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Preface

To write a bachelor assignment in the subject "*Global Englishes*" and linguistic imperialism in relations to the Internet has been an interesting but tough task to do. It has taken a lot of time and effort to write this bachelor, and especially to define my bachelor thesis. I have taken in as much information about linguistic imperialism and the Internet as I can with the time I was given and I know now how the Internet is contributing to linguistic imperialism and what I believe are the pros and cons of this. I chose this topic because it was really appealing to me. I think it is very interesting how the internet has revolutionized how language is spread and that it is only about twenty years since this started. There is a lot left to study and to discover and I am thinking of expanding this bachelor into my master when I start writing it in a couple of years.

I started this assignment with collecting as many books, articles and papers I could on the subject "linguist imperialism" and on the subject "language and Internet" because I needed theory since the assignment was not going to contain any own studies, as I did not have any time to conduct them.

There was a bit of a problem in the sense that the Internet is such a new phenomenon that no one really has done any real study on this field. This put me in the situation where I had to do the best with the theory I had and I decided to put together the aspects of the two topics that I felt matched the best I could. I really hope someone is going to do an extensive study on this field in the future, as I think that would be a good read.

Finally, I would like to thank my instructor Heidi Silje Moen for all the help and guidance through this hectic period of writing, Karianne Dæhlin Hagan at the college library and my "Global Englishes" teacher Susan Nacey for helping me find relevant theory, and last but not least Høgskolen I Hedmark for giving me the opportunity to write this bachelor. As strange as it may sound, I enjoyed working with this assignment and even though it has been hard, I have learned very much from this experience.

Hamar 27.11.2015

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Contents

- CONSENT.....2
- PREFACE.....3
- CONTENTS.....4
- NORWEGIAN SUMMARY.....5
- ENGLISH SUMMARY.....6
- 1. INTRODUCTION.....7
- 2. METHOD.....8
- 3. THEORY.....9
 - 3.1 What is linguistic imperialism.....9
 - 3.2 The Internet and its origin.....11
- 4. DISCUSSION.....12
 - 4.1 Companies export English words on the Internet.....12
 - 4.2 Internet and language death.....13
 - 4.3 Homogenization of culture.....15
 - 4.4 Impact of Computer Mediated Communication on the English language.....16
 - 4.5 Blogging.....17
 - 4.6 English in international corporations.....18
 - 4.7 Linguistic imperialism and outsourcing.....19
- 5. CONCLUSION.....20
- 6. LITERATURE LIST.....23

Norwegian summary

Problemstillingen min for denne oppgaven er: "*Hvilken innflytelse har Internettet på lingvistisk imperialisme?*".

Jeg har basert oppgaven min på diverse lingvister og forskere sine teorier om lingvistisk imperialisme med hovedrøtter i Robert Phillipson, Nicola Galloway og Heath Rose, samtidig som jeg har måttet tilpasse og finne sammenhengen i det jeg mener er relevant mellom de to temaene lingvistisk imperialisme og internett fordi lite studier er gjort på akkurat dette feltet.

Jeg presenterer den teorien jeg har funnet igjennom perioden med oppgaveskrivingen for så å drøfte for og imot den. Det er ingen undersøkelser gjort i forhold til denne oppgaven, da tiden jeg hadde på å skrive den ikke strakk til.

English summary

My thesis for this assignment is: "*What impact does the Internet have on linguistic imperialism?*".

I have based my assignment on different linguists and researchers theories on linguistic imperialism with my main focus on Robert Phillipson, Nicola Galloway and Heath Rose, as well as I have had to adjust and find the connection in what I believe is relevant between the two topics of linguistic imperialism and the Internet because there has not been done much study on this exact field.

I present the theory that I have been able to find during the period of writing this assignment, and then discuss pros and cons about the existing theory. There has been no research work done in relations to this assignment since the time was too short to conduct one.

