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1

Languages and Power: Accommodation and Resistance

Máiréad Nic Craith

Interconnections between language and power in the context of identity politics provide the focus for this book. One of the primary issues for contributors is the process of globalisation and its consequences for languages at all levels, major, regional and migrant. The emerging deterritorialisation of all languages is a new and important consideration in the process of language planning. This applies not just to major world languages such as Chinese or Spanish, but is relevant at all levels. Minorities are no longer restrained by a national geographical context and are not dependent solely on national state bureaucracies for recognition. Speakers of all languages operate in a modern transnational framework which has been considerably enhanced by the development of new media and technology. People and their languages are 'on the move'. As individuals and communities migrate from one location to another, new linguistic minorities are formed and fresh issues arise. There are novel cultural contexts which are not easily translated and the field of intercultural communication has important resonances for language planners.

Globalisation has sparked numerous debates on religious issues and Samuel Huntington's seminal essay in 1993 suggested that civilisational identity would become increasingly significant in the twenty-first century. The world would be shaped by a number of major civilisations such as Western and Islamic. Moreover, the most significant conflicts of the future would occur 'along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another' (1993: 25). The predicted 'Clash of Civilisations' has linguistic as well as religious implications and in an age of increasing anxiety, certain languages have become associated with particular religious perspectives and terrorist atrocities. While such implications are of current import for speakers of languages such as

Arabic, the association of violence with languages is hardly original, and minority languages such as Irish and Basque have suffered from such connotations in the past (Conversi 1997, Kockel 1999, Nic Craith 2006).

Globalisation and global languages

Concepts of language and power are inherently related and strongly connected with the notion of 'cultural capital' – an idea that was first proposed by Pierre Bourdieu in the early 1970s. Bourdieu extended the concept of capital beyond its traditional economic categories and broadened it to include social as well as linguistic capital. For Bourdieu, the concept of 'cultural capital' is not an economic term. It involves a broad range of linguistic abilities as well as orientations which are present in the family and nation-state. In the case of the state it may exist in an institutionalised form (such as educational qualifications) or in the form of cultural artefacts such as books (Bourdieu 1991, 1997).

Language is also a form of cultural capital, and linguistic capital can be defined as 'fluency in, and comfort with, a high-status, worldwide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural and political power and status in local and global society' (Morrison 2000: 471). This implies that individuals and groups speaking global and majority languages have considerable advantages over their counterparts whose mother tongues are ranked low on the social scale – a matter which is hardly a point for debate in an economic context. Many benefits accrue to those speaking a major language. These include prestige, honour and educational credentials, that is speaking the 'right' language becomes a form of capital or investment which can consolidate or enhance one's credibility in the non-material sector. 'Moreover, privilege and prestige can be transmitted intergenerationally through forms of cultural capital' (Swarz 1996: 76).

In the twenty-first century we tend to think of languages in international rather than national terms and there are many sources of information on languages spoken at a global level. Although many assume that English is the most widely spoken language in the world, it has not yet attained that position. The most widely spoken languages in the world according to the Global Language Monitor Service are outlined in Table 1.1. Not surprisingly, the six official languages of the United Nations are all included on this list.

There are incredible difficulties with statistics such as these. How does one define the concept of a speaker of a language? Does one count native and non-native speakers alike? How does one assess fluency?

Table 1.1 Most Widely Spoken Languages in the World

Language	**Approx. Number of Speakers**
Chinese (Mandarin)	1,075,000,000
English	514,000,000
Hindustani	1,496,000,000
Spanish	425,000,000
Russian	275,000,000
Arabic	256,000,000
Bengali	215,000,000
Portuguese	194,000,000
Malay-Indonesian	176,000,000
French	129,000,000

Source: Global Language Monitor (http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0775272.html)

Nevertheless such statistics are useful as a guide to the escalation in numbers of speakers of certain languages and to the spread of particular tongues at a global scale.

