

Globalisierung: Ideologie, globales Englisch und kulturelle Differenz

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Globalization: Ideology, global English and cultural difference

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Abstract

This paper traces the link between three issues in the study of globalization. The first concerns the semantics of globalization. To understand how globalization might affect our lives, we need a form of literacy that transcends simple interpretation to reflection on the social significance of globalization discourse. This paper will also explore the consequences of the dominance of English. We will argue that globalization is a process that may involve a certain amount of homogenization but also always results in linguistic glocalization. Finally, the implications of the forces of globalization for intercultural communication will be investigated. Here three paradigms on cultural difference (cultural differentialism, cultural convergence and hybridization) will be presented and the interconnectedness of the above mentioned issues will be discussed.

1. Globalization rhetoric as ideology

The term *globalization* has been used in a multiplicity of senses. Since the publication of the report 'Global 2000' on environmental questions, the term *global* was associated with thinking in terms of environmental responsibility. The UN conference about environment and development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 appeared to be the turning point towards active global responsibility. The East-West conflict, moreover, was over. For decades, this conflict had prevented governments worldwide from dealing seriously with environmental conservation and fighting against poverty. All these developments seemed to lead to a new era in the history of mankind.

Nevertheless, the meaning of the concept globalization changed quickly. Two years after Rio came Marrakech when the WTO (World Trade Organization) was established. In April 1994, the World Trade Contract was signed. As a result, the globalization current took another direction. Free world trade was given priority; agenda 21 was downgraded – and hardly anyone noticed the contradiction between the two world plans. With the entry into the new millennium the project of Rio de Janeiro has proven to be a mere utopia, and the magic word 'globalization' turned into a nightmare, since globalization ignores public, social, and ecological values.

The term *globalization* is just one of an array of concepts and arguing points that have been mobilized to advance the process of corporate expansion across borders. Like *free trade*, globalization has an aura of virtue. Just as *freedom* must be good, so globalization hints at internationalism and solidarity between countries, as opposed to nationalism and protectionism, which

have negative connotations. As an ideology, globalization connotes not only freedom and internationalism, but, as it helps realize the benefits of free trade, it also supposedly enhances efficiency and productivity. Because of these virtues, and the alleged inability of governments to halt progress, globalization is widely perceived as beyond human control, which further weakens resistance.

Concepts are thus tools to play with. One can ennoble them or vulgarize them; one can change them from a praising word into a swearword and vice versa. A change of value is often reflected in the change of meaning. For instance, the term *reform* was a synonym for leftist society change 30 years ago. Meanwhile, it is being used so loosely that it is now associated with any alteration of a law paragraph – whatever the political direction (cf. Petras / Veltmeyer 2001:61). Like so many fashion concepts, globalization has also undergone a change of meaning, but into an ideological direction¹. During the cold war, nations generally either pursued the capitalist or socialist model of development. But with the collapse of the communist system, this period came to an end and during the 1990's the capitalist model of globalization has become dominant. All countries must open their economies freely and indiscriminately to imports and reduce the role of governments in the economy in favour of transnational corporations (TNCs). Seen in this way, globalization is the highest and last stage in history in which all countries and economies are linked through "new capitalism"². One early spokesman for this idea, Fukuyama (1992), wrote about "the end of history" in which markets, democracy and prosperity had put an end to conflicts. The proponents of the global liberalization dogma won their semantic campaign by propagating the idea of the nation-state as being an obstacle to the so-called "global equality".

They have successfully conveyed the impression that globalization is not only inevitable but has been a success. This ideological campaign, carried out within a democratic facade, has been highly successful, because vast sums of business money fed to intellectuals and journalists has allowed their views to prevail, while the views of the opponents have been fought and rejected. This is not only a question of language, but also a question of power and who is making a point or presenting something. Those who have no social position often do not have a voice in the public sphere. Knowledge is thus in direct relationship with power. Some knowledge is accepted as truth, other is rejected as deficient (Foucault 1980).

It follows that part of rethinking globalization is rethinking the way language figures within new capitalism. One way of thinking about the concerns of language is in terms of examining “the new-liberal economic discourses which are internationally disseminated and imposed by organisations like the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (including key words and phrases like ‘free trade’, ‘transparency’, ‘flexibility’, ‘quality’)” (Fairclough 2000). The new ways of using language are part of the new order and a better understanding of how language figures in the new order is part of a better understanding of globalization. As Fairclough (2000) argues, “the project of the new order is partly a language project [...]”. And challenging the new order is partly a matter of challenging the new language”.