1. Introduction

Internet World Stats estimates that English is the most spoken language on the Internet with 60,9% of the users speaking English (www.internetworldstats.com, 2015). This does not mean that 60,9% of the users have English as their first language, but that 60,9% use the English language while online.

Because of the development of the Internet and the rapid increase of the amount of bandwidth we now can access in our private homes, it is possible to stream or download movies and TV-shows on our computers. Hollywood is the world's entertainment capital and the power of American media is creating the "Hollywood effect", making the English language the most popular cultural language internationally and a popular language to be able to understand. (Xue & Zuo, 2013, p.2264). The "silicon valley phenomenon" is also something that had a great impact on how the English language has become the dominant language online. This phenomenon refers to computer-based and internet-based technical products that were invented in Silicon Valley, San Francisco that helped develop the internet to what we know it to be today (Xue & Zuo, 2013, p. 2264).

Many corporations have taken this under consideration and most large companies have English websites. The Swedish company Skanska even changed their name from Skånska Cementgjuteriet in 1984 (skanska.co.uk, 2014) in order for the English speaking society to feel more related to their name, and there are surely more companies that have done the same.

Using the English language on the internet is in a way using the English language as a lingua franca. There are less negative attitudes towards the language because there is no accent, and there is less concern about grammar and spelling. What is important is that you are able to communicate.

The reason that English is the most spoken language online is due to the fact that the internet was invented in the United States (Greiffenstern, 2010, p. 4). In order to create a website, you have to know how to code one. In order to code a website, you have to know the English language, since this is the mainstream language of coding. Another reason for English being the predominant language is the amount of people using the Internet (hereby called hosts) that have English as a native language. When the Internet became a public domain, it was mostly North-America and Europe that was able to use it. Since North-America has such a huge amount of Internet hosts and their linguistic diversity is so low, it is no surprise that English is

their choice of language. On the other hand, the countries with the highest linguistic diversity, such as Africa have the least amounts of hosts (Danet&Herring, 2007, p 418).

There are those who believe that the spread of English has its benefits, but some are stating that the spread is intentional and with a goal of taking over and "Englishify" the linguistic world. In this paper I am going to have a look at the spread of English through Internet communications and discuss pros and cons from the point of view from relevant theories on linguistic imperialism, making my thesis: "*What impact does the Internet have on linguistic imperialism?*".

2. Method

I have chosen to write this paper with the main focus being on relevant theory from Robert Phillipson, since he coined the word linguistic imperialism and Nicola Galloway and Heath Rose because they are one of the few people I have been able to find theory from that is related to advantages of a common language such as English. The problem with only using theory connected to those mentioned above is that neither Phillipson nor Galloway and Rose say enough about linguistic imperialism in relevance to Internet communications. The Internet is such a new phenomenon that no one has really been able to gather much empirical evidence on how it behaves and therefore much of what they say is just theories. This is why I have also chosen to use other theorists and linguists in order to add to the discussion. Because of this I have chosen to use the pros and cons that already existed when talking about linguistic imperialism in general and apply them to the spread of English through the Internet. I believe that many of the advantages and disadvantages of linguistic imperialism are very much relatable to how the English language is being spread through the Internet and I believe that it is important to take the Internet into the equation when speaking about linguistic imperialism.

In the theory chapter I wanted to present the term linguistic imperialism and what means as well as talk about the origin of the Internet to clear what the thesis is based upon. Mostly I used Robert Phillipson's book *Linguistic Imperialism* and Nicola Galloway & Heath Rose's *Introducing Global English* because they have some points that could be put up against each other. In the discussion chapter I have listed different ways the English language is spread through the Internet and tried to explain the positive and negative effects and why this is linguistic imperialism or could be linguistic imperialism in the future.

3. Theory

3.1 What is linguistic imperialism?

Linguistic Imperialism is a controversial word, and it may be hard to boil it down to a definition. Macmillan Dictionary defines it as "the belief or assumption that everyone should speak English because it is the main means of international communication" (Macmillan, 2015). In modern time the global expansion of the English language has been seen as the main example of linguistic imperialism (Nordquist, unknown).

