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An H. Kuppens (PhD) is a lecturer and postdoctoral researcher at the Erasmus School of History, Culture, and Communication (ESHCC) at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her interests are at the intersection of cultural globalization, language, and the media. Previous work includes studies of the use of English in advertising and in subcultural media (published in Applied Linguistics and Journal of Communication Inquiry), the acquisition of English from popular media (published in Learning, Media, and Technology), and the representation of tribes in reality television (published in Media, Culture, and Society).
Abstract

The global spread of English is an inextricable part of the globalization of culture and media. Despite this close entanglement, theories on the global spread of English have largely been developed within separate fields such as applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, with relatively limited reference to theories of cultural or media globalization. Reversely, scholars of cultural and media globalization who focus on the role of language, rarely refer to work on the global spread of English. Despite this mutual independence, paradigms of cultural and media globalization on the one hand, and those of the globalization of English on the other, have developed along remarkably similar lines. The aim of this paper is to identify and explain these similarities. After discussing five major paradigms in cultural and media globalization, and their equivalents in theory on the global spread of English, we will argue for a transdisciplinary approach to the study of the globalization of culture, media, and language.

Keywords

cultural globalization, media globalization, global English, transculturation, paradigms
Cultural globalization and the global spread of English: From “separate fields, similar paradigms” to a transdisciplinary approach.

1. Introduction

The global spread of English is an inextricable part of the globalization process. According to Selma Sonntag (2003) English is "part of the cause, the process, and the product of globalization" (p. xii); Hjarvard (2004), focusing specifically on cultural and media globalization, regards global media as “both vehicles of Anglo-Saxon culture, and contribut[ors] to the anglicization of global culture” (p. 75). Despite this close entanglement, theories on the global spread of English have largely been developed within separate fields such as applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, with relatively limited reference to theories of cultural or media globalization. Reversely, scholars of cultural and media globalization who focus on the role of language, rarely refer to work on the spread of English.

Moreover, in studies on cultural and media globalization, there is rather little theory in which the role of language is extensively dealt with. There are exceptions, for example in the study of global television flows, where a number of scholars have discussed how languages shape the global circulation of media (e.g., Biltereyst, 1992; Collins, 1989; Moran, 2009; Moran & Keane, 2006; Sinclair, 2004; Sinclair, Jacka & Cunningham, 1996; Straubhaar, 1991, 2002, 2003, 2007; Waisbord, 2004; Zhu, 2008). While these studies constitute an important contribution to the field of international communication, in which the role of language per se has long been ignored (Mowlana, 1996), their engagement with language is relatively limited, as they consider language primarily as the form or package of a media product, not as part of the content (Zhu, 2008, who mentions that English is equated with superiority and credibility in the global TV market, constitutes an interesting exception). Indeed, studies in international
communication frequently consider language as "transparent", as "a neutral tool of communication" (Mowlana, 1996, p. 109). However, language is deeply cultural and ideological (Fairclough, 1989; Pennycook, 1994). These dimensions seem to be taken up more readily by sociolinguists and (critical) language scholars who focus on the global spread of English.

The aim of the current article is not to criticize the fact that studies of cultural and media globalization refer little to studies of the global spread of English, and vice versa. It is, however, important to point out the high degree of mutual independence with which both fields have developed, for, despite this mutual independence, paradigms of cultural and media globalization on the one hand, and those of the globalization of English on the other, have developed along remarkably similar lines. It is the purpose of this article to identify and explain these similarities. The next section will summarize five major paradigms in cultural and media globalization. Subsequently, their equivalents in theory on the global spread of English will be discussed. Finally, the conclusion will elaborate on the similarities between both sets of paradigms, and argue for a transdisciplinary approach to the study of the globalization of culture, media, and language.

2. Five paradigms in cultural and media globalization

Arguably the most pervasive discussion in the academic debate on cultural and media globalization focuses on what one could call the structure/agency nexus: is globalization directed by the structural, homogenizing powers of global companies, institutions, governments, and media, or by the hybridizing practices of local, critical, and creative human agents, movements, and institutions? Around these binaries, five major paradigms have developed, which will be discussed in the next sections.
2.1. The modernization paradigm

The first paradigm to be specifically concerned with the global circulation of cultural and media products was the "development" or "modernization" paradigm. More particularly, scholars within this school assumed that flows of Western media and technologies would lead to the development of the "traditional societies" in the "Third World" (e.g., Lerner, 1958; Pye, 1963; Rogers, 1962; Schramm, 1963). "Development" was thereby equated with "modernization" and "westernization". A "modern" lifestyle was defined as a consumerist, urban, mobile and individualist way of life, and well-being was equated with economic growth.