Moreover, there is the issue of international languages which are interlingual versus those that are intralingual. This distinction put forward by Ammon (1991) proposes that languages can only be deemed to be international in a rigorous sense if different nation-states with diverse languages use the same international language in addition to their own. Here one could cite the example of English which is widely used in international communications by many nation-states in addition to or instead of their national language. In contrast, Ammon reserves the concept of international-intralingual languages for forms of communication such as German which are spoken in different nation-states such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. These states are unified by the same language which is spoken as a first rather than as an additional language (Ammon 1991; see also Ussai 2003). Such distinctions may be useful in predicting the future status of many 'international' languages – especially when used as an indicator along with statistics such as those cited in Table 1.1.

Linguistic capital is closely tied to the process of globalisation and especially with the spread of online technology. Speakers of many languages are united across the globe through the Internet in an imagined virtual community. The Global Language Monitor outlines the top ten languages currently used on the Internet as shown in Table 1.2. It is interesting to note that certain languages such as Hindustani and Malay-Indonesian which currently feature on the list of the top ten

Table 1.2 Top Ten Languages Used on the Web

Language	Internet Users (by language)	Percentage of all Internet Users
English	312,924,679	30.0
Chinese	144,301,513	13.8
Japanese	86,300,000	8.3
Spanish	78,166,075	7.5
German	58,214,778	5.6
French	45,807,499	4.4
Korean	33,900,000	3.2
Portuguese	32,372,000	3.1

Source: Global Language Monitor (http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm)

languages spoken worldwide are not present on the Internet list – a feature which is probably explained by a lack of widespread access to technology in India and Malay-Indonesia. What is more interesting is the presence of languages such as German, Korean and Japanese on the Internet language list although these do not feature on Table 1.1. It would be interesting to speculate whether or not the strong Internet presence of these languages will alter the spoken language ranking in time to come.

Of course, it is incredibly difficult to arrive at statistics on a global scale. A survey by Global Reach of Internet users in 2004 exhibits different statistics for users of languages over the Internet (see Table 1.3). Interestingly, however, the ranking order of languages is the same. Classifications on the Global Reach website are 'by languages instead of countries, since people speaking the same language form their own online community no matter what country they happen to live in' (http://www.glreach.com/globstats/index.php3). These are the top ten languages currently in use over the Internet according to the Global Reach statistics.

The emergence of online technology inevitably has an impact on language policy and strategy. A shift of focus has occurred and Diarmuit Mac Giolla Chríost's contribution points to the concentration of new information and communication technologies in cities, and other urban centres more generally. He advocates a move from primarily territorially based language policies to strategies that recognise the significance of space rather than place in our contemporary globalised world, although notions of community and sovereignty still remain important. In the context of technological advances, language-planning approaches that

Table 1.3 Global Internet Statistics (by languages)

Language	**Internet Access (millions)**	**Percentage of World On-line Population**
English	287.5	35.8
Chinese	102.6	14.1
Japanese	69.7	9.6
Spanish	65.6	9.0
German	52.9	7.3
Korean	29.9	4.1
French	28.0	3.8
Portuguese	25.7	3.5
Italian	24.3	3.3
Russian	18.5	2.5

Source: Global Reach (http://www.glreach.com/globstats/index.php3)

are entirely territorially based are unlikely to generate long-term success. Mac Giolla Chríost argues that policy makers who ignore the changing infrastructure of power relations will ultimately fail in their efforts to cultivate or maintain specific languages, while global languages such as English which are no longer identified with a particular territory will continue to gather momentum.

The late twentieth century has witnessed a rapid spread of English in particular. A publication by the British Council in 1997 confirmed that very few languages in the world could now rival English (Graddol 1997). The 'normalisation' of British and American English in a global context is at the expense not just of other languages but of other varieties of English. The major dialects of British and American English are virtually the only varieties to be seen in print or heard in broadcasting, and the status of these two varieties is overwhelming. However, the picture is hardly entirely simplistic.