Professor emeritus at the department of international language studies and computational linguistics at Copenhagen Business School Robert Phillipson is a well known name when talking about linguistic imperialism. Robert Phillipson brought back the term "Linguistic Imperialism" in 1992, when he published his book *Linguistic Imperialism*. Robert Phillipson has worked with Linguistic Imperialism throughout the most of his career and in his book, he describes linguistic imperialism in the way that "the dominance is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47). This means that there is an overlooking power that is making sure of that one language is more used and more important than another in financial and cultural situations (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47).

Nicola Galloway and Heath Rose describes in their book *Introducing Global Englishes* how Robert Phillipson views linguistic imperialism. According to *Introducing Global Englishes* Phillipson stated that he sees linguistic imperialism "as a form of linguistic imperialism which manifests in favoring the dominant language over another, along similar lines as racism and sexism", "as having an exploitative essence that causes injustice and inequality between those who use the dominant language and those who do not" and "as having a subtractive influence on other languages, in that learning the dominant language is at the expense of others" (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 60-61)

This is how Robert Phillipson views the spread of a dominant language, English in particular and it is wise to remember that this does not mean that everything Phillipson says is correct, but it is mentioned because this thesis is about how the Internet is a contributing factor of linguistic imperialism, and Phillipson's stands on the subject is important because he is the one that has been given credit for clearing up what the term means. Robert Phillipson

obviously believes that linguistic imperialism is a negative trend in the way that it contributes to i.e. language death (Academia, 2014). Phillipson believes that you should look at linguistic imperialism as a “top-down perspective, where it was the intent of ENL (English as a Native Language) nations to spread English for their own gains to create social and economic inequality” (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 60-61), while “other scholars take more of a bottom-up perspective , arguing that the spread of English was merely a consequence of the spread of British and American power, which went hand-in-hand with first colonization and later colonization” (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 60-61).

Professor Emeritus Bernard Spolsky argues that if there exists a top-down perspective to linguistic imperialism, “it would be one of the most successful examples of language policy management the world had ever seen (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 62). Spolsky argues that if you look at where English is spread in countries where English settlers were a minority, that this is a recent phenomenon, while in countries where English settlers were a majority, the spread of English had happened much earlier (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 62).

Robert Phillipson also views linguistic imperialism “as a structurally manifested concept where resources and infrastructure are provided to the dominant language” (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 60). This view fits perfectly with the statement that the Internet is a big contributor to linguistic imperialism, because more than 80 percent of the content on the internet is in English (Fishman, J.A, 2001). It is possible to argue that these statistics are outdated, but it still shows that English was by far the dominant language in the early days of the internet. This means that the infrastructure and the resources that Phillipson is talking about are in the dominant language, hence showing that his point is very much valid in this discussion. Linguistic imperialism is per definition an imposition of one language on speakers of other languages and one could argue that this is exactly what the Internet is doing. In order to keep up in the western society, knowing how to use the internet (with all its connections such as email, downloading, social media etc.) is crucial and takes place in English.

On the other hand Phillipson sees linguistic imperialism “as being contested and resisted because of these previously mentioned factors (Galloway, N & Rose, H, 2015, p. 61). The Internet has never really been resisted nor contested, although you may say that censorship is a kind of resistance. Countries such as North-Korea, China and also Egypt has taken the liberty to censor parts of or all of the Internet for its own gain, but this is because of political control more than language control, thus making it unimportant in this context.

3.2 The Internet and its origin

The fear of technology affecting the English language is not a new phenomenon. In fact people were concerned about this concept since the telegraph, the Morse code and the steam engines were created. Many believed that this development of new technology were to be the downfall of dialects and that Standard English would eventually take over because it would bring those who lived in the country side closer to the urban culture (Van Herk, 2014). This is a notion that has stayed with following generations and it is more current than ever.