Along the same lines, Hasan (2003a), in her article “Globalization, Literacy and Ideology”, points out that globalization has generated a kind of discourse³ where language (English) is being (mis)used for specific manipulations. To be for or against globalization is reflected in this discourse:

“The principle of non-discrimination is embodied in the 1993 Uruguay round agreement on trade related investment measures. It means that developing countries cannot give special treatment to their domestic companies. Neither can they insist that foreign companies use local labour [...]. To many civil society groups the principle of non-discrimination is unjust – anti-democratic, because it threatens laws drawn up by democratically elected governments, and anti-economic development, because it ties the hands of poor countries, making development policy subservient to trade policy. The WTO’s ‘free trade’ philosophy effectively reduces the freedom of governments to buy locally produced materials or to use local labour.” (Madeley 2000, cited in Hasan 2003:436)

What emerges from the discourse of the two opponents during the first active protest against the underlying principle of globalization in Seattle in 1999 is a series of linguistic contradictions in terms of meaning (“non-discrimination is discriminatory and anti-economic”, “liberalization trade imposes constraints”, “free trade philosophy reduces freedom” etc.). In this respect, Hasan (2003:438) suggests that the principle underlying the internal contradictions of the “globalizing variety of English”, also called “glib-speak”, is that of “re-semanticization”: The natural process of language change takes place slowly and inconspicuously. In “Glib-speak”, however, a deliberate and conspicuous change of meaning occurs and “the meanings of long-established linguistic patterns are being ‘hijaked’ in order to disarm objections by those to whom the locution is addressed” (ibid.). To clarify this point, let us take, as an example, the construction *liberalization of trade* or *liberal trade*. The value of the evaluative term *liberalization/liberal* provides a positive factor: *liberal trade* is then expected to be good for the parties involved in the trade nego-

tiations, since liberalization decreases restriction, which is coercive, and allows people to be free in their actions. In other words, the colligation of *liberal* and *trade* makes *trade* appear more desirable and "other-oriented". By implication we infer a certain sensitivity to the needs of the poor nations. This strategy, which Hassan calls *exploiting evaluation*, re-semanticizes *liberal trade* so that it turns out to be liberal, positive and rational for mankind. Any opposition is then supposed to irrational. That is why the so-called Seattle rioters were described as ignorant, violent and wild by the representatives of the WTO. The reality, however, is that the Seattle protesters were in fact aware of the term of the WTO agreements which are biased in favour of TNCs – *liberalization trade* thus imposes *constraints* and reduces *freedom*. The WTO spokesmen need to present themselves as benefactors when framing international agreements with poor countries. The language they speak weaves a perfect web of "lexical camouflage" and "manipulation of meaning". Clearly, Language change is being actively "manufactured". A fascinating quality of this change is that the new meanings and concepts are friendly exploited to the interests and ideologies of its speakers.

Obviously, globalization is a metaphor for integration, but it is also, by implication, a marginalization of the integrated group. Thus, it becomes a pretext for dominant groups to assert their superiority and to perpetuate the subjugation of smaller groups. In this sense, globalization rhetoric is an ideological mask disguising the emerging power of TNCs and their tendency to enrich themselves, to an unprecedented degree, at the expense of others. We therefore develop a sense that language is being used as an instrument of deceiving people into believing quite the opposite of what is really happening.

Today we are facing a certain discourse on globalization which is in fact a gigantic misreading of current reality – a deception imposed upon us by powerful groups through the use of euphemisms and concepts that have little relationship to the social and political realities they purport to describe. "Governance", for instance, is a euphemism for diminished government; "reform", of course, means privatization in its media use; "investment" may be pure speculation; "free markets" means actually private markets etc. The language of the new adepts consists in saying "there is no choice" or "there is no alternative (shortened as TINA)" to the status quo of neoliberalism. This is the central slogan of capitalist globalization of which Margaret Thatcher, the radical British Prime Minister was fond. In economics, politics, and political economy, it has come to mean that despite capitalism's problems, *free markets* and *free trade* are the only way in which modern societies can go, as any deviation from this doctrine is certain to lead to disaster. Susan George, a

prominent critic of neoliberal globalization, disagrees by saying "TATA!" (There Are Thousands of Alternatives), which also refers to the main political slogan of the alter-globalization movement⁴: "another world is possible". Such expressions as "there is no alternative" or "there is no choice" clearly depict and faithfully sum up the essence of what globalization is all about. They became an apology of the 1990's because in the world of globalization everything acquires the opposite of its meaning, and there is little room left for freedom, social justice, dignity and peace. Thus, not only the new order needs to be challenged, but its language as well, because language is important in imposing, extending, and legitimizing the new order, especially the claim that it is inevitable, that "there is no alternative".