Central to Foucault's theorisation of power was the notion that power is not monolithic. Resistance, contestation and struggle are accompaniments of power (Foucault 1978: 93) and 'power relations depend on a multiplicity of points of resistance, which serve at once as adversary, target, support, foothold' (Sheridan 1980: 185). This applies to language as much as to other social phenomena. The apparent continuing domination of English is queried in Jane Saville's contribution. In the first instance Saville notes the increasing recognition of English as spoken by non-native speakers. The range and variety of English spoken worldwide is unparalleled (http://www.ic.arizona.edu/~lsp/main.html).

Varieties of American English are spoken in Canada and the United States. British English has diversified in many locations in the British Isles, Africa, South and South East Asia, and Australasia. Even within England, the diversity of English is immense (Crystal 2004).

But the growth of English has not necessarily continued at the predicted pace. The American television channel CNN failed to reach a mass market when operating solely through English. In consequence it has produced editions of news programmes in different languages because English has not spread as far as the corporation had originally anticipated. A visit to the CNN US website (http://us.cnn.com/) offers news in Arabic, Japanese, Korean and Turkish. Saville's chapter explores the relationship between language and culture in an international context with special reference to English. In particular she examines the extent to which linguistic and cultural rights have permeated into educational systems in three continents, South Africa, The Philippines and Peru and how this permeation ultimately affects the life chances of individuals living in these locations.

The role of language in education – especially in colonial and postcolonial contexts has prompted much debate at international levels. In many colonies English became the language of education and ultimately stemmed the intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages. In France, Belgium, Spanish and Portuguese colonies, only European languages were recognised and permitted for official and educational purposes (Spolsky 2004: 83). However, this policy was not universally applied. In some instances, British cultural policy promoted primary education in the local languages but with a transition to English at higher levels – a strategy which gave English a higher status in social and educational contexts.

Moreover, such a strategy had political as well as educational and linguistic consequences. Until the Second World War, only 2 per cent (or less) of the 15–19 age group went to high school. This was the norm even in countries with a reputation for democracy such as Denmark and the Netherlands. The net effect was that only the literate (i.e. the elites) had access to state power and could engage effectively with political structures (Hobsbawm 1996).

The dominance of English is a key concern in the writings of Robert Phillipson. In previous publications, he has pointed to the phenomenon of linguistic imperialism as a key factor in the spread of English (Phillipson 1988, 1992). He defines linguistic imperialism as a strategy of linguistic planning which occurred in many colonial contexts when the colonial elite promoted its own language through power structures. This argument has been countered by Bernard Spolsky (2004), who suggests instead that historical immigration to the colonies has served as the primary catalyst for the spread of English. In core English-speaking countries such as Australia, New Zealand and much of Canada, English-speaking emigrants quickly outgrew the native population. Once the number of colonists was larger than the indigenous Maori in New Zealand, for example, there was a change in school policy in favour of English. Internal migrations also helped the emergence of English.

In this book, Phillipson focuses on the pro-English pressures of the European linguistic market, which have received clear impetus from the United States. Phillipson argues that as a global language, English has impacted negatively on major languages within the European Union such as French, German and Swedish, and suggests that there are several forms of linguistic apartheid in EU institutions. Since minority language users are not entitled to speak their languages in EU affairs, Phillipson argues that these languages are in a perilous state. He focuses on what he terms 'the Janus-faced dimension' (or double-edged sword) of English which can be seen to enhance opportunities in economic and employment sectors but only for those who are fluent in the language. Such opportunities are counterbalanced by the threat of English for the autonomy of many national languages, and in particular, French. The process of 'Englishisation' in continental Europe has served as the impetus for a number of countries to take measures to counteract the growing influences of English and protect their own national tongues. Whether such strategies can be successful in the long term remains to be seen.

The quest for recognition

Globalisation has traditionally been interpreted as a process which offers endless opportunities to speakers of global languages at the expense of those who speak regional and minority languages. However, there is increasing evidence that this is not necessarily the case, and Roland Robertson (1994) is credited with coining the term 'glocalisation' to indicate the increasing significance of the local in the global context and the counter-trends that can occur in the globalisation process. Although glocalisation is frequently used in a business context, it also has relevance for language planners, and speakers of many minority languages have come to regard the international context as an opportunity rather than a threat.