When the technological sensation of the Internet was developed in the start of the 1960's it was only a way of communicating between two computers and no one expected the Internet to become what it is today. Even later, when the Internet became available for public access in 1991, no one really knew what the Internet was, and if you did you probably did not have online access because of the limitations of the hardware (the computer) the expense of buying the hardware you needed was too high, and the bandwidth provided to the public was to slow.

Today on the other hand, Internet is seen as something you "must-have", something you cannot manage without and perhaps also something that is truly addictive. The age of information is upon us, and you have access to all the information you could possibly think of with the touch of a screen. With the new age of information and connectivity, we are free to explore and search whatever we want using different browser, we can get in touch with whomever we want using instant messaging like Facebook Messenger and Snapchat, we can publish all our thoughts and emotions using blogs or creating our own websites, we can release our own music and movies using Soundcloud and Vimeo and we can keep a close look at what friends, acquaintances and family is up to using Facebook.

4. Discussion

4.1 Companies export English words on the Internet.

Phillipson's definition is the one that could be dangerous when talking about linguistic imperialism and the Internet. As mentioned earlier, the Internet was created in English by native speakers of English and was in the beginning only accessible to countries of native English language. Because of this, the core (such as coding, mainstream business websites and most of the popular culture) of the Internet is only accessible to you if you are proficient in and able to understand English. Phillipson would explain this using a top – down perspective, where he would claim that the industry would make this available in English only, to make the language even more attractive to learn. Bernard Spolsky on the other hand, would use the bottom-up perspective to explain that because the Internet became so popular that those who wanted to use it had no choice but to learn English.

Media has a big influence on socio-culture and most of the new technology that is advertised via the Internet is named in English. Take for instance one of the invention of "Discman". This is an invention by Sony from Japan, but still it has an English name. There are many more examples of this, and the phenomenon of companies naming their products in English is something that linguists around the world is something that cause the worry of the destruction of other languages and language cultures. In Norway there is a council called "Språkrådet" that comes up with Norwegian words to replace the original English words. As an example, "Språkrådet" decided that the American invention "segway" should be more Norwegian sounding and came up with the word "ståhjuling" (www.sprakradet.no, 2012). Unfortunately, "ståhjuling" is not as much used in Norway as "segway" because of the social status of the English language. Companies selling these devices believe that they are likely to sell more if they appeal to the Americanization of Norwegian society, thus helping (perhaps unknowingly) the continuation of English linguistic imperialism.

Moulay ElBekraoui and Brad Hokanson give an insight in this in their paper *The Impact of the Internet on language*, but also describes that some countries try to “fight” this Americanization:

The internet is the recent scapegoat for linguistic imperialism, the propagation of Western decadence, and the destruction of endangered languages and cultures. In France, for instance,

l'Académie française plays the role of the enforcer that ensures the proper usage of French language to preserve its purity. The infiltration of American culture was so alarming that the Académie felt the need to replace English words that are commonly used in France with French equivalents. This fight against English has moved into cyberspace when recently France developed and launched a computer program that automatically replaces English words with French words, thus making cyberspace the site of linguistic war of the twenty-first century (ElBekraoui & Hokanson, Unknown).

Other linguists such as Andy Kirkpatrick, who is a Professor in the Department of Languages and Linguistics at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia does not agree with this train of thoughts. Kirkpatrick argues that that even though there is a belief at the macro level that policy that promotes English language education will help to leverage economic benefits, it is important to note that knowledge of English alone is not a means, in itself, for a nation to develop politically or economically (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 63). Andy Kirkpatrick points to the fact that the economic stagnation of i.e. Laos and Burma are due to political systems rather than to their level of English proficiency (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 63).

