.

In Asia also, the military conquests of preceding centuries very much determine the present distribution of languages. The most notable exception is Indonesia, where after Independence Dutch disappeared completely, while Malay spread all over the archipelago. But the language constellations of China and

India, the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia still coincide rather closely with the political patterns of a century ago. In Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, French had to make room for English in the wake of more recent wars.

1.3 Supercentral constellations in the present language system

The supercentral languages mostly spread in two ways: over land and over sea. German, Russian, Arabic, Hindi, Chinese and Japanese each cover a large contiguous area, more or less coterminous with the territory once or still controlled by a major empire: these are the 'land-bound' languages that spread with marching empires.[17] English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, on the contrary, spread with the conquest of territories overseas. Swahili and Malay initially functioned as regional vehicular lingua francas and became national languages after Independence.

The Chinese language constellation covers mainland China and Taiwan. The vast majority of continental Chinese are by now able to read the most current Chinese characters and speak or at least understand *putonghua*, a standardized version of the Mandarin variety from Beijing that has been taught in the schools all over China since 1948. Mandarin differs considerably from the other varieties of Han Chinese that are spoken mostly south of the Yangtse. Of the 1.2 billion mainland Chinese, 96 per cent use one of the varieties of Han, 93 per cent are native Han speakers and 63 per cent are mother-tongue speakers of its most important variety, Mandarin.[18] The largest non-Han language spoken in China is Zhuang, with 13 million speakers.[19] Abroad, varieties of Han Chinese continue to be used by many millions of emigrants, mostly at home and on social occasions, and in newspapers for the local immigrant community. The supercentral position of Mandarin *putonghua* in mainland China is illustrated by the fact that the lion's share of 'minority' members who did acquire a second language (18 million) learned a Han variety (almost all of them Mandarin) and only a tiny fraction (0.9 million) learned other 'minority languages', whereas very few Han speakers (1.2 million) learned one of the peripheral languages. Yet, for its huge numbers and ancient tradition, Han Chinese in its several versions plays a rather minor role in communication beyond China's borders, except for the many millions of emigrants.

Unlike China, India was occupied by a Western colonial power for almost a century and a half. Once again, the language map reproduces features of earlier political maps: English, more than half a century after independence, is still very much present as a second language, in stiff competition with Hindi. The presence of the Dravidian languages in the south very much complicates the Indian constellation. This is the subject of a separate chapter (chapter 4).

German, Russian and Japanese nowadays are barely supercentral languages, confined as they are to the remaining state territories. In the wake of centuries of conquest and rule each of these languages became established as the official

language, the vernacular and the predominant mother tongue in a vast and contiguous area. In the course of the twentieth century, as a result of military expansion all three of them spread far beyond their former limits, and receded again once the defeated conquerors had to surrender their territorial gains.

Since the early 1990s, the Russian language constellation has been rapidly coming apart. The Central and East European satellite states have regained their full autonomy and quickly did away with Russian as the first foreign language, turning instead to English or German. The former autonomous republics of the Soviet Union became 'independent states' and likewise discarded obligatory Russian, reverting to their regional languages, from Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian on the Baltic Sea, to Armenian and Georgian on the Kaspic shores, or Kazakh, Kirghiz, Turkmen and Uzbek, and Tadhzik in Central Asia. Siberia retains Russian, although indigenous peripheral languages remain current locally.

But even in the core area of the Soviet empire, the speakers of Belorussian and Ukrainian increasingly came to see their languages as essentially different from Russian and abandoned the idea of complete mutual intelligibility that had prevailed without much controversy during the Soviet era.[20] As a result, Russian began to lose many of its supercentral functions in the former Soviet empire. English took over these linking tasks almost everywhere, Turkish grew in importance in the Central Asian republics and German plays a modest linking role in Central and Eastern Europe.

Just as Russian was discarded by its European vassal states immediately after the transition, some forty years earlier German had been uprooted and abolished in the same region, while in East and South East Asia, Japanese was 'forgotten' just as quickly.[21] On the other hand, in the respective core territories, where political rule by the central state had already been consolidated during the nineteenth century, these languages have conserved all their functions and are still spoken by practically all citizens, almost without competition from smaller indigenous languages. Apparently, in the twentieth century imperial conquest did not pay in terms of enduring language expansion. Maybe national languages had already taken hold too deeply in the newly conquered territories to be eradicated definitively; possibly also the foreign occupation did not last long enough to establish the conqueror's language for good.