Using Bourdieu's concept of the field, one could argue that the EU linguistic domain is essentially a field within which there is rank and hierarchy. Moreover, the European Union could operate as a 'force field where the distribution of capital [i.e. linguistic status] reflects a hierarchical set of power relations between competing individuals, groups and organisations' (Swarz 1996: 79). The European Union has served as a forum in which speakers of minority languages can operate in collaboration at a transnational level with one another rather than in isolation. Just as proponents of official, working languages of the European Union seek to co-operate in an endeavour to prevent the total domination of English, speakers of languages classed as 'minority' or 'regional' have worked together for a number of years on matters concerning their lack of official, working status. The transnational context has offered many such speakers an opportunity to bypass unco-operative central powers in their respective nation-states and work together on common issues. Early collaboration led to the establishment of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL) in 1994, which has proved a not insignificant champion for the cause of minority languages (http://www.eblul.org/).

Markus Warasin's contribution to this book considers the achievements of speakers of lesser-used languages in the process of designing a new Constitution for Europe. When the Convention began its work on 28 February 2002 under the presidency of ex-French Prime Minister Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, minority protection or the promotion of lesser-used languages was not on the agenda and was hardly considered relevant. However, the efforts of speakers of minority languages to profile issues of concern prompted several debates and conferences on questions related to minorities in general and to regional or minority languages in particular within the context of the future European Union. Several organisations working in the field of minority protection promoted an open dialogue about these questions and generated responses from academics, think tanks as well as individual members of the European Convention. Although ultimately the Convention was not endorsed by all member states, and the final document could hardly be regarded as a 'Minority Charter', the process offered opportunities and clear perspectives for a potentially significant step forward in the standard setting of European minority protection and lesser-used language promotion.

Promotion of minority languages is also a key feature of the chapter by Philip McDermott, which focuses on the significance of broadcasting and the media in the Celtic regions in Ireland, the United Kingdom and France, where English and French have consistently dominated. For such languages, access to power structures in the public sphere is a key issue. Without such access, the significance of these languages for public recognition of one's identity remains problematic since an important influence on the promotion of identity-cohesion is missing. Broadcasting is extremely significant in maintaining the vitality of one's own linguistic community. Moreover, the media has the capacity to introduce the language to non-speakers and therefore serves an important role in augmenting numbers. 'In short, it is no longer necessary to make a language official if it is to be moved out of the house and off the street into a wider world' (Hobsbawm 1996).

Some theorists such as Joshua Fishman (1991: 473) argue that there is an overemphasis on the power of the media in contemporary society which detracts from the effectiveness of other means of restoring a minority language, such as the role of education and the family, but McDermott emphasises the impact of the broadcast media on the consolidation of a language within family and education systems. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the media have become a focal point in many homes. If the language of the home is neither visible nor audible in the broadcast sector, this is highly likely to have an adverse impact on the status of the language at societal level, and the lack of recognition in the public space has been an important factor in the decline of many languages.

Many minority communities have recognised the importance of the media in the promotion of small or lesser-used languages (Kirk and Ó Baoill 2003). For example, the growth of a feeling of community among the indigenous Sámis in the Arctic Circle has been made possible through technological innovations. In particular, the use of radio has overcome physical distances and borders in a new way. Radio has provided an international tool for the communication of Sámi culture and protects it against the overwhelming force of other Scandinavian and international cultures (Nic Craith 2004, Niezen 2004).

In his analysis of the James Bay Crees, Niezen (2004) explores their increasing use of computer technology for traditional language preservation in a non-European context. The James Bay Crees have developed a cultural programme that includes the promotion of indigenous language on the Internet. In response to the challenges posed by the dominance of English and French in Quebec, the Cree Regional Authority has developed a Cree Cultural Institute which is devoted to language preservation (http://www.creeculture.ca/e/institute/index.html). One of its more significant initiatives has been the cultivation of computing resources which facilitate the Cree syllabic alphabet (http://www.creeculture.ca/images/content/syllabics.gif).