4.2 Internet and language death

Robert Phillipson states in a paper published by Academia.edu that “English is said to have the status of a world language since it dominates economic and cultural fields, and it is the language most widely taught as a foreign language around the world. Nevertheless, the status of English as a global language has led to linguistic imperialism which refers to the dominance of English over other languages and cultures. This Linguistic imperialism exploits and monopolizes other languages and cultures, thus creating language death, loss of identity and a superior-inferior division among people and languages”(Academia, 2014)

There are about 6000 languages spoken worldwide today. These varies in the amount of users from the most commonly used languages English, Chinese Mandarin, Spanish and Hindi to the least commonly used such as Tanema, Liki and Ongota. These are languages that are endangered and that is predicted to be extinct within a short period in time. As for the Internets part in this, the languages that are endangered are mostly languages of countries that lack technological and economical power (which perhaps is why they are endangered) and many of the languages belong to indigenous people who have no access or training in Internet

use. The Internet is becoming more and more about reaching the most amounts of people across the world

The languages such as Tanema, Liki and Ongota stand no chance in the competition with English, Chinese Mandarin etc. online, because not enough people are able to read or write them. This could (and most likely will) evolve into a vicious circle where the end result is that the endangered languages will cease to exist both on the Internet and in the real world.

Linguists have made a type of map for language death:

"First, its speakers stop using it in practical areas like commerce; then younger speakers lose interest in speaking that language; and, finally, the younger generation forgets it all together. A language is technically still alive as long as one person speaks it. And there are typically many years between when a language starts to decline and when its last speaker passes on, during which time young people fail to adopt it in their daily activities, such as when using the Internet" (www.washingtonpost.com, 2013).

As you can see, the fact that the younger generations use the Internet and that they cannot find their language there is adding to the endangerment of the language they are speaking.

So why is it dangerous that language death occurs? It is possible that information disappears when a language disappears and one example of this could be that perhaps the cure some disease is being discovered by someone with a language that is not English, and that the information in how to heal this disease dies along with the language. Chairman in the Foundation for Endangered Languages Nicholas Ostler says to BBC in one of the meetings the foundation attends:

"And when languages are lost most of the knowledge that went with them gets lost. People do care about identity as they want to be different. Nowadays we want access to everything but we don't want to be thought of as no more than people on the other side of the world.(www.bbc.com, 2010)"

Sandra Greiffenstern states that "On the one hand, one can say that the Internet facilitates linguistic imperialism; One is reminded of the image of English as a killer language. On the, other hand one can say that with the help of the internet speakers of less widespread languages can connect worldwide" (Greiffenstern, 2010). She continues to speak about how it is not only important how speakers of English as a native language influence the rest of the

world, but how the influence that non-native speakers of English have (Greiffenstern, 2010, p. 4-5).

4.3 Homogenization of culture

English has gotten its place in different nations because of some previous action such as being a colony of the British Empire and being forced to learn it, or that the schools started educating the language because of the notion that knowing English is important to learn because it is attached to power and prestige. If a country starts adapting to the English language, there is a possibility that their respective culture could be replaced by the "English-speaking" culture. One example of this is here in my own country Norway. Even though we in Norway are good at keeping our traditions and culture, we do adapt to Americanization. We are taking after the American culture more and more in how we dress, what types of food that we eat, the music we listen to and the holydays we celebrate. We are slowly adapting an American style of culture without even thinking of it and if we go back in time only a decade there were almost no mention of celebrating for instance Halloween in Norway. Sure kids knew what it was and some even dressed up and went trick or treating, but it was not the phenomenon that it has become today with the parties, expensive costumes and advertisement everywhere you look a month in advance. The Internet is a massive contributor to this spread of the American culture to Norway (and other countries) because it allows advertising to reach us so quickly.