In Europe, German has the most numerous native speakers covering an area that comprises present-day Germany, Austria, the northern part of Switzerland (where it coexists with the Schweitzer-deutsch variety) and Luxembourg (where the local variety is Letzeburgesch). Moreover, as Alsatian it is spoken by most inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine, an area that became German in 1871, only to revert to France in 1919. By the end of the nineteenth century, German had become one of the most important commercial and scientific languages, almost on a par with English and French.[22] Had Germany not been dispossessed of its overseas territories by the League of Nations after its defeat in the Great War of 1914–18, those parts of Africa that were once German colonies, Tanganyika,

Rwanda, Burundi and Namibia (and also Eastern Papua New Guinea), would almost certainly have adopted German as their official language. In Central and Eastern Europe, German was the native tongue in communities of German settlers (*Volksdeutsche*), many of whom had lived in the area for centuries. Until 1945, it was the most important language of long-distance communication in that part of the continent (it had of course been the language of the Austrian empire and – with Hungarian – of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy). During World War II, German became a major foreign language throughout the occupied areas of Europe and many people made an effort to learn and use it. Immediately after the end of the war the language was abandoned in the liberated territories, and as most *Volksdeutsche* were driven out of Eastern and Central Europe, the language lost its strongholds in that part of Europe, too. Yet, to some degree, German continues to function as a supercentral language of science, commerce and arts in contemporary Central and Eastern Europe.[23] It may still gain in importance in the language constellation of the European Union (see chapter 8).

Very much the same applies to the brief expansion of Japan and Japanese in North and South East Asia: the defeat at the end of World War II also undid the gains of Japanese as a supercentral language in the territories it had occupied since the end of the nineteenth century: Taiwan (1895), Korea (1910), Manchuria (1931) and large parts of Mongolia on the eve of World War II. During the war years Japan wrested large parts of South East Asia from European colonial rule, including Indonesia. In all the occupied territories it made an effort to instil Japanese language and culture, while often ferociously repressing the indigenous heritage. As a result, after the defeat of Japan the newly liberated countries strongly rejected Japanese influence and the language disappeared almost completely. At present, in Japan, Japanese is used by practically everybody for every domain. Here or there local languages are spoken, mostly at home, in Okinawa for example. Abroad, Japanese plays a very limited role as a transnational language of science and business.

The foregoing supercentral languages cover a contiguous area that corresponds to the territories once conquered by military might. Arabic, too, spread through conquest and commerce, mostly over land. More than other languages it also spread by conversion, even overseas. The Arabic language constellation roughly covers the world of Islam. It is widely spoken as a first language in North Africa and the Middle East, but elsewhere it has continued to function in competition with other supercentral languages, remaining mostly confined to the domain of religion: on the Indian subcontinent, in South-East Asia (most notably Indonesia), and also in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. More recently, Muslim immigrants to the European Union brought Arabic with them, as a liturgical language and for many North Africans as the home language, too. The vast expansion of Arabic is a relic of a long succession of explorations and conquests. The fact that, subsequently, Arabic in many areas was relegated to liturgical functions mostly bespeaks the growing might of succeeding conquerors: the European powers.

English, French, Portuguese and Spanish all originated on the shores of the Atlantic ocean and their expansion beyond their core area was mostly maritime. These languages became predominant wherever European settlers succeeded in colonizing relatively thinly inhabited areas with a moderate climate and could oust the aboriginals (greatly helped by the more virulent microparasites[24] and the more resistant plant and animal species they – unwittingly or wittingly – brought with them).[25]

Thus, Spanish and the Spanish conquered and colonized almost all of South and Central America, pushing the indigenous peoples and their languages into peripheral positions. The Portuguese did the same in Brazil. As a result, Portuguese and Spanish have remained true 'world languages' that number a hundred and twenty-five million and two hundred and fifty million speakers respectively, even though their 'metropolitan' versions, spoken on the Iberian peninsula, count roughly ten million in the case of Portuguese, and some forty million in the Spanish case (the two languages are moreover quite closely related, although not mutually intelligible without some learning effort). Brazilians and Portuguese can still understand each other, and so can mainland Spaniards and the hispanophone inhabitants of South and Central America. Lisbon and Madrid (or Barcelona) have remained important centres of the book-publishing industry for their former colonies.