The modernization paradigm was a highly eurocentric framework, which regarded western culture as inherently superior. Western economic neo-liberalism, secularism, nationalism, and rationalism were opposed to the "underdevelopment" and "traditionalism" of the rest of the world, and this opposition functioned within a social-Darwinist rationale which positioned contemporary western culture as the ultimate stage in the evolution of societies. Some of the modernization authors themselves later acknowledged the limitations of the framework (e.g., Rogers, 1976; Schramm, 1979), realizing that the causes for underdevelopment had unduly been placed exclusively with the underdeveloped nations.

2.2. Dependency theory and cultural/media imperialism

After a decade in which adherents to the modernization paradigm optimistically praised the role of communications in enhancing development, newly emerging theories such as dependency theory and cultural imperialism theory pointed out the destructive consequences of the global dissemination of Western media and culture. Dependency theory was developed largely by Latin American, mostly Marxism-inspired scholars (e.g., Chilcote, 1978; Dos
Santos, 1970; Frank, 1969; Sunkel, 1973). In contrast to modernization theorists, dependency theorists saw underdevelopment not as the outcome of internal factors, but as ensuing from relations between the "Center" and the "Periphery". Within this framework, Western media are regarded as imbued with a capitalist ideology, which penetrates Third World countries with consumerists ideas and make the Periphery dependent on imported technology (Dorfman & Mattelart, 1975).

Concomitantly with the development of dependency theory, in communication studies the first theories of "cultural imperialism" (Galtung, 1971; Mattelart, 1979; Schiller, 1969) took root. Cultural imperialism’s most prolific theorist, Schiller (1969, 1976, 1979, 1985, 1991), defines cultural imperialism as "the sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even to promote, the values and structures of the dominant centre of the system" (Schiller, 1976, p. 9). It is thereby assumed that cultural flows lead to what has been variably referred to as cultural homogenization (Schiller, 1969) or synchronization (Hamelink, 1983).

Central to Schiller's thesis is the idea of transnational and multinational media corporations intentionally reinforcing the ideological domination by the Centre. In less radical variants of the cultural imperialism framework, authors such as Tunstall (1977), Boyd-Barrett (1977) and Lee (1979) speak of "media imperialism". Adherents to cultural and media imperialism found empirical support for their claims in the (UNESCO-funded) "flow studies" which demonstrated the unequal global flows of information and media (e.g., Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974; Varis, 1974, 1984; Mowlana, 1996).

From the 1980s on, the tenets of cultural imperialism received increasing criticism. Some of the critics pointed out the lack of theoretical depth of accounts of cultural imperialism (e.g., Fejes, 1981; Tomlinson, 1991); others have questioned its romanticization of the "national"
(Rantanen, 2005), its lack of empirical support, and the economic determinism of some of the analyses (Fejes, 1981). Most of the studies only took the import and export of media products into consideration, rather than their actual consumption. More recent flow studies have demonstrated that, despite the prevalence of American products in the media supply, audiences often show a preference for local programs (e.g., Biltereyst, 1991, 1992; Chadha & Kavoori, 2000; McMillin, 2001; Straubhaar, 1991). Secondly, even if a foreign media product is actually consumed, this does not mean that audiences also adopt the culture in which it was created (Ferguson, 1992). Such a mediacentric approach underestimates the resilience of national and local cultures (Waisbord, 1998). The image of weak audiences in particular has been criticized from within new theories which surfaced in the 1980s within the active audience and hybridization paradigm.

2.3. Active audience and hybridization

The reception studies that surfaced in the middle of the 1980s undermined the image of all-powerful media in emphasizing the creative and active use by audiences of international media. Two landmark publications, Liebes and Katz’s (1993) and Ang's (1985) studies on the reception of the U.S. soap opera *Dallas*, demonstrated a multitude of different "readings" that underlie a single media text (see also Hall, 1980; Fiske, 1986), and shifted attention to the agency and creativity of audiences. In the 1990s especially, several studies have demonstrated how audiences interpret and/or adapt foreign or global cultures in ways to suit their own local and/or national cultures (e.g., Bennett, 1999; Biltereyst, 1991; Gillespie, 1995).