The European Union has traditionally supported minority languages in their quest for recognition through the offices of the EBLUL. However, such support has only extended to indigenous and autochthonous languages in the continent, and the growing numbers of non-European languages spoken in Europe are virtually ignored by many official bodies. Speakers of migrant languages in Europe have virtually failed to gain access to power structures. In the EU linguistic field, specific forms of struggle (i.e. between majority and minority languages) are regarded as legitimate whereas others are excluded. There is tacit fundamental agreement that only those indigenous to Europe are permitted to engage with its hierarchy of power structures and there is a fundamental distinction between the established actors and the newcomers who are denied entry. Bourdieu (1971: 178) suggested that in all cultural fields there is inherent opposition for the monopoly of cultural legitimacy along with the right to withhold and confer it.

The principle of indigeneity has remained central to the mindset of many bureaucrats in Brussels, and languages which are regarded as 'in Europe', but not 'of Europe' have been virtually excluded from many international documents and charters. This occurs despite the fact that the whole notion of what constitutes a 'European language' remains problematic. In the *Encyclopaedia of the Languages of Europe*, Glanville Price makes a strong case for Arabic as a European language. He supports his argument with a number of reasons. Historically, Arabs occupied extensive territories in Southern Europe, sometimes for lengthy periods of time and especially during the Middle Ages. Price also notes the existence of a long-standing Arabic-speaking people in Cyprus. He highlights the large numbers of Arabic-speaking peoples in contemporary Western Europe and especially France (Price 2000: 11). One could also point out that Maltese, which is historically a dialect of Arabic, has acquired the status of official, working language in the European Union (Nic Craith 2006).

Price also extends the umbrella term 'languages of Europe' to the community languages spoken in Western Europe, especially in Britain, France and the Netherlands. He uses the concept 'community language' to denote the vernaculars of 'reasonably settled communities of (in most cases recent) incomers from areas such as Asia, Africa or the Caribbean'. Price suggests that if these tongues 'are not, in the usual sense of the term, "European languages", it seems difficult not to recognise them as having achieved the status of "languages of Europe" '.

Chapters by Mary Delargy, Rebecca Fong and Gabriele Marranci in this book feature such community languages in the United Kingdom. Unlike Great Britain, which has had a Race Relations Act since 1976, Northern Ireland has had legislation relating to race only since the Race Relations (NI) Order of 1997 (http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Sr/sr2003/20030341.htm). This Order has led to a significant change in the relationship between the host community and the incoming communities in Northern Ireland in the last 10 years, and Delargy's chapter aims to outline some of the changes which have occurred in the Chinese community since it was first established in Northern Ireland in the early 1960s.

One of the key issues raised here is the influence of English in several sectors. Not only does the global language impact on the use of migrant languages in the public space, it also generates anxiety about which language is spoken in the home. In the case of Chinese migrants in Northern Ireland, children acquire fluent English through their everyday contact with the language in schools and in the public environment but many of the older generation have limited skills in the language leading to inter-generational problems of communication and understanding (Holder 2003). Moreover, some of these elders have been advised by the well-meaning officials not to speak Chinese or Cantonese with their children and to use English instead (Man-Wah Watson 2000: 98).

This is a process which is hardly confined to Northern Ireland, and examples of such advice are available on an international scale. In his autobiography *Hunger of Memory*, Richard Rodriguez, the son of Mexican immigrant parents in Sacremento, recalls similar advice being given to his parents. On one occasion, 'with great tact' nuns from the local convent visited his parents at home and enquired whether it would be possible for Richard's mother and father to encourage their children to practice English (instead of Spanish) at home. The response was predictable. 'Of course my parents complied. What would they not do for their children's well-being? And how could they have questioned the Church's authority which those women represented' (Rodriguez 1982: 20). The change was immediate. 'In an instance they agreed to give up the language (the sounds) that had revealed and accentuated our family's closeness.' In such cases, there are social consequences which go beyond a simple language change. Frequently, there are different levels of fluency between one generation and the next. Children typically learn the language 'fluently, accent-free and with confidence'. In contrast, the language of the parents is all-too-often broken and a potential source of embarrassment for the children (Bammer 1994: 101).

