Notes

[1] The role of foundations based in East Asia (government-affiliated in Korea and Japan, private in Taiwan) has been enormous in the development of East Asian studies. As with United States government funds, we cannot reduce the consequences of such sponsored research and study to ideological service, especially when there are reasonably autonomous selection committees.

[2] For more on the postwar United States reception of Japanese literature, see Field 232–41.

[3] On the dynamic of literature as ornament and as information in area studies, see Chow, "Politics." This essay, a valuable critique of area studies generally, is especially fine on the teaching of literature as resistance to such instrumentalization (132). In a later essay by Chow, such specificity is dissolved in an affirmation of the mutual implication of cultural studies and poststructuralist theory ("Theory").

Works Cited

Amin, Samir. *Re-reading the Postwar Period: An Intellectual Itinerary*. Trans. Michael Wolfers. New York: Monthly Review, 1994.

Chow, Rey. "The Politics and Pedagogy of Asian Literatures in American Universities." *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993. 120–43.

———. "Theory, Area Studies, Cultural Studies: Issues of Pedagogy in Multiculturalism." *Ethics after Idealism: Theory-Culture-Ethnicity-Reading*. Theories of Contemporary Culture 20. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1998. 1–13.

Field, Norma. "'The Way of the World': Japanese Literary Studies in the Postwar United States." *The Postwar Developments of Japanese Studies in the United States*. Ed. Helen Hardacre. Brill's Japanese Studies Lib. 8. Leiden: Brill, 1998. 227–93.

Guillory, John. "The Sokal Affair and the History of Criticism." *Critical Inquiry* 28 (2002): 470–508.

From Imperialism to Collaboration: How Do We Get There?

DOMNA C. STANTON
Graduate Center, City University of New York

I WANT TO BEGIN WITH SOME ANECdotal facts:

Item: a first-year seminar on multiethnicity in New York is taught at Barnard College only by the English faculty.

Item: a senior seminar on epic and romance in the Middle Ages, announced in the fall 2002 offerings of the University of Michigan's English department, will include works by Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France, but the only texts to be read in the original language are in Middle English.

Item: a comparative literature course on modernism, magical realism, and postmodernism at the University of Michigan for fall 2002 will read texts by Proust, Kafka, Mann, Borges, García Márquez, Tekin, Calvino, and Pamuk in English only.

Item: a graduate course on the lyric essay taught this spring in the English PhD program of the City University of New York lists Keno, Shei Shonegon, Montaigne, Proust, Leiris, Pessoa, Rilke, Simone Weil, Barthes, Ponge, and Borges among the authors to be read, in English only.

Item: a graduate seminar on the theory and the practice of literature scholarship and criticism offered by the City University of New York PhD program in English (spring 2002) features Bakhtin, Baudrillard, Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva—more or less half the theorists to be read for the course—in English only.

These anecdotal items are symptomatic of the rampant privileging of English to the exclusion of readings in the original languages at col-

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press

leges and universities in the United States today. And this phenomenon is occurring even in institutions, like Barnard College or the University of Michigan, in which there are foreign language requirements. But graduate departments of English, like graduate students, do not seem to be using foreign language requirements as a significant way of enriching their areas of research and expertise; instead, the requirements tend to be regarded as a hurdle to overcome as students hurtle toward completing the PhD in five supported years at the better-funded institutions. French, German, Italian, and Spanish are not held up to students as crucial to their understanding of the Renaissance, for example, even though this was undeniably a pan-European phenomenon where learned texts knew no linguistic barriers. In the past, comparative literature, at least, was the academic site where students could examine texts intensively across national divides in the languages in which they were written. Indeed, there is no way to do close textual analysis of any methodological stripe in translations, which are quite simply different texts from the originals, as any comparison of translations into English confirms. The apparent indifference to the complex linguistic medium of a text is only one of the effects of the enthronement of English as the lingua franca. More accurately, English is the *lingua universi* of modern languages and literatures, as it is of every other scholarly and scientific field today, the world over. How did we get here? And what should we, what can we, do about it?