The observation that audiences do not uncritically adopt foreign cultures has introduced a paradigm shift from globalization as a process of homogenization to one of hybridization. International cultural and media flows give rise to a multitude of hybrid (Appadurai, 1996; Bhabha, 1994; García Canclini, 1995; Kraidy, 2002, 2005; Nederveen Pieterse, 1995), glocal
(Robertson, 1994), or creole (Hannerz, 1992; Cohen, 2007) cultures, rather than to one "monoculture". From a social-geographical point of view, hybridization involves the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of a culture: the seemingly "natural" relationship between cultures and their geographical and social territories is broken, and simultaneously, (parts of) these cultures are "relocated" and adapted by cultures in new locales (García Canclini, 1995)

2.4. The free-flow paradigm

Besides the hybridization framework, another paradigm challenged the assumptions of the cultural imperialism thesis. Proponents of the free-flow paradigm believe that uneven media flows are not due to cultural imperialism or hegemony, but rather, should be regarded as the outcome of certain "natural" economic market laws, combined with the characteristics of the media products themselves (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988; Hoskins, McFadyen & Finn, 1997). Hoskins and Mirus (1988) argue that "conspiracy theories" such as the cultural imperialism thesis are uncalled for, "as U.S. dominance follows naturally from the characteristics of television programming, its production and trade" (p. 500). More specifically, they contend that U.S. films and television programs are widely exported because they appeal to audiences around the world. This global appeal is a result of the nature of the U.S. home market, which is very large and wealthy. This leads to a highly competitive environment, which results in high quality productions. Additionally, the diversity of the U.S. audience encourages producers to design their products for diverse audiences, and such "lowest common denominator" products also appeal to foreign audiences. In Hoskins and Mirus' terminology, these films and television programs enjoy a "low cultural discount", as viewers will more easily identify with the style, values, beliefs, institutions and behavioral patterns displayed in these media products, than with those exhibited by other foreign media products. Moreover,
television programs and movies enjoy the property of "joint consumption", which entails that American companies can sell their products abroad for the low marginal cost of making an additional copy. In these non-U.S. markets, they thus easily outprice the local television programs. A similar analysis had been made earlier by Read (1976), who used the lowest common denominator argument in his study of the global circulation of print press and film. Read does not deny that American cultural products may affect the cultures to which they are exported, but these effects are limited to the reinforcement of already established values. In the end, Read concludes, a free flow of information system is the best choice for the world, "an honorable principle, worthy of being upheld in the interests of humankind" (p. 191).

As Biltereyst (1995, 1996) points out, the free-flow paradigm adheres to a cooperative conception of the audience: audiences constitute the "demand-side of the market-system", as they independently decide which media products they will consume. This perception confers to audiences a high degree of agency, which is believed to neutralize potential influences of cultural globalization. Consequently, free-flow analyses have been criticized of losing sight of ideological intentions behind uneven media flows (Sepstrup, 1989, p. 3), and of minimizing the cultural effects of these flows. Nevertheless, they did have the virtue of introducing the characteristics of the text into the equation (see also Olson, 1999).

2.5. The transculturation paradigm

As the previous sections have demonstrated, theoretical developments in cultural and media globalization can be characterized largely as oscillating between accounts which focus on structure and those which focus on agency. After active audience and hybridization theories in a reaction to the structure-focused cultural imperialism theories optimistically praised the agency of the audience, the pendulum seemed to swing back to structure in the 1990s and 2000s. Some of the tenets of cultural imperialism theories enjoyed renewed interest (e.g.,
Boyd-Barrett, 2005; Harindranath, 2003; Herman & McChesney, 1997; Miller et al., 2001), and active audience and hybridization theory received increasing criticism for granting insufficient attention to structural inequalities and hegemony. Several authors have warned against an overstated romanticization of the creative agency of audiences and an uncritical celebration of hybridity as resistance (e.g., Ang, 1990; Curran, 1990; Harindranath, 2003; Hesmondhalgh, 2002). Furthermore, some authors have pointed out that hybridity can constitute a form of hegemony-in-disguise (Thussu, 2007, p. 28; see also Matusits & Leanza, 2009). Thus, after a few decades in which globalization theory focused primarily on aspects of either agency or structure, it is now increasingly acknowledged that both structure and agency should be taken into account in the study of cultural and media globalization (Iwabuchi, 2002; Straubhaar, 2007; Thussu, 2007; Wise, 2008).