Of course the counsel given is well-intentioned and aims at enhancing the linguistic capital of the children involved. In Delargy's case study, however, such concerns are incredibly ill-advised when one considers the global scale on which Chinese is spoken. Current statistics indicate that Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world and it ranks as one of the most widely used languages on the Internet. However, such advice does point to the greater esteem in which English is held (especially in primarily English-speaking countries!). English has become one of the major business *lingua franca* internationally, and there is a general perception that 'English is indispensable to personal material success and to the performance of a technologically advanced economy' (Grin 1999: 175).

Perhaps there was a perception on the part of the advisor in Northern Ireland that Chinese was a language spoken at 'the other side of the world' which would be of no practical value to children living in Northern Ireland, but such matters are changing rapidly. Rebecca Fong's chapter addresses the increasing presence of speakers of Chinese within Britain and argues for a new conceptualisation of intercultural communication in Academia. There is no doubt that there have been extraordinary changes in our communications between and across cultures in the past 50 years. One of the consequences of globalisation has been the increase in international students in UK Higher Education. Fong's chapter highlights the role that culture plays in the curriculum and the manner in which this affects teaching and learning expectations. She proposes that the process of 'cultural awareness' needs more explicit treatment in the curriculum to heighten issues of identity and to facilitate the cross-cultural experience. In addition, it is argued that the practice of bridging the gap between theory and practice is a reflexive issue for each individual in his or her own right and more recognition needs to be given to two processes: methodology, or more specifically an 'anthropological approach' to underpin a search for meaning, and pedagogy that trains teachers to be more aware of the issues concerning migration and intercultural communication.

Religion and communication

Migration is essentially a process of 'up-rooting' and 're-grounding' in a new cultural context and different forces influence the adaptation to the host society. Language can prove an important barrier to communication in such contexts. Religious belief can also constitute a significant hindrance in the process of communication and accommodation in a new society. The final chapters in this book feature case studies where issues of language, religion and power are intertwined to such an extent that efforts at genuine communication are difficult to resolve.

Marranci's essay focuses on Muslim migrants in Scotland and Northern Ireland and their different approaches to cultural negotiation with the host society. Arabic is a language of considerable cultural standing among the Muslim community worldwide. As the liturgical language of Islam, Classical Arabic, the language of the Koran is regarded as sacrosanct and is used in mosques throughout the world (Suleiman 2003). Although the majority of the world's Muslims do not actually speak Arabic, many are familiar with phrases in Islamic prayer and would respectfully participate in services conducted in that language.

In his contribution, Marannci considers the relationship that his Muslim respondents in Northern Ireland and Scotland have with language and worship. In particular he focuses on the official role of Arabic within the community (*ummah*) and the differences in approach to this language by Muslims in Northern Ireland as opposed to Scotland. In the case of Northern Ireland, the local Muslim community has made the unusual decision to conduct their Friday sermons (*khutbas*) in English rather than Arabic. This has been explained as a gesture towards peace in a largely English-speaking political context that has been sectarian and violent. As such it could be regarded as a genuine attempt at intercultural communication by a group that may feel under threat from its immediate environment. (Alternatively, a cynic might suggest that this is more likely an excuse to avoid the use of a language which the majority cannot understand.) This approach contrasts sharply with that of the Muslim communities in Scotland, many of whom have sought to retain the symbolic importance of Arabic as the only acceptable language of the *ummah* in a society which is hardly devoid of sectarian conflict either.

Marranci's contribution sets the language question in the context of a fundamental shift in the understanding of Islam among the different generations and its significance as part of a wider national and international ideology. It addresses the question of how language plays an integral role in both dividing and uniting peoples of different faiths and ethnic backgrounds. The chapter by John Dunlop looks specifically at barriers to communication between Catholics and Protestants in the course of the Northern Ireland conflict. Although both groups speak English as their mother tongue, there is still a genuine lack of communication between them.