I want first to mention some of the oft-stated reasons for the decline in the study of languages and literatures in the United States since the 1970s that are internal to colleges and universities. Numerous issues of *Profession* and of the ADE and ADFL bulletins have documented this decline statistically, most noticeably in German and less so in French, a field that now highlights its 300 million francophone speakers—a decline, in fact, in most commonly taught European languages.[1] The main exception is Spanish, which cannot be called a foreign language because it is the second language of the United States today, the English-only missionaries notwithstanding.[2] These and other publications, such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, have been saturated with commentaries on students' vocational aims for lucrative careers in business and other professional fields and on the corporatization of the American college and university, where the numbers of administrators, worried about the proverbial bottom line,[3] have swelled far more rapidly than the number of new faculty members.

As a response that has by now become reflexive, we (in the foreign languages and literatures) have urged our departments to be less insular; to become more visible, relevant, and engaged in the broader academic community of our campuses; and to reach out to other departments, forging curricular and collegial links through joint appointments and interdisciplinary programs. In point of fact, there has been a noticeable trend to transform the old curriculum of courses on language and literature to interdisciplinary studies (French and francophone studies, for example) at the undergraduate and graduate levels. To be sure, different departments on different campuses have been less or more successful at this mainstreaming of the "peripheral" foreign language departments for reasons that are in part local and contextual and that range, for instance, from personal inclinations to the extent to which interdisciplinarity is facilitated and rewarded. It is clear that we need to do far more and better to be interdisciplinary, despite problems of enrollments, resources, and disciplinary boundaries, and that we need to do more and better to be engaged in the intellectual life of the campus, for we are cast as service departments that teach language, which is still defined instrumentally as a *technē* rather than indispensable cultural work.[4] This reduction of our role or function is not simply our fault, however; it is also the fault of colleagues in area studies, who regard international relations and political science as the only models for their field, and, I

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press

dare say, of colleagues in English and, more and more, in comparative literature, who define themselves as the proprietors of literary and cultural studies—any literature, any culture, anywhere, so long as its texts and artifacts have been translated or can be appropriated into English.

These internal factors for the decline in the study of foreign languages and literatures parallel—and, I would argue, are closely linked to—the global dominance of English that we have witnessed in recent decades. As Humphrey Tonkin explains, citing David Crystal, "[A] language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country" (6). For English today, global status includes the preeminent role in imparting and storing knowledge and information, since English is the language of the computer and the Internet, of scientific texts, international business, and diplomacy. It is also, of course, the language of the media, of the conglomerates that now dominate publishing, as well as of popular culture, what Benjamin Barber has dubbed McWorld. Intimately connected to military and economic power, the dominance of English is an emblematic case of Foucauldian power-knowledge. Even more than a global language, then, English can be viewed as an imperial tongue, partly in the sense in which Raymond Williams understands latter-day or neoimperialism as being primarily an "economic reference, with implications of consequent indirect or manipulated political and military control" (159). English is also more imperial than global because it is not the most widely spoken language in the world—Hindi and Chinese are—but it is the elite language that other language speakers aspire to master, as an indispensable means of access to cultural and other forms of capital. In *Linguistic Imperialism*, Robert Philippson argues that "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" that are linked to inequalities in the political and economic spheres, and he emphasizes that this dominance is sustained by the explicit or implicit devaluation of other languages (48).

To be sure, all imperial and colonial powers, beginning with Rome, have understood the importance of linguistic imperialism. In early modern Europe, France was probably the first nation-state to undertake systematically the making of its native tongue into the language of diplomacy, knowledge, civility, and refinement; by 1883 France had established a full-blown Alliance Française pour la Propagation de la Langue Française dans les Colonies et à l'Etranger ("French Alliance for the Propagation of the French Language in the Colonies and Abroad"). It is easy, then, to laugh at France's awkwardly anxious attempts today to limit the contagion of English, including restraints on the percentage of pop tunes with English lyrics that can be heard on French radio and television. They seem pathetically defensive, full of *ressentiment* at the demise of French and the enthronement of English.[5] And yet this perception surely shifts when the threatened language is not French but one of many indigenous idioms disappearing every year as imperial English triumphs. In fact, shouldn't we bemoan the internalizing of the norms, modes of thought, and cultural assumptions necessarily embedded in English, which cause cultural deracination and alienation, as Frantz Fanon emphasized half a century ago in analyzing the colonial impact of French? Above all, how can we reconcile the imperialism of English in the world, and its analogue in the academy, with the values that humanists have been promoting for over two decades: the values of difference, diversity, pluralism, multiculturalism? Are these values only to be affirmed with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation—even though all too often these terms constitute a mantra rather than a set of analytic and strategic categories for intellectual exploration? Shouldn't these humanistic values also be deployed in the practices of our everyday life, in what we do about different languages and diverse idioms when we teach, when