Apparently, those concerned with shaping political reality in the brave new world fashioned by globalization often believe that they can achieve their purposes indirectly by influencing language. What makes this influence possible is "the power of language", which can be manipulated to meet every demand of the speaker. However, one thing it is essential to keep in mind:

"[...] in itself the power of language is simply a potential; its semiotic energy requires the ideological spur of the speaker to be activated; the active principle is always the potentially positioned speaker [...]. And it is my belief that ignorance of intention or effect is no excuse; if there is guilt or blame, it does not attach to language as potential; it attaches to some section of some speakers somewhere, who are the actualizers of this potential. The trick is to know through careful reflection an analysis exactly how they do it and why." (Hasan 2003a:447)

Therefore, every speaker (even native) must (re)consider everyday news with caution in order to figure out the specific semiotic nature of the variety of "glib-speak" and for whose benefit it is.⁵ The above mentioned expressions "non-discrimination policy" or "liberalization of trade" are not just two isolated cases from the discourse of rioters and their opponents. "Glib-speak" is quite wide in its reach, and it could thus involve other contexts with corresponding concepts, such as forcing 'democracy' or 'liberty/freedom' when countries are to be ruled by force with a presumed legitimacy even outside international law.

If the advent of globalization has highlighted a tension between the Global, on the one hand, and the Local, on the other, this tension is clearly manifested in the linguistic relations of the world's peoples. English has emerged as a worldwide communication tool. Its adoption is primarily a manifestation of a set of non-linguistic factors having to do with global economic integration and with significant changes in the way of life. The continued spread of English today has been incited by globalization, just as globalization has been permitted by the spread of English. Since English is the medium of globalization, this seems

to have taken a rapid and radical course through English. To this we turn now.

2. The rise of English as a global Language

The process of turning the world into a village is certainly promoting the use of English and, to some extent, other European languages at the expense of small languages – minority or otherwise. The result is that when a language dies, not only does the world's linguistic diversity receive a blow, but entire systems of knowledge are lost (cf. Jacinto 2001).⁶

At the same time, however, we are witnessing the proliferation of new local languages, that is, the phenomenon of dialects becoming languages. Trudgill (2004) examines the conversion of dialects into languages, specifically in relation to "nation-state development in the context of globalization". Following Nederveen Pieterse (1995:50), Trudgill (2004) points out that globalization does not necessarily mean homogenization; it can in fact imply the strengthening of "subnational regionalism", which may lead to the reinforcement of linguistic regionalism. In this respect, Trudgill (2004) observes that in recent years we have seen in Europe a development of what he calls "Ausbau languages" – Ausbau languages are languages that have been "outfitted" or developed so that they have the lexical resources (vocabulary and technical terminologies) that enable them to be used for science and technology.

Trudgill (2004) points out that Ausbau Languages "appear to contradict the widespread assumption that world-wide homogenisation is an inherent part of cultural globalization, and to fly in the face of suppositions that this is being accompanied by linguistic homogenization". The best known example from Europe clarifying nation-state proliferation and Ausbau languages proliferation is that of Yugoslavia, which was a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual nation-state: "At various times in history, and by different people, Serbian and Croatian have variously been considered a single language with two different norms, or two different (though mutually intelligible) languages [...]" (Trudgill 2004); with the break-up of Yugoslavia, however, the linguistic situation has changed. The government of the now independent nation-state of Croatia (Zagreb) calls its language Croatian, while the Yugoslavian government (Belgrade) calls its national language Serbian. This new scenario has led Muslims of Bosnia to establish a new national language for themselves, namely Bosnian.⁷

The sociolinguistic conclusion we can draw is that globalization encourages subnational political regionalism which, in turn, encourages subnational linguistic regionalism. The decreasing im-

portance of nations and borders in the age of globalization has thus given minorities the opportunity to claim their political and/or religious independence beyond state authorities. Such a claim is supported by transnational networks⁸ promoting human rights and defending the preservation of the environment, for instance. In short, independent nations tend to promote autonomous local dialects, a fact leading to the reinforcement of localism.