There are several pros of being able to get in touch with almost anyone you want. One of them is about teaching possibilities. As a teacher, you now can show your students all the information on the subject that you are teaching in just by entering their home page or Facebook page. For instance if you are a social studies teacher, teaching about different international companies, you can go to their home page and collect all the information you want directly from them. With a little planning, there is a chance that you can get someone from the company to speak live to your students as a conference call using Skype. Only your mind sets the limit of what you can do in a teaching environment. Of course to be able to do this, both you, the other participant of the conference call and your students have to be able to speak English, but as a result of the spread of English across the world it is more likely this is not an issue now, than ever.

We can also read, watch and listen too almost anything we want online, but for any of this to be done there is a common denominator, something you are acquired to know in order to exploit the Internet to its fullest extent, namely knowing the English language. This could show that the Internet contributes to linguistic imperialism from a bottom-up perspective, because we want to be a part of the cultural and political culture that the Internet provides.

4.4 Impact of Computer Mediated Communication on the English Language

Honorary Professor of Linguistics David Crystal mentions in his book *The Language Revolution* that because communication on the internet is not just a variety of language but a whole new alternative in which to communicate, it also need a new type of language (Crystal, 2004, p. 64). This new alternative of communication Crystal calls computer-mediated communication (hereby called CMC) and the language of CMC he has named *Netspeak* (Crystal, 2004, p.65). It is important to remember that *Netspeak* involves both writing and talking as well as listening and reading (Crystal, 2006. p 19). You use *Netspeak* when you use "internet words" to describe something you could say straight out in traditional language. For instance you use *Netspeak* if you say "she is multitasking", which means that she is doing multiple things at once or "I got a pile of spam in my post today", which means that you received a lot of junk mail (commercials etc.) (Crystal, 2006, p. 20).

As we can see, *Netspeak* contains a lot of new words that technology has brought with it. As the Internet develops, so must the English language to be able to describe the changes and what we are talking about. Words such as e-mail, blogging, snaps, tweets and so on has gotten a hold in our vocabulary. It is not a new notion that words develop as technology goes forward, but what is new is the speed at which it does. before the Internet and CMC became as popular it is today, it could take a generation for a new word to become common. Now, because of the accessibility we have to seek out new information and that we are constantly bombarded with new expressions in movies, TV-shows and gaming, a new word can stick very quickly (Kleinman, 2010).

You can argue that these new words are being invented in English because of the "top-down perspective" or that they are invented in English because of the "bottom-up perspective", but if it is intentional or not to use technology and new words that comes with it as a way of spreading the English language is a hard question to answer. There are countries that make an

effort to try and stop this spread of English into their own language by making up their own words instead of using the English ones, such as Norway that use "e-post" instead of "e-mail". This is another example of how the Internet is making us use English in our everyday life without us even knowing, hence contributing too linguistic imperialism.

4.5 Blogging

Blogs have grown extremely fast since its arrival. It can be used by anyone as a personal diary, where one can share personal information about what is going on in one's life (Crystal, 2006, p. 240), as well as show pictures, add music and decide the layout of the blog. This is a way of personalize the blog and try to make it represent oneself as an individual. Blogs have become a huge business, and there are people making a great living for themselves because they share their life with the public online. Perez Hilton is an English speaker and is the most famous individual blogger in the world, with an estimate of 14.500.000 unique monthly visitors (www.ebizmba.com, 2015). This means that almost 15 million people read something every month, that does not require the author to have any degree within language nor any particular level of writing, and this is just one of many bloggers.

The positive aspects of blogging are that you no longer need a career as a journalist in order to get something published. The opinions of the writers are more diverse, meaning that there are several points of views depending on whose blog you are reading. Many newspapers often tend to stick to one political aspect of a discussion even though they are supposed to hold a neutral position and if you find yourself on the other side of the discussion, then finding information that supports your own beliefs can be hard. Since everyone wants their own blog to have most readers and the example in the previous paragraph with Perez Hilton shows that writing in English is the way to do it.