While this could possibly be explained simply in terms of a clash between Hiberno- and British-English, Dunlop tends to look for a more complex rationalisation. He explores approaches to what is basically the same language from different religious groups. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has great respect for the authority of the written word of the Bible. This religious group has traditionally placed great importance on education and continuous study of the scriptures and theological writings (Hamilton 1992, Holmes 2000). Dunlop suggests that Presbyterian language does not have too many layers to it and is not very flexible. (For this reason, they are probably not very good negotiators.) Political statements of negotiators influenced by Presbyterianism tend to contain a straight analysis of the situation along with a blunt statement of their 'bottom line'. There is no movement either contemplated or even possible unless you can convince Presbyterians that the primary analysis is incorrect.

In contrast, he suggests that Catholics adopt a more flexible approach to the English language. Historically, the language was spoken by the coloniser rather than the native, and many Irish still have an ambivalent relationship with English and speak it using syntax that is inherited from Irish Gaelic (Todd 1999). Although the English spoken in Ireland is largely similar to that spoken in the United Kingdom, there are subtle differences between Hiberno-English and British-English – and this includes variations in nuances even when the same words are spoken.

James Joyce, one of Ireland's most notable writers in English and a Nobel Laureate, noted the differential experience of the same language in one of his more famous novels written in the early twentieth century. In Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the principal character, Stephen Dedalus, senses the shadow of imperialism while having a conversation in English with an English (Catholic) priest. Dedalus feels that the English language in which they are conversing ultimately belongs to the priest and his English tradition and is still the language of the coloniser. Dedalus remarks on the difference between 'the words home, Christ, ale, master' on the priest's lips in contrast with his own efforts. Dedalus 'cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit'. The priest's language which in one sense is 'so familiar' will always remain 'an acquired speech' for Dedalus because he has not made or accepted its words. His voice holds them at bay. Dedalus remarks that his 'soul frets in the shadow' of the coloniser's English (Joyce 1916: 172).

Although these comments were written early in the twentieth century, they reflect the differences still current in nuances between English as spoken by the British and that spoken by the Irish. Dunlop's contribution focuses on diverse interpretations of the same English by individuals from different denominations. Research has already been conducted on whether there is any variation in the English spoken by different denominations in Northern Ireland. According to Milroy 1981, any differences are regional rather than denominational. Others (e.g. Kirk 1997, Todd 1984) have countered this research. Presumably, Irish (Gaelic) has had a more significant influence on the English spoken by Catholics, although the ancestors of some Protestants were speakers of Irish and Scots-Gaelic (Blaney 1996, Ó Snodaigh 1995).

According to an account written by a medical doctor in the mid-1970s, most Catholics and Protestants recognise one another's religious denomination by their accent difference (Fraser 1974: 115–6). This view seems to be supported by individuals, such as Polly Devlin (1983: 383), who grew up in Northern Ireland and describes her early experience of being recognised as Catholic (Papist) in the following manner. She and a childhood (Catholic) friend were playing when they were pursued by a Protestant girl calling them 'papishes' (i.e. Papists): The Protestant girl urged them to say the Lord's Prayer which Polly began with 'Our Father Who art in Heaven'. When the Protestant girl heard ' "Who art in Heaven" instead of "which art" which is how they [Protestants] said it, she said, "You dirty wee papishes, you wee bitches, get on home." ' They ran on home crying asking their father the meaning of the word 'papishes' (cf. Nic Craith 2002: 131).

Although this incident refers to formal prayers rather than colloquial conversation it illustrates the manner in which Protestants and Catholics are aware of clues in one another's speech which confirm the denomination of the speaker. For her part, Devlin (1983: 384) suggests that the vocabulary of Catholics is antique and is more full of meaning than the 'pale nimble English' spoken by Protestants. She explains the constant use of violent imagery and exaggeration in Hiberno-English in terms of the 'damage done to Ireland' in its colonial past.