This dialectic relationship between the local and the global or “global localism” has come to be known in social theory as “glocalisation”. This term was coined by Robertson (1995), who borrows the concept from the business context where it means marketing goods and services on global basis by catering to local particularities. It combines the term globalization with localization and is now being used by social theorists to refer “not only to the fact that globalism can strengthen localism [...], but also to the fact that localism is now a global phenomenon” (Trudgill 2004). More important, Trudgill argues that the development of national Ausbau languages in the 19th and early 20th century is to be seen in the light of the growth of nation-states, while the proliferation of local Ausbau languages is an integral part of the “glocalisation process that is an aspect of modern forms of globalisation” (Trudgill 2004).

Consequently, the effects of globalization in the light of Ausbau sociolinguistics are twofold: the appeal to political sovereignty and/or religious revival has been accompanied by a proliferation of local dialects, thus awarding themselves language status. At the same time, the status of a particular national language can be reduced by the expansion of English as a global language, which may, in turn, leave a gap for the proliferation of local dialects. The results of globalization are thus complex, as different societies appropriate global pressures differently. Seen in this way, the spread of English and the teaching of English, which have spawned a debate in the field of applied linguistics, do not necessarily involve “linguistic imperialism” (Phillipson 1992) or what Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (2001) have termed “linguicide”, that is, the death of other languages in the wake of globalized and globalizing English. Several linguists reject these notions because the theories assume the existence of a hegemonic structure driving English. But as shown above, globalization does not necessarily mean homogenization. Rather, glocalization as a modern form of globalization can lead to the development of local Ausbau languages.

In our globalized world we therefore need a lingua franca, for practical purposes, for doing business with people, for the distribution of scientific and technological knowledge and for serving as a “contact language between persons who share neither

a common native tongue nor a common national culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication" (Firth 1996:240). It would be reasonable if foreign language teachers help students not only to import information but also to export it. By helping students explain their own culture to others, they will manage to make other people aware of the many aspects that are intrinsically interesting and usually taken for granted. English should therefore be taught as a *lingua franca*. Students learn an international language not to absorb a foreign culture, but to express their own culture in it. Students should, for example, be able to read, write and even present a paper in a professional way⁹. House (2003), among others, also played an important role in the shifting perception of the English language as she argues against the widespread assumption that English is a serious threat to other languages and makes some suggestions for a new research paradigm for English as a *lingua franca*:

"If one makes the distinction between languages for communication, such as English today, and languages for identification – mother tongues, regional, local, intimate varieties of language – ELF [English as a *lingua franca*] need not be a threat. It can be seen as strengthening the complementary need for native local languages that are rooted in their speakers' shared history, cultural tradition, practices, conventions, and values as identificatory potential." (House 2003:562)¹⁰

At the end of the first chapter, we emphasized the power of language and pointed out that this power resides in the flexible design of language as a system. Language, as a means of communication, is simply a potential, which is neutral and requires the ideological spur of the socially positioned speaker. From this point of view, English itself neither supports nor deceives. However, the situation is different when it comes to satisfying the needs of a certain ideology:

"When in the context of its worldwide expansion, we talk of English as a killer language, we put the blame where it does not belong. It is not English that is the killer, it is the ideology of the dominant speakers of English, their ways of being, thinking, doing and saying that knowingly or unknowingly kill [...] we alone are responsible for harnessing the language's semiotic energy in our own chosen ways [emphasis mine]." Hasan (2003a:447)

In this view, the ideology of the dominant speakers of English, like any other language, involves a certain cultural arrogance, which originates from their ignorance of other value systems and their disregard of the right to other people's existence. In so doing, they aim to promote their interests and values in virtually every part of the world by commercializing all the physical and mental spaces of our life, especially in the so-called "Third World". This issue brings me to the final section of this paper, namely the implications of the forces of globalization for intercultural communication.