Such an approach is taken up in the critical transculturation framework. The notion of transculturation has been developed by a number of authors (e.g., Kraidy, 2002, 2005; Lull, 2000; Rogers, 2006; Spitta, 1995) in order to cope with the increasing complexity of hybrid cultures. Transculturation involves ongoing, circular appropriations of elements between multiple cultures, including elements that are themselves transcultural (Rogers, 2006, p. 491). While the term "hybridization" might (unwittingly) suggest the equal input of two or more "equal" contributors to a new cultural form, "transculturation" does not have this connotation, and allows for more strongly emphasizing existing inequalities. Transculturation theorists highlight "the influential role of economic, political, military, and other forms of power while also recognizing how cultural appropriation can be constitutive of cultural particularity and agency" (Rogers, 2006, p. 496). Moreover, transculturation theory abandons the practice of routinely equating the global with power and the local with subjection. Kraidy (2005) stresses that the local is itself pervaded with exogenous ("global") and endogenous ("local") power and inequality, and therefore warns against uncritically glorifying every instance of cultural
hybridity as an act of resistance. Equally so, as Rogers (2006) points out, not every instance of (what appears to be) the influence of a "dominant" culture should be seen simply "as cultural impositions or evidence of assimilation but also as part of the ongoing dynamics of culture, identity, survival, and resistance" (p. 494). Agency, then, is not located in the local, but in the translocal and intercontextual, in "the space where global forces become recognizable in form and practice as they are enmeshed in local human subjectivity and social agency" (Kraidy & Murphy, 2008, p. 339). Furthermore, transculturation stresses that cultures are not "singular, bounded essences", but rather always already hybrid, and in doing so defies romantic and idealizing notions of (non-urban, non-Western, or pre-modern) cultures as "pure" and "authentic". Thus, hybridity is not regarded as a deviation from the "norm" of cultural isolationism and essentialism, but rather as constitutive of cultures: "appropriations do not simply occur between cultures, constituting their relationships, but […] such appropriative relationships and intersections constitute the cultures themselves" (Rogers, 2006, p. 492).

3. Five paradigms in the global spread of English

Theory on the global spread of English has developed largely around the same structure/agency nexus as did theory on globalization. Scholars of the global spread of English are divided over the question whether the global spread of English is a process of increasing linguistic homogenization dictated by top-down structural forces, or one of hybridization by dint of the creative and agentive appropriation by speakers of local languages. More specifically, Alastair Pennycook, currently one of the most influential voices in the field, has distinguished between five paradigms which attempt to account for the causes, characteristics, and effects of the global spread of English (Pennycook, 2000). These paradigms will be discussed in the next sections, and for each, the similarities with its
counterpart in cultural and media globalization will be considered. Table 1 at the end of this section summarizes the similarities between both sets of paradigms.

3.1. The colonial-celebration paradigm

A first strand of scholarly accounts celebrates the global spread of English, arguing that it will bring wealth, development, and "civilization". Because of parallels to colonial discourses, Pennycook (2000) has dubbed this account the colonial-celebration framework. Bailey's (1991) study of the images of English throughout history demonstrates how ideas about the intrinsic superiority of English have been used to explain, justify and sustain the global spread of English, especially from the nineteenth century on. Even though the paradigm has lost credibility in academic circles, even today ideas about the intrinsic superiority of English are remarkably popular, as Pennycook (1998, 2000a) shows. The same Anglicist rhetoric which was used to defend the language policies in the British colonies, he states, is now used in relation to "global English". Only as recently as 1983, Claiborne (cited in Pennycook, 2000b) claimed that the inherent characteristics of English make it “a medium for the precise, vivid and subtle expression of thought and emotion that has no equal, past or present" (p. 4). Similar analyses have been made by Bryson (1990) and by McCrum et al. (1986), who describe English as “essentially democratic”, and “well equipped to be a world language” (p. 48).