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press

we write? In short, as we grapple with all the other differences that literature makes and mediates, are we willing to commit in practice to an ethics of linguistic diversity?

Americans uphold the free flow of information as foundational to democracy, but with imperial English, information flows only one way through one medium. Others want to—or need to—understand us,[6] but English-only speakers do not have the linguistic means to understand them, as Tonkin forcefully puts it:

> We need languages to reach outside the envelope of wealth and privilege in which we find ourselves. [. . . We] are locked in our own linguistic house, no matter how commodious its rooms [. . .]. [. . . H]aving a single language for global communication may have its advantages, but it comes at considerable cost to the diversity of cultures. Indeed it makes it doubly imperative that we learn how to communicate effectively with the rest of the world in a spirit of reciprocity and openness. (8)

As teachers of language and literature, as humanists even more, we should welcome the development of international covenants on linguistic human rights. These resolutions protect the rights of minorities in a state to use their own language, and therefore to enjoy their own culture, and they establish the fundamental human right of indigenous people to develop their own language and literature (see Philippson 93–98). In addition, since 1989, conferences held at UNESCO have been discussing the human right to learn any foreign language for purposes of international understanding. Although probably devised to combat the dominance of imperial English, a declaration on foreign language education up to and beyond 2000, submitted to UNESCO by the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes, warrants our consideration:

> Increasing economic pressures on governments and local authorities [have] produced in many national curricula the linguistic and cultural hegemony of one foreign language, which, as an albeit diluted form of outmoded imperialism, frustrates the aim of international understanding insofar as the opportunity for young learners to study other languages and cultures, or to be receptive towards them, is thus removed. Single language dominance [. . .] is not defensible on educational grounds. Moreover, it tends to favour the "privileged" languages of the world and neglect utterly the legitimate interests of others. (qtd. in Philippson 97)[7]

As humanists, as citizens of the world, we need to combat imperial English and monolingualism through the quotidian but important act of selecting the works we teach with the recognition that the idiomatic language of the text is of paramount importance to its meaning; through respect for our colleagues' knowledge of non-English languages, literatures, and cultural and historical contexts; and through a commitment to an ethics of linguistic difference. This commitment also means urging students to engage seriously with languages other than French, German, Italian, and Spanish, such as Arabic or Chinese, Hindi or Wolof. Professors of language and literature, across all linguistic and disciplinary divides, must join together to impress on academic administrators the crucial role of what Shakespeare calls "that great feast of languages" (5.1.39) in forming the next generation of citizens and thus constructing a new form of internationalism for our global future. So doing, humanists would have a uniquely valuable role to play in the academy and the world to come.

I want to finish by focusing on the potentially collaborative nature of this enterprise. Of course, to collaborate means to work together, ideally as equals, but it also means to cooperate with a force inimical or destructive to one's primary affiliations. I believe there can be no collaboration among professors of language and literature in a universe and university of imperial English that dismisses the other languages and literatures explicitly or implicitly as irrelevant. There can be positive collaboration only if we

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press

acknowledge one another's worth and knowledge through our practices, if we recognize the importance of the linguistic idiom of the word and respect those who produced the word in their own language. Personally, I saw positive collaboration in action at every meeting of the editorial board of *PMLA* when I was editor of the journal for five years. Linda Hutcheon's presidential forum, published in a recent issue of *Profession*, featured inspiring case studies of collaboration between and among humanists. And we should examine seriously Cathy Davidson's recent suggestion that humanists adopt the model of collaboration that scientists practice in the laboratory.