3. Globalization and intercultural communication

The awareness of the world becoming smaller coincides with a growing sensitivity to cultural difference. Cultural difference accompanied by globalization and *informatisation*¹¹ has clear relevance to theorists in intercultural communication in at least the following aspect: the ways in which cultural difference is perceived by different trends is an important issue of discussion for communication scholars, as this provides the foundational assumption for our interpretation of the processes of intercultural communication. The increasing salience of cultural difference form part of a general cultural turn, since the notion of cultural difference itself has, as Bloomaert (1998) argues, changed form:

“We seem to live in a world in which difference has replaced inequality as the main focus of social science. Preference now seems to go to horizontal differentiation within and across societies – differences in terms of nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, and so on – rather than to vertical differentiation – differences of power and status, hierarchies, degrees of inequality within and between societies. Part of the reason for this is the upsurge of nationalism and identity politics, in Europe and elsewhere, in the last decade, combined with the collapse of rigid ideological oppositions encapsulated in socio-political and economic state-systems caused by the disappearance of the Iron Curtain [...].”

Generally, there appear to be three ways of perceiving cultural difference: “McDonaldization”, “clash of civilizations”, and “cultural mixing”. Each of these positions involves particular theoretical precepts and in this regard they may be considered paradigms. We will outline these new forms of cultural difference in three paradigms, show respectively their relationship to the phenomenon of globalization and conclude with a defence of the third perspective, namely cultural mixing or ‘hybridization’.

The first perspective on cultural difference is that of Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations”¹². Huntington (1996) argues that a clash of civilizations is occurring as Western, Islamic, and Asian cultural systems collide. Certainly, one of his contentions is that cultural consciousness is growing and that it is getting stronger, not weaker. He provides (1996:20) a brief summary of his thesis in the following lines: “The central theme of this book is that culture and cultural identities, which are at the broadest level civilizational identities, are shaping the patterns of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict in the post-cold war world”.

He argues that there is a great possibility for intercultural and interreligious conflict between future world powers, each united from within through culture and religion, in a multi-polar world. He further constructs the West as a “universal civilization”, directly at odds with the “Rest”. Thus, the survival of the West depends, according to Huntington, on Americans reaf-

firming their Western identity and Westerners accepting their civilization as unique not universal and uniting to renew and preserve it against challenges from non-Western societies. The argument that we are experiencing a clash of civilizations provides the first perspective on cultural difference: cultural differentialism or lasting difference, which can be translated into a "policy of closure".¹³

The second perspective on cultural difference is that of "McDonaldization". McDonaldization is viewed as cultural Westernization, and more particularly Americanization, of the entire globe through the impact of multinational corporations. As Holton (2000:142) notes, "[c]onsumer capitalism of this type has been built upon a standardized brand image, mass advertising, and the high status given by many Third World populations to Western products and services." In this sense the forces of globalization threaten to undermine centuries of tradition, local autonomy, and cultural integrity. Already we can witness a cultural conflict between tradition and change, or as Friedman (1999) puts it the "lexus and the olive tree conflict". In the same vein, Barber (1995:4), characterises the dialectic between "McWorld" vs. Jihad" as an inevitable point of conflict in the future, between a "McWorld tied together by communications, information, entertainment, and commerce" versus a "Jihad [...]...against technology, against pop culture, and against integrated markets; against modernity itself".

It follows that neither cultural differentialism nor cultural homogeneity seems to offer a satisfying model on cultural difference. A third position, altogether different from both these models of international relations is that what is taking place is a process of cultural mixing or hybridization across locations and identities. To understand mixing, we should first define the notion of culture. While at one level, culture distinguishes one human group from another, at a deeper anthropological level culture represents the collective ideas and tools shared by the entire human species. Modern anthropology suggests that human history is a record of complex cultural mutations. Human civilizations have evolved in discrete stages, from foraging tribes to agrarian empires to industrial nation states. In this larger sense, human culture refers to all patterns of thinking and behaviour that human beings living in social groups learn, create, and employ (Lenski 1995).

Nederveen Pieterse (2004) describes this historical process as cultural hybridization or mixing. For him humanity's sociocultural history is an unbroken chain of intercultural synthesis. He points out that while cultural hybridization has been concealed by religious, national, and imperial chauvinisms, it remains the underlying force of history. In this same way, modern technol-

ogy is enabling a complex global culture today where globalization is both desirable and inevitable, a final production of human evolution. Globalization, in other words, is not only inevitable but part of a "larger process" that is no "more reversible than evolution itself" (Truett 2002).