The northern half of the western hemisphere was first colonized by English settlers, and they succeeded in maintaining English as the predominant, well-nigh exclusive language of North America, in the end ceding only Quebec to French. Hesitant attempts to claim a position for other immigrant languages, such as German, were quickly abandoned, until massive Spanish immigration in the last part of the twentieth century secured strong local footholds for Spanish in some US cities, and may yet result in urban enclaves of Hispanic-English bilingualism.[26]

As British colonists settled the Australian continent and established their language there, the indigenous, Aboriginal languages withered away. Later cohorts of immigrants who came with other mother tongues were never numerous or determined enough to make a dent in the hegemony of the language that the first, English, colonizers had brought with them. In South Africa, a settler colony initially populated by 'Boers' (immigrants from Dutch stock), British rulers introduced English, which to this day competes with Afrikaans, a descendant of Dutch, for the central position in the area. (The South African language constellation will be the subject of chapter 7.) English also remained the official language in the former British colonies in Africa, with the partial exception of Tanzania (see chapter 6 on Sub-Saharan Africa).

French, too, spread with overseas colonial conquest. But the French were much less successful than the British in establishing and maintaining settler colonies. Only Quebec, after much strife, succeeded in conserving French as its first language, and even there it must weather stiff competition from English.[27] The great francophone settler communities in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia

disbanded when these countries regained their independence and the '*pieds noirs*' left en masse for the mother country. French nevertheless remains the 'high' medium in North Africa, but it must confront the re-emergence of Arabic in a nationalist and religious revival of 'Arabisation'.[28]

In the former possessions in Sub-Saharan Africa, French continues to serve as the supercentral language par excellence, and within each of these countries it remains the language of politics, administration, law and education. Recently, French has been losing ground to English in Rwanda, after exiles educated in Uganda took over the government there in 1995. In the rest of 'francophone' Africa, individual intellectuals and scholars are gradually turning more to English. What occurred in the former French colonies in South East Asia, where English almost entirely replaced French, may yet occur in francophone Africa (see also chapter 6 on Sub-Saharan Africa).

Closer to home, on the European subcontinent, French claimed its greatest triumphs: by the seventeenth century, it had emerged as a European vehicular language, emanating like Italian from courtly circles. In the course of the eighteenth century it was adopted at courts all over the continent, by royalty, courtiers and diplomats, and by men and women of taste and learning. French thus became the pre-eminent vehicular language in Europe and anyone who pretended to some refinement and education had to master it. By the nineteenth century it was current as a second language in bourgeois circles from the Netherlands to Russia, especially in more formal settings. Until the mid-twentieth century it remained the language of diplomacy par excellence and the main transnational language of literature and the arts, centred as they were on Paris as a global hub of culture.[29]

At present, the most important transnational functions of French are played out in the European Union, where it is still a major language in everyday administration and politics, once again next to English, which has consistently been making inroads on its hegemony since the United Kingdom joined the European Community in 1973.

English, Portuguese and French have remained supercentral languages in the conquered territories of Asia and Africa, even in those areas that never became settler colonies, and even after colonial rule was abolished. Why the former colonial languages have persisted so tenaciously in these countries after Independence is one of the recurrent questions in this book.

There are, however, domestic languages that have weathered the competition with the language of the colonizer and at present fulfil most supercentral functions in their area: Hindi in northern India, Malay in Malaysia and Indonesia (*bahasa Indonesia*), and Swahili in Tanzania and Kenya. Each of these language constellations is the subject of a separate chapter or section (4, 5 and 6.3.2 respectively).

English is the hypercentral language that holds the entire world language system together. This has not always been the case. It is in fact a very recent phenomenon. Only after 1945 did primacy, also in global diplomacy, radically shift to

English. This may not always remain so; the 'end of history' is not yet in sight and hegemony, even global hegemony, may still wane. But even if the economic and political power of the English-speaking nations, the United States foremost among them, were to dwindle, most probably English would continue to function as the pivot of the global language constellation for a long time. It takes, after all, a major effort to acquire a new foreign language, and a language once learned is not all that easily forgotten or abandoned. That is one cause of 'linguistic inertia', one reason why the language constellation tends to lag behind when the political constellation changes.