The negative aspects of blogging are having roots in the same issue as the positive. As mention previously you no longer need a career or education within journalism and there is no way of controlling that bloggers have the sufficient skills in grammar, spelling etc for it to be a good thing that millions of people read what they write. Also, bloggers are viewed as trend setters and role models in today's society, giving them huge influence on the generation that is growing up today. They can create words, phrases and "publish" them online without any problem and since the most popular bloggers write in English and have as many readers as

they do, these words can spread and catch on quickly, possibly making blogging a part of linguistic imperialism and contributing to a possible "dummying-down" of the language, since no grammar or spelling corrections are needed. As mentioned earlier Robert Phillipson states in his publication *Imperialism and colonialism* from 2012 that he sees linguistic imperialism "as a form of linguistic imperialism which manifests in favoring the dominant language over another, along similar lines as racism and sexism"(Phillipson, 2012, p. 214). This is what the most popular bloggers do; they choose to write in English because they believe that the English language is the dominant one.

4.6 English in international corporations

Linguistic imperialism can serve a purpose for businesses in the sense that it would be much easier if everyone could talk to everyone. As an example, Norway exports a lot of fish to other countries, and need to have intelligible communication with those countries that imports it. Having English as a lingua franca (or in this case business English as a lingua franca), and the fact that it has spread as much as it has makes this possible. The same logic applies to the Internet. Countries like China, Japan and many more are making a lot of money from exporting merchandise that has been produced in their country and ordered by someone from the other side of the world online. And almost every company that sells merchandise internationally over the Internet gives you the option to read their website in English with a touch of a button. It is not only to achieve a larger customer base that companies use English. They also use the English language in order to be able to communicate internally in the corporation. Communication that spans from the company head quarters, foreign branches, factories and various other connected institutions are being executed in English (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 54). International corporations in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries such as Sony, Panasonic and Toyota all have many foreign branches that need to know what is going on and what changes are being made by the head quarters. You could look at this from a "bottom-up perspective" and say that the only reason they are speaking English internally in the corporation is because the English language was already spread so much, and it would be a mistake not to take advantage of it. And this might be true although the likes of people like Robert Phillipson might suggest that it has to do with how ENL countries consists of a huge amount of the people who buys these items and that it is linguistic imperialism and a "top-down perspective", because it is the power and prestige of

these countries, in the way that the rest of the world look to them for what next car, phone or other gadget to buy, that make for instance these ASEAN countries "choosing" to use the English language. Perhaps is the English language being used for websites of international corporations because "the world" would rather buy from an "Englishified" company than from a Chinese one?

4.7 Linguistic imperialism and outsourcing.

English is an official or co-official language in one third of all the worlds countries and plays a significant role in overall 90 countries today (Macarthur, 2002, p.3) and even before the Internet arrived many countries outsourced their customer-service to other countries in order to cut costs because salaries in their own countries were too high. Galloway & Rose puts it like this:

"It can be argued that a global language makes international communication more efficient. The use of a global lingua franca means access to wider sources of information, and the growth of internet-based media also means that English has remained the preferred language of most electronically stored information. English proficiency has resulted in the outsourcing of a number of different types of call-centers in places like India and the Philippines, meaning that people in Scotland may end up discussing their finances with someone in Delhi."(Galloway & Rose, 2015, p.54-55)

This type of outsourcing has only grown since the Internet came about, and shows the impact of how linguistic imperialism can change the lives of individuals. If there was no common language, then this would not be a possibility and those who have lost and are losing their jobs in ENL countries because of outsourcing would have still been employed at their respective employer. Even more jobs have been lost to outsourcing since the Internet became mainstream, and now costumer service is basically just a man or a woman prepared to chat with whomever might have a problem. This means that they can chat with multiple costumers at once instead of being limited to only servicing one at the time.