Moreover, Nederveen Pieterse (2004) explores, among other things, the relevance of these perspectives to globalization. By addressing these issues, he articulates some important areas that merit the attention of intercultural communication theorists. According to cultural differentialism

"globalization is a surface phenomenon only: the real dynamic is regionalization, or the formation of regional blocs, which tend to correspond with civilizational clusters. Therefore, the future of globalization is interregional rivalry. According to the convergence principle, contemporary globalization is westernization or Americanization writ large, a fulfilment in instalments of the classical imperial and the modernization theses. According to the mixing approach, the outcome of globalization processes is open-ended and current globalization is as much a process of easternization as of westernization, as well as of many interstitial influences." Nederveen Pieterse (2004:57)

Nederveen Pieterse (2004) offers "cultural hybridity" as a more scientific paradigm through which to understand human evolution. For him contemporary globalization is the continuation of an evolutionary process unfolding as history. This process is especially important to understand globalization. While most assessments of globalization are confined to a narrow time frame (modernity), Nederveen Pieterse (2004:25) examines globalization in anthropological terms; that is, globalization "belongs to a deep dynamic in which shifting civilizational centers are but the front stage of history". He further (2004:28) argues that "none of the achievements of the world's civilizational centers are local or regional achievements: they are interregional achievements that are incomprehensible without their cross-cultural infrastructure".

Rather than emphasizing resilience or homogenization, Nederveen Pieterse's perspective recognises cultural evolution as the result of hybridization or cultural mixing. Taking a long historical perspective, hybridization acknowledges globalization through trade and migration. Globalization generates new cultural forms and translocal identities through the mixing of global elements with local identities. Seen in this way, much of human evolution of culture can be regarded as borrowing and adjusting to local needs.

Nederveen Pieterse's plea for a conceptual framework linking the mixing of global elements with local identities and his insistence on the "cross-cultural infrastructure" of the "achievements of the world's civilizational centers" is reminiscent of the notion of "linguistic glocalization" discussed above in connection with the dialectic relation between globalism and localism

and the consequences of this kind of global/local dynamics on the development of Ausbau languages. In this section, we would like to reinvent the term “glocalization” for the context of cultures in contact and use it to signify what Robertson (1995:30) calls the “interpenetrating” of “the particular” and “the universal”. That is, “the local is not best seen [...] as a counterpart to the global”; rather, it can be regarded “as an aspect of globalization” (Ibid.).

Likewise, Nederveen Pieterse (2004) uses terms such as “mélange”, “hybridization”, “syncretism” etc. to capture similar processes with regard to culture. Both Pieterse and Robertson make the point that globalization entails a synergetic relationship between the global and the local as opposed to the dominance of the former over the latter. Although globalization may entail some homogenization, the process also results in local approbation of global trends and the production of new, hybrid identities. In this respect, Talbott (1995) concludes in her examination of the homogenization thesis in relation to McDonald’s in Moscow that it is not so much cultural homogenization, but a global localization. The Moscow McDonald’s varies from its American, Western counterparts by catering to the consumers in Moscow (cited in Nederveen Pieterse 2004:50). As Nederveen Pieterse (Ibid.) writes, “Firms may be multinational but ‘all business is local’.” McDonald’s then may be an increasing global corporation; it only survives by catering to local tastes and needs. Therefore, for Nederveen Pieterse (2004:51), “it would make more sense to consider McDonaldization as a form of intercultural hybridization, partly in its origins and certainly in its present globally localizing variety of forms.” As Backhaus (2003) observes, while “glocalization” and “hybridization” stand for a special kind of “mixing, with regard to globalization – they all describe local adaptations of things that come from outside the context”. Thus, they belong to the same genre and importantly for our purposes offer a prudent synthesis on the issue of globalization of cultures, namely a combination of the two – the universal and the particular.

In fact, “hybridization” and “glocalization” are quite different from the other two paradigms (cultural differentialism and cultural convergence) because they affirm plurality against the domination of one, and, by drawing attention to the mingling of cultures in history, reject the theory of “the clash between cultures” and encourage dialogue between cultures. In viewing globalization as a process of hybridisation that gives rise to a “global mélange”, we would then witness a kind of cultural syncretism, as cultures interact more, and so borrow and lend from each other. The reality, however, is that fundamental issues regarding human rights, the question of environment,

national sovereignty and peace remain unresolved. What will be essential to solve such problems is to develop a mechanism for coordination worldwide. But how can this be achieved?