Notes

1 Cf. De Swaan, 1991b.
2 Karl Deutsch, 1966 [1953], pioneered a global and systemic vision of communication networks in his *Nationalism and Social Communication*.
3 There are precursors in formal and quantitative theory. Greenberg, 1956, proposed a 'diversity index', elaborated by Lieberson, 1964; Laitin, 1992, 1993, 1994, and others applied game theory; Pool, 1986, 1996, and others discussed compensation proposals; Church and King, 1993, analysed bilingualism in terms of network externalities. See also chapters 2 and 3 for further sources.
4 See Cavalli-Sforza, 2000; Deacon, 1997; Jablonski and Aiello, 1998; Lieberman, 1984; Pinker, 1994; Ruhlen, 1994.
5 Thus, the number of bird species has been revised regularly, from 19,000 in 1900 to some 9,000 in 1945 and since then upwards again (science supplement to *NRC/Handelsblad* 29 August 1999, p. 5).
6 Thus, for example, Netherlandish (or Dutch) is a 'Co-Sprache' (co-language) of German, as are Yiddish, Afrikaans and Frisian: the product of economic and political rather than linguistic needs having grown apart (Décsy, 1973; cf. also Goossens, 1976; Amnion, 1991).
7 See Goody, 1986; Ong, 1982.
8 Of old, peripheral languages were often connected by unwritten indigenous, vehicular languages, and also by pidgins, creoles and sign languages. See also Wurm et al., 1996.
9 The French sociolinguist Louis–Jean Calvet, 1999, pp. 75–99, has devoted the better part of a chapter to the presentation of the world language system. After an initial reference and a faithful, at times almost verbatim, summary of my 'galactic model', he rebaptizes it a 'gravitational model'.
10 See the atlas of the world's languages by Moseley and Asher, 1994.
11 Cf. Genesis 11:1–9.
12 See Goudsblom et al., 1996.
13 See Parker, 1983; Pollock, 1998.
14 Gensini, 1985.
15 'The divisions of linguistic continua and homogeneous space into vernacular languages and heterogeneous places accordingly constitute a cultural act, not a natural fact … Language and place were becoming mutually constitutive' (Pollock, 1998, 63).
16 For a description of the spread of the great languages of the world, in mutual competition, see among others Calvet, 1999; Laponce, 1987; Wardhaugh, 1987; for English see Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 1997.
17 See Collins, 1986.

18 See Ramsey, 1987. Figures have been taken from the monumental study by McConnell and Kerang, 1995. The authors mention that 'Han language has big differences among its dialects between some of which communication is difficult' (p. xxvi). Compare this to Cheng, 1979, p. 541: 'Whether or not Taiwanese, Hakka, Cantonese, and Mandarin, etc. are different languages or different dialects of the same language is a problem. Western linguists have regarded them as different languages on the ground that they are not mutually intelligible. Some Chinese patriots view this to be an attempt by imperialists to divide China. I use the term "variety" here to cover "language" as well as "dialect".' See also Barnes, 1982, p. 264: 'The amount of difference which obtains between these speech groups [namely of North Chinese (Mandarin)] has been obscured by the tradition of referring to them as "dialects," and there is compelling evidence that speakers of these groups are not as a rule capable of intercommunication.' Cf. also Ramsey, 1987, p. 7.
19 McConnel and Kerang, 1995, p. li.
20 They are classified as Balto-Slavic languages in the index of Crystal, 1987, p. 300.
21 See Cheng, 1979.
22 Chartier and Corsi, 1996, esp. the contribution by Weindling.
23 For comparative statistics on scientific publications in various languages, see Laponce, 1987; Ammon, 1998.
24 McNeill, 1976.
25 See Crosby, 1986.
26 Zolberg, 1999.
27 See Veltman, 1996; Putzel, 1996; Vaillancourt, 1996.
28 See Benrabah, 1999.
29 Casanova, 1999.

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