The colonial-celebration paradigm shares a number of similarities with the modernization paradigm. Both are built on the colonial, Eurocentric image of the West as inherently superior to the rest of the world. Both paradigms also regard western culture, and respectively, language as agents of (intellectual, economic, cultural) development. Finally, both the colonial-celebration and modernization paradigms uncritically claim it is the (Anglophone) West's moral duty to impose its culture/language upon the rest of the world.
3.2. Functionalist accounts

Another strand in academic theory regards the spread of English not as a positive (nor a negative), but as a neutral process. In functionalist accounts (Pennycook, 2000), the spread of English is seen as a process which has no ideological implications, and English is regarded as a language which has no cultural or ideological ties. Such views regard English as "a world language with no single proprietor" which is not “tied to a particular view of the world or a particular culture” (Wardhaugh, 1987, p. 133), or as “ethnically and ideologically quite neutral” (Fishman et al., 1977, p. 119). Such statements have generated strong criticism. Dua (1994), for instance, has not only criticized them for being empirically and theoretically inaccurate, but he also detects a clear ideological agenda behind such statements, claiming that they are intended to promote the spread of English. While Fishman (1987) has mitigated his views on the neutrality of English, some scholars still adhere to an image of English as a neutral language. Lyasandrou and Lyasandrou (2003) for instance, state that the role of English in the world is that of "a neutral language of communication" and that English is "no longer a medium through which power and authority are exercised" (p. 229).

The functionalist viewpoint is epitomized best by Crystal’s (1997) much-cited work. Crystal acknowledges that English owes its global position to political and economic power dynamics; however, once established as a global language, English does not seem implicated with issues of power and dominance any longer. While not everyone perceives English as a neutral language, this is merely because languages are symbols of identity, and as such, Crystal maintains, the dominance of English is not problematic, as bilingualism (or multilingualism) offers us a perfect solution to “the identity problem”: if people become bilingual, they can use their own local language(s) for expressing their identity, and they can use English for international communication. Such views can be criticized on a number of
grounds. Firstly, this idea would mean that “native speakers of English will have the luxury of remaining monolingual while all other will have to learn their language” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, pp. 15-16). Furthermore, English is not the neutral "tool" that functionalists accounts purport it to be: English did not merely rise to its current global position because of political and economic inequities; its global position also perpetuates and reinforces these imbalances. On the whole, functionalist accounts of the globalization of English are marked by an emphasis on the agency of the foreign language speaker. Fishman et al. (1977), for instance, maintain that "[i]ndividuals, not countries, learn English", and that they do so “not because of abstractions such as linguistic diversity or international trade balances” but simply because it helps them communicate in certain contexts (p. 106).

This focus on agency and disregard for structural factors is one characteristic the functionalist paradigm of global English shares with the free-flow paradigm in media globalization. Like functionalists present the choice for English as a free, agentive choice for a language which, due to certain historical circumstances, happens to be the "best choice available on the market", so do free-flow theorists advance the choice for American media products as a free, agentive choice for the products which happen to offer the best quality available on the market. Both thus adhere to highly liberalist interpretations, in which the laws of the free market ensure that the "best" or "most useful" product (culture/language) enjoys the widest global spread. Both paradigms also adhere to views of ideological neutrality: English is presented as a neutral, "ideologically unencumbered" language, and American media products are “neutral” or “transparent”.

3.3 Linguistic imperialism

In response to celebratory and functionalist accounts, a number of authors have pointed out the harmful consequences of the spread of English. A very influential paradigm regards
English as an instrument for establishing and reinforcing asymmetrical relationships between "Centre" and "Periphery" nations (e.g., Pattanayak, 1996; Mazrui, 1997; Naysmith, 1986). The most theoretically elaborate account of the imperialist functions of English is Phillipson’s (1988, 1992, 1997, 2007) theory of linguistic imperialism. Phillipson interprets the spread of English in terms of a Gramscian (1971) notion of hegemony. According to Phillipson (1992), hegemonic ideas of the desirability of English are "internalized by the dominated, even though they are not objectively in their interest" (p. 8). English linguistic hegemony entails a set of values and practices which “core-English speaking countries” (Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) continually legitimate as being in the best interest of the periphery-English countries (the rest of the world), but which in practice merely maintain the dominant position of the Centre. According to Phillipson, the core countries export English to the periphery in a deliberate attempt to reinforce relationships of dependence. Phillipson builds on earlier work on imperialism by Galtung (1980), and conceptualizes linguistic imperialism as a sub-type of cultural imperialism which also permeates all other forms of imperialism (e.g., economic, political, military).