4. Final Thoughts

As shown above in the section on the semantics of globalization, another central feature of globalization is the resistance which has arisen in response to the process. Alter-globalization demonstrations (for instance in Seattle in 1990, The G8 Summit in Genoa in July 2001 and the European Summit in Barcelona in March 2002) have increased their effectiveness by being globalized. In this respect, Mignolo (1998:44) points out that globalization allows alter-globalization movements to create transnational information networks in order to fight for their own social and human rights. Robertson (2003:263) also argues that the struggle for connectivity and global cooperation should not be abandoned and that people need claim globalization for themselves and on its democratization. In this way, resisting exploitation through globalized networks “provides for the possibility that, in everyday life, the powerless [...] may find ways to negotiate, alter and oppose political structures, and reconstruct their language, cultures and identities to their advantage (Canagarajah 1999:2). Consequently, what we are witnessing is that particularity is becoming a global value by the help of transnational networks.

However, a common language is necessary for solving global problems as there is a need to establish what Wright (2000) calls a “community of communication”. It follows that both the process of globalization and the ability to react to it are dependent on language. The role of language, and particularly the English language, often fulfils this need for a global lingua franca. This is why the present position of English in the world today has been considered “both a consequence of and a contributor to globalization” (Fishman 1998–99:27). As people use English both to take part in and profit from globalization, we need to opt for a “third way, which steers clear of the extremes of fighting the spread of English for linguistic imperialism, and accepting it *in toto* for its benefits. Accepting hybridity and using English creatively for one’s own communicative purposes seems to be one such third way” (House 2003:574). In this sense, people can refuse to accept prevailing ideologies and thereby alter (or at least challenge) the unfair and uneven aspects of globalization by using a language of communication, the most prominent of which is English. Moreover, English is predominantly the language of the internet. It can certainly contribute to a greater global consciousness that makes local

issues extend far beyond their immediate borders. People can publish data on the World Wide Web without direct contact and interact with each other through email and chatrooms. In this way, local cultures can thus adapt their linguistic behaviour and language choices to the internet and express themselves without being subsumed by a global agenda.

As stated above, “challenging the new order is partly a matter of challenging the new language” (Fairclough 2000). Language is thus an important element in the social processes and practices of the new capitalism. That is why, we need to take language seriously – to critique the dominant discourses and to project alternatives. People no longer believe that the unjust world order is inevitable. To Margaret Thatcher's TINA (There is no alternative) they are replying that there are thousands of them. By following this process we can establish a global *mélange*, a culture of hybridization. This is in fact the only way to struggle effectively against the effects of capitalist globalization¹⁴. Finally, it is within Nederveen Pieterse's framework that we are perhaps best suited to document and analyse the salient issue of globalization and intercultural communication. This historically deep and geographically wide approach to globalization is just what is needed on the brink of more war bred by cultural misunderstanding.

5. Summary

In this paper the link between three issues in the study of globalization as a theme for sociolinguistics were examined. The first concerns the semantics of globalization. In this connection, we have reflected the semantics of globalization by showing that concepts are tools to play with in a struggle to control reality. To understand how globalization might affect our lives, we therefore need a form of literacy that transcends simple interpretation to reflection on the social significance of globalization discourse. We also explored the consequences of the dominance of English which is crucial to understanding the structure of global relations. In this respect, we found that globalization is a process that may involve a certain amount of homogenization but also always results in “linguistic glocalization” that is an aspect of modern forms of globalization. We then suggested to teach English as a lingua franca. We also pointed out that English does not “kill” languages and that we should not put the blame to where it does not belong. English, as any other language, is simply a neutral potential which is being misused and manipulated to satisfy the needs of the ideology of those who profit from capitalist globalization. Finally, we investigated the implications of the forces of globalization for intercultural

communication. Here three paradigms on cultural difference (cultural differentialism, cultural convergence and hybridization) were presented. We then opted for 'hybridization/globalization' as a framework within which we can analyse the intersections of globalization and intercultural communication. Finally, we moved on to trace the link between the three issues. It is evidence of this interconnectedness that this present research is trying to track.