On the other hand, this type of linguistic imperialism and technology development can also be viewed as something positive, since underdeveloped countries get more taxpaying jobs and therefore have a better chance of prospering in economy and that their inhabitants can thrive in a better work environment. John C. LaBella writes in his book *The Inside of Outsourcing*:

One of the more intriguing aspects of India as an outsourcing location is the fact that it was once part of the British Empire, Because of this, the English language has been taught in Indian schools for years. It is rare to find an educated Indian citizen that is not proficient in formal English.... Locations such as China, Brazil, the Philippines and others have not had the opportunities to evolve the use of English as widely as it is in India (LaBella, 2012, p.24).

This paragraph by John C. LaBella shows that this phenomenon is happening because of the British Empire and how they imprinted the English language into India many years ago. The reason why India now has this opportunity is because they are proficient in English and the reason why they are proficient is because of their part in the British Empire that made English a second language and India into an outer circle country according to Kachru's "Three Circle Model". This can also be viewed as "bottom-up perspective" because the English language was there before the technology made it possible to outsource your customer service to India.

5. Conclusion

There is no doubt in the fact that the Internet has spread the English language in a rate that no one has ever seen before. English is the language spoken on the Internet that most of the world has in common, and being proficient in the English language gives you benefits that those who do not understand it does not have. The possibility to share whatever you want with the rest of the world is now available with the touch of a button and when you share something either via a post in your blog dedicated to a mass public, talking to a friend you met on holiday in a another country by instant messaging, sending an e-mail from your corporations head quarter in Japan to one of your foreign branches in Germany or giving costumer service to someone from Britain when you are stationed in India, you are contributing to maintaining English as de facto language online. There are both pros and cons to this spread of English, where pros often revolves around being able to freely understand and communicate those who do not speak the same native language that you do, and that everything is easier when everyone can speak the same language. The cons on the other hand are described to be that the Internet could contribute to language death in the way that the English language is so dominant both on the Internet and in real life that it could in time replace the native languages. Another argument is the one of loosing ones culture in the way that when you lose your language you lose a part of your culture and loss of knowledge in the

sense that if a language is lost all the information that only those who speak the language holds is also lost. I believe that there is the spread of English through Internet communications is just starting to reveal itself. Not many have been able gather empirical information about this topic because the Internet is such a new phenomenon. Robert Phillipson started describing linguistic imperialism in 1992 when the Internet still was in its infant stage without mentioning it, and from what I have been able to find, he has not been speaking too much about linguistic imperialism in relations to the Internet since then either. I also believe that the Internet is both our and the next generations source of finding information for example in school related subjects, but also in what is the "next thing" in fashion, music, movies and behaviorism. One could argue that if the English language continues to spread as rapidly as it has done since the Internet was created, then it is just a matter of time until most people dress the same, listen to the same music, eat the same food and behave in the same way. I can relate with Phillipson and the others who believes that English as a common language is creating a homogenization in cultures and that culture can be lost as a result of English being spread. I believe the culture in for instance Norway has been greatly Americanized and traditions such as Halloween and Valentine's Day have sprung up that we never even would have heard of if it had not been for the impact America has in media and in deciding what is "cool". It is likely that countries such as Norway would have taken on these traditions even if it had not been for the Internet, but when looking at the spread of English through Internet communications and how rapidly the Internet makes the world's population conform to what the media says is the "right" thing to do, the argument that the Internet has a huge impact on how the world behaves and that it all comes down to the use of the English language and linguistic imperialism. Too quote Dr Barbara Seidlhofer's summary of the movements of English in countries affected by its spread due to the Internet and globalization:

The current role of English in Europe is, thus, characterized by the fact that the language has become a lingua franca, a language of wider communication, and has entered the continent in two directions as it were, top-down by fulfilling functions in various professional domains and, simultaneously, bottom-up by being encountered and used by speakers from all levels of society in practically all walks of life (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 68)

The argument used against the Internet having an impact on linguistic imperialism is in almost all cases that the English language is spread by a bottom-up perspective, meaning that it is the people who want to learn the language in order to succeed, not that the English

language is forced upon the people by making it impossible to be a part of the Internet revolution without knowing English.

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