Phillipson’s work has generated strong criticism, among others for its lack of empirical grounding (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Davies, 1996; Spolsky, 2004). Several scholars do not share Phillipson’s claim that British colonial policy was aiming at the spread of English, as English education in the colonies was deliberately restricted to a minority of the population (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Pennycook, 1994). The linguistic imperialism thesis has also been criticized for its lack of regard for the agency of speakers of other languages, who are regarded as passive and malleable subjects (e.g., Pennycook, 1994; Canagarajah, 1999). This disregard for agentive and creative appropriations of English leads linguistic imperialism theorists to reduce the spread of English to a process of homogenization and americanization. The linguistic imperialism framework also overlooks the (truly) local level, as nations seem to be the only
relevant players in the process. Not surprisingly, then, Phillipson locates the answer to linguistic imperialism in nationalism and the promotion of national languages (Holborow, 1999; Pennycook, 2007a). However, as Holborow (1999) points out, "nationalism does not necessarily mark a break with the imperialist order" (p. 77).

The linguistic imperialism framework resembles the cultural imperialism paradigm in a number of respects. Both paradigms are founded on a distinction between Centre and Periphery countries, and focus on the Centre's hegemonic practices. Both also project (linguistic/cultural) globalization as culminating in homogenization ("Englishization"). Both cultural and linguistic imperialism theories have been criticized for their lack of regard for the agency of audiences/speakers, for their lack of empirical support, and for their economic determinism. Finally, both cultural imperialism and linguistic imperialism have been criticized for their uncritical romanticization of the national.

These similarities are not unexpected, as Phillipson explicitly built his theory of linguistic imperialism on the paradigm of cultural imperialism. It would be hasty, however, to speak of a genuine convergence between the field of study of cultural globalization, and the spread of English. For Phillipson’s seminal work – his monograph *Linguistic Imperialism* – appeared in 1992, more than two decades after Schiller’s (1969) and Galtung’s (1971) influential works. By that time, the cultural imperialism thesis had been challenged for more than a decade for its theoretical and empirical foundations. This extensive body of critical work is, however, never acknowledged by Phillipson. Thus, linguistic imperialism, a paradigm which seems at first sight to be indicating a convergence between the fields of cultural globalization and the spread of English, actually highlights how little both fields were concerned with each other’s developments.

### 3.4 The World Englishes paradigm
From the 1980s on, the growing awareness and study of "new" varieties of English gave rise to a new paradigm. The World Englishes framework focuses on the hybrid varieties of English that emerged as a result of the appropriation of English by speakers who came into contact with English as a result of colonization and globalization. It thus challenges common notions of the spread of English as a process of linguistic homogenization. Furthermore, World Englishes scholars regard non-native speakers not as passive and malleable subjects, but as agentive and creative multilinguals. They advance the hybridization of English as a form of (anti-colonial) resistance. The work of World Englishes scholars was pioneering in several respects. They regarded varieties such as Indian English or Nigerian English as legitimate English varieties in their own right, rather than as "deficient" or “ungrammatical” forms of British or American English (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982; Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984; Kachru, 1992). Secondly, scholars within this paradigm have challenged the hegemony of British and American Standard English as world-wide normative models for English learners (cf. Kachru, 1985, 1991 versus Quirk, 1985, 1990).