We hope that the three related issues discussed in this paper would contribute to paving the way for a new look at some issues under the rubric of a sociolinguistics of globalization. As explained above, they help us see and understand how global factors impinge on linguistics. They also begin the process of theorising sociolinguistics in more explicitly global terms, and provide a strong platform for us to progress in future contributions to a 'sociolinguistic theory of globalization'. Whatever globalization means, it remains the dominant framework for current discussions and analyses of social phenomena.

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¹ The same holds true for the term 'terrorism', which has become a question of semantics. As Chomsky (2002) in an interview observes "[t]errorism is now being used and has been used pretty much the same way communism was used. If you want to press some agenda, you play the terrorism card. If you don't follow me on this, you're supporting terrorism [...]". Actually, the use of terrorism as an ideological instrument of propaganda and control has been accomplished with outstanding success because Western audiences have become conditioned to a view of the "Third World" which is founded upon "wrong or ill-judged information", and which can be characterised as "exploitive, patronizing, and distorted" (Smith 1980).

² The term “new capitalism” is used in Jessop’s sense (2000): It is a particular project referring to the most recent of a historical series of radical re-structuring through which capitalism has maintained its fundamental continuity.

³ We refer to globalization as a discourse because it is a process for which there is no clear definition and because people talk and write about it. In doing so they engage in debates or discourses about the issue and thus form a discourse (Backhaus 2003).

⁴ The term *alter-globalization* is derived from the term *anti-globalization*, which journalists and others used to describe the movement. Many French journalists, in particular, have since ceased using the term *anti-globalization* in favor of *alter-globalization*. It is supposed to distinguish proponents of alter-globalization from different “anti-globalization” activists (those who are against *any* kind of globalization: *nationalists*, *protectionists*, *communitarians*, etc.).

⁵ In this connection, Elmandjra (2004) also suggests some self-defence mechanism against ‘the semantics campaigns’ of the agents of globalization. The title of his article “Need for reglobalization of globalization” is an evident expression of that pre-occupation.

⁶ Breton (2003) speaks of a strong reduction in the number of languages spoken in Africa. According to Mehrotra (1999:105) in India there are presently 442 languages that have only between one and five speakers left.

⁷ Trudgill (2004) provides enough examples from Europe supporting the idea of the development of Ausbau languages. In his respect, we would like to cite another example from North Africa, where contemporary processes of globalization have stimulated the Berber/Amazigh culture movement. This cultural revival is also reinforcing the Berber/Amazigh language in domains where Arabic and French were predominating. Indeed, the Amazigh peoples of North Africa are the primary protagonists in the heightening of national consciousness. For instance, governments of Morocco and Algeria have made concessions to the Amazigh people by agreeing to provide instructions in Tamazight at the elementary level and provide access to audiovisual media for radio and television Broadcasts.

⁸ The role of transnational networks in the democratization of globalization by using English as a lingua franca will also be dealt with in the section on intercultural communication at the end of this paper.

⁹ This very paper is an example of the problem: Since English has become the lingua franca of science, it is written in English by a non-native speaker of English in order to make it readable to a wide range of people (native or non-native speakers of English).

¹⁰ Pennycook (1994) also argues that the discourse on English as a global language has become detached from its contexts of imperialism and hegemony and suggests that users of English combat the global dominance of English by appropriating the language for their own purposes.

¹¹ Informatization or informatisation refers to the extent by which a geographical area, an economy or a society is becoming information-based, i.e. increase in size of its information labor force. Usage of the term was inspired by Marc Porat's categories of ages of human civilization: the Agricultural Age, the Industrial Age and the Information Age (1978).

¹² For Huntington (1996), civilization and culture are linked: both involve "the overall way of life of a people". Civilization is "the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity [...] defined by [...] language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people" (Huntington 1996:43).

¹³ In this respect, Fukuyama (1992) argues that liberal democracy has finally overcome all other ideologies, literally putting an end to history seen as a series of confrontations between ideologies. His proposition is that liberal democracy, which first developed in the cradle of Western civilization, is a universally acceptable concept, and that the world is now moving in a fundamental way toward embracing it. Huntington, in contrast, argues that it is not only wrong, but also conceited and dangerous to think that Western civilization has a universalist nature.

¹⁴ In this respect, the current financial crisis is to be seen in the light of the diminished or vanished power of nation-states to control globalization. We need to stress the regulation of the money market and the movement of goods. In this way, the state will be a major decision maker to prevent another crisis similar to the present one.