This view would concur with Dunlop's thesis that although Protestants and Catholics speak the same language, it can have inherently different meanings and it does not necessarily mean that they are communicating. From a Catholic perspective, it would appear that political statements are open to interpretation and re-interpretation. They tend to 'read between the lines' and may comprehend the same words in an entirely different manner from their fellow Presbyterians – a phenomenon which does not aid the resolution of conflict.

This premise is not entirely new and was noted by John Dunlop, Godfrey Brown and others at the Opsahl Commission in Northern Ireland some years previously. Both contributors argued that Protestant ideas of honesty had little time for ambiguous statements and approached politics in a literal fashion. One commentator suggested that Protestants were 'puzzled by what they feel is the ambiguous attitude of Catholics and their failure to define ordinary concepts in a clean, straightforward way'. Moreover, Protestants found it difficult sometimes to 'understand the sophistry, the playing with words which [they] sometimes get from Catholics' (Opsahl et al. 1993: 37).

This issue of the extent to which our language embraces our worldview is not a new one in applied linguistics. As early as 1929, Sapir proposed that our perception of the world is inevitably shaped by our mother tongue. Human beings, he suggested, viewed life through the filter of whatever particular language had become the medium of expression for the society in which they lived. He was convinced that languages predispose individuals to a specific interpretation of their environment (Sapir 1929: 69).

In the 1930s this position was endorsed by Whorf (his student), who extended it to argue that society cuts nature up. We 'organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language' (Whorf 1940: 213–4). While, generally speaking, this hypothesis is no longer accepted in its strict form, it is not entirely inconceivable to suggest that our mother tongue in particular has some impact on the way we view the world. But what is interesting about Dunlop's contribution is his suggestion that speaking the same 'mother tongue' does not necessarily guarantee a similar worldview.

Words have always had a sensitive role to play in the debate of cultures, traditions and civilisations, and the final chapter explores the perception of Islam in the wake of 9/11 atrocity and the subsequent war on terrorism. In 1993, Samuel P. Huntington published an essay on the theme of a clash of civilisations in which he anticipated a new variation in conflict in the twenty-first century. For Huntington, territorial politics were no longer relevant. The new faultlines were civilisations which were essentially cultural entities which he defined as 'the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species' (Huntington 1993: 24). Language, history, culture and tradition were common objective elements which held civilisations together, but the most important factor was religion (Huntington 1993: 25).

For Huntington a clash of civilisations was inevitable as differences between civilisations became ever more real in a world that was becoming smaller. As the process of globalisation gathers momentum, people become even more aware of the other in their presence. 'North African immigration to France generates hostility among Frenchmen and at the same time increased receptivity to immigration by "good" European Catholic Poles' (Huntington 1993: 25). He felt that faultlines between civilisations were going to replace the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War and he predicted the re-emergence of the 'cultural division of Europe between Western Christianity, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam, on the other' (Huntington 1993: 29–30).

However, Javaid Rehman argues that this clash of civilisations predicted by Huntington should not be accepted without question. Instead he queries key words and concepts such as 'civilisation' and 'human rights' and argues that our interpretation of such words is highly dependent on the cultural context. The atrocities of 11 September 2001 generated considerable concern about the rise of terrorism and many problems have arisen as a result of the differential usage of words and values such as 'terrorism' in an international context. Rehman's contribution considers the extent to which the application (or misapplication) in the usage of such words has had a major role in exacerbating divisions between contemporary Muslim societies and the Western world.

Overall, contributions to this book address the issue of language, power and identity from a variety of perspectives – from global to transnational to local. The book explores powerful languages such as English, minority and regional languages such as Irish, and immigrant languages such as Chinese and Arabic. The issue of power, however, is highly contextual. Several contributions focus on languages such as Arabic and Chinese which are powerful in their homeland but lack any access to power structures abroad. The recognition of one's own language has important ramifications for a sense of identity in all cultural contexts, and all chapters query the implications of language in the quest for the ongoing negotiation of identity.

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