The World Englishes paradigm can be considered the equivalent of both the hybridization and active audience theories, as it shares some of its most essential characteristics with them. Both paradigms put an emphasis on the agency of the speaker c.q. the audience, rather than on structural power. Like the active audience school, World Englishes scholars focus on agentive, creative, and critical acts of appropriation and resistance. The global spread of English, these theorists stress, should be regarded as a process of hybridization. The World Englishes paradigm and the active audience and hybridization paradigm have also received similar criticisms. Their stress on agency has been criticized for disregard for issues of structure, and it has been claimed that the "hybrid" has been celebrated too routinely as an act of resistance.
3.5 Post-colonial performativity

Striving to acknowledge the ideological aspects and power structures in the spread of English, while at the same time focusing on processes such as resistance, appropriation and hybridization, Pennycook (2000, 2001, 2007b, 2010) developed the "postcolonial performativity" framework. Rejecting both an “over-voluntaristic” and an “over-deterministic” account (Pennycook, 2010, pp. 22-23), this paradigm integrates linguistic imperialism's regard for issues relating to structure (ideology, hegemony, dominance) with World Englishes' focus on agency (resistance, appropriation, creativity). One of the central characteristics of Pennycook’s approach is its “performative” conception of the relationship between language and identity. In contrast to the essentialist conception of identity of authors such as Phillipson, Pennycook is influenced by post-modern notions of identity and thus adheres to a more flexible relationship between language and identity, which leaves room for agency. His approach to language and identity, which is inspired by gender theorist Butler's (1990, 1993) notion of performativity, regards language as *performative* of identity, rather than language being a *reflection* of a pre-existing identity. Pennycook focuses on how different varieties of English are used to perform different identities: "When we talk of global English use, we are talking of the performance of new identities" (2007b, p. 112).

The postcolonial performativity framework shares several similarities with the transculturation framework in globalization studies. A first parallel concerns both paradigms' explicit acknowledgment of the significance of aspects of both structure and agency. Both paradigms thereby focus on hybridity, but do so without uncritically celebrating it as intrinsically constituting resistance. In the transculturation paradigm, hybridity is not presented as some "unnatural" deviation of the constructed norm of essentialism – rather, cultures are regarded as "always already" hybrid (or transcultural). Pennycook adheres to a similar conception of hybrid Englishes, for instance when he criticizes the World Englishes
paradigm's reliance on what he calls the myth of English: the idea that there is "a core, central grammar and lexicon of English" to which varieties of English have to be related to at least some extent in order to be regarded as "World Englishes" (Pennycook, 2007a, pp. 22ff). These similarities between the postcolonial performativity framework and transculturation framework are no coincidence, but the result of Pennycook’s profound acquaintance with state of the art globalization theory, cultural studies, and critical theory. From these fields, Pennycook adopted a number of ideas. He concurs with anthropologist James Clifford that cultures should be regarded as inextricably involved in movement, encounter and change, and that locality is not some unprocessed given, but that it is produced, "a result of particular ways of constructing identity" (Pennycook, 2007a, p. 44). "[T]here has always been transculturation", Pennycook explains, and "it is the massive weight of the fixed concept of culture that has made it invisible" (p. 47). From the transculturation paradigm, Pennycook also adopted the idea that hybrid cultures are more than mixed cultures, but that they constitute third cultures in their own right: "Once cultural forms become transcultural forms (if indeed all cultural forms are not transcultural to start with), we have moved beyond questions of ownership an origins" (2007a, p. 92). While the linguistic imperialism paradigm was also built on theory in globalization studies (i.e. the cultural imperialism paradigm), it would be fair to say that it is only Pennycook’s work that we find a true and profound convergence between studies of cultural globalization and studies of the globalization of English. In contrast to Phillipson, who subscribed to the cultural imperialism framework by the time it had long been denounced in globalization studies, Pennycook’s reliance on the transculturation framework is timely. In fact, Pennycook’s careful and complex analysis of transcultural flows and how they relate to issues of language can be considered cutting edge in transculturation theory, and it can be highly informative even to scholars of cultural globalization who do not share Pennycook’s interest in the global spread of English. More
than any other author, Pennycook treats the globalization of culture and media as not merely the context or background against which the global spread of English develops, but rather as a process of which a solid understanding is the prerequisite for comprehending the globalization of English. Not coincidentally, one of his criticisms of the linguistic imperialism theory is its adherence to a notion of globalization as homogenization: "Given that there is now a vast range of work looking at the complexities of globalization […] studies of global English deserve better than this" (Pennycook, 2007a, p. 19). He continues: "At the very least, we need to understand how English is involved in global flows of culture and knowledge, how English is used and appropriated by users of English around the world, how English colludes with multiple domains of globalization, from popular culture to unpopular politics, from international capital to local transaction, from ostensible diplomacy to purported peacekeeping, from religious proselytizing to secular resistance" (2007a, p. 19). In view of Pennycook’s interdisciplinary – or better, transdisciplinary – approach, then, postcolonial performativity can be regarded as not merely equivalent to the transculturation paradigm; it is a "transculturist" approach.
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<td>Western/US culture as a pathway to development and wealth, as superior</td>
<td>English as a pathway to development and wealth, as superio...</td>
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<td>Paradigms</td>
<td>Neocolonialism, rationalization of national cultures</td>
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Table 1. Cultural globalization and the global spread of English: Separate fields, similar focus.
interest in each other’s theoretical and empirical developments. This state of affairs is perhaps not entirely surprising: disciplinary boundaries are inherent in academic research, and they enable scholars to specialize and gain a clear focus. How should the analogies between both fields be interpreted? The similarities between the two fields can, in part, be explained by the more general paradigms which underlie every field in the human sciences, such as Marxism, liberalism, and postmodernism. However, we certainly cannot claim that "paradigm shifts" (cf. Kuhn, 1970) have synchronically given rise to the development of new theories in both fields; the late adoption of the neo-Marxist cultural imperialism framework by theorists of the global spread of English stands as a case in point here. This late adoption also shows that it is unlikely that the field of study of the global spread of English has continually been influenced by the developments in the field of cultural globalization. The reverse scenario is even less likely: scholars in cultural globalization generally show a relatively modest interest in language-related issues, and when they do, they rarely refer to studies of the global spread of English. There is an additional explanation for the parallels between both fields. They might have developed similar paradigms because they actually study, to a certain extent, the same phenomena. The globalization of culture and media, and the global spread of English are inextricably intertwined. This interrelationship is produced by the fundamental interconnection between language and culture. As Schudson (1994, p. 29) has put it, "[t]he importance of language as an aspect of culture can scarcely be overestimated. Language is the fundamental human mass medium. It is the mass medium through which all other media speak". It is therefore not surprising that these two fields, despite their relative lack of interest in each other’s developments, have produced such similar paradigms. As they study the same phenomenon, they observe similar indications of structure and agency, homogeneity and hybridity, and hegemony and appropriation. Viewed through the same lenses of neo-Marxism, structuralism, liberalism, and postmodernism, these empirical observations gave rise to
similar paradigms. Furthermore, theoretical developments also to a certain extent mirror developments in society at large. The gradual move from more essentialist and Euro-centric paradigms, to more constructivist and cultural-relativist paradigms, can be seen as relating to changing social realities during the last decades (which some would call the move to postmodern or late-modern societies), of which globalization itself undoubtedly is one of the major exponents. As Coupland (2007) points out: "The move away from a structural account of language in society is a reflection of how society itself has begun to move beyond what we have understood by social structure” (p. 179).

What is, then, perhaps most surprising is not the fact that the fields of study of cultural globalization and the study of English show such similarities, but rather, that both fields refer so little to each other’s work. The work of Pennycook marks a very necessary convergence, not only between accounts which stress agency and those which stress structure, but also between the study of cultural globalization and the globalization of English. His empirical work demonstrates how fruitful a transdisciplinary approach is, and that it presents an important way forward in the further development in both fields. More specifically, a transdisciplinary approach could inspire future research, in studying the spread of English not simply as set against the background of cultural globalization, or as an aspect of cultural globalization, or as reflective of processes of cultural globalization. Rather, linguistic and cultural aspects of globalization would be regarded as inextricably intertwined. In such an approach, language is not studied not as a neutral, transparent medium through which culture is communicated, but rather, language is regarded as part of culture: as deeply ideological, cultural, and entangled with identity politics. From the part of scholars of media globalization in particular, such an approach would entail scrutinizing the idea that the global circulation of English language media products is not just enhanced by the fact that audiences around the world understand English, but also by the cultural associations which are invoked with
audiences by (particular varieties of) English. Related to this, is more critical scrutiny of the role which these media themselves play in producing and reinforcing these connotations. Finally, a transdisciplinary transcultural approach regards language not as reflective of local/national/regional/global identities, but rather, it studies how these identities are performed in language practices, thereby acknowledging the structural conditions which confine these performances.

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References


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*Exceptions include Sonntag (2003), Omoniyi and Saxena (2010), and the work of Pennycook (cf. infra)*