If we can establish an ethics of collaboration in difference, then we can also create alliances among professors of English and the foreign languages and literatures to advocate the importance to all other disciplines of the interpretive strategies and critical thinking that we do. And we can work on collaborative projects that will enrich the humanities, the social sciences, the life sciences, and the professional schools. One important project, in the light of my remarks, would be the study of the theory, problems, and practice of translation both in the literal sense in which the field of translation studies has developed and, by extension, in the metaphoric sense of the multiple ways in which each of us translates others—a person, an image, a culture—to make them understandable and acceptable to us, a process that involves gains and losses. Over and beyond cotaught or team-taught, bi- or multilinguistic, pluridisciplinary courses, which are affordable as meet-together seminars,[8] we can work together to conceptualize the humanistic dimensions of traditional area studies. We can also refine emerging ones, such as Atlantic studies, Caribbean studies, or migration studies. And we can create a synergistic major in the humanities and international affairs, which Randa Duvick describes in her essay "Sustaining Foreign Language Enrollments through Collaboration: An Interdisciplinary Major"; develop interdisciplinary studies of media, which would include visual, print, and technological cultures; and promote courses with colleagues in the sciences ranging from critical studies of scientific and artistic cultures to the ethical dilemmas raised by advances in the life sciences.

To quote Benjamin Franklin, which I rarely do: "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." For although those of us in the foreign languages and literatures may criticize departments of English and comparative literature for their imperial posture, their fields are experiencing an ongoing crisis of atomization, and their faculties too have felt literature's loss of cultural capital. In the face of this decline, the answer, once again, is not for English to continue to colonize all other languages and literatures; it is for us, as charter members of a new cosmopolitanism, to collaborate in advancing the humanistic values and the critical practices to which we are committed, over and against the corporatized university, "anglobalization," and worldwide cultural homogeneity that ultimately subject and dehumanize all of us.

Notes

[1] MLA surveys show that Italian enrollments went down between 1990 and 1995, then up between 1995 and 1998 (and 1998 is the last year for which the MLA has data).

[2] As a result, some of my comments will not be pertinent to departments of Spanish or programs of Latin American literature. In the Winter 2001 issue of the *ADFL Bulletin*, John Edwards estimated that 55 percent of all language students take Spanish (14). He also believes, however, that while there are now 30 million people of Hispanic origin in the United States and that in fifty years the number will double, the knowledge of a language other than English among this population will not last beyond the second or third generation (13–14).

[3] To cite Aphra Behn: "Money speaks sense in a language all nations understand" (3.1).

[4] Claire Kramsch has perhaps been the most forceful voice in this effort to view language acquisition as dialogic cultural work.

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press

[5] Air France pilots now speak English to air-traffic controllers in Paris. Perhaps the most definitive sign of the imperium of English in France is the twelve-page insertion in the 7 April 2002 edition of the Paris-based daily *Le monde* of stories, reviews, and photographs from the *New York Times* in English. In an editorial in *Le monde* on this landmark edition, Jean-Marie Colombani eliminated any reference to American dominion and domination in favor of enlightened interest in the other's difference, explaining the inclusion of the supplement as a way "to know Americans better in all their diversity. It is to understand their vision of the world, which is both like and unlike our own, and is definitely more complex, more open, less self-absorbed than the impression one gets from the State Department or the Pentagon." And he concluded, "To better know the Other in his own language and his own imagination is not to renounce oneself. It is, on the contrary, to accept the plurality of worlds, the diversity of visions, and, above all, a respect for differences" (qtd. in Gopnik 58, 60). The supplement has become a weekly feature in *Le monde*.

[6] This is not to deny the importance of learning English as a means for surviving in the world or for improving one's material conditions and employment possibilities. But we should also not deny that learning English is a strategic means for using the master's linguistic tools, which are the tools of mastery today. In his editorial, Colombani puts the issue of learning the master's tongue more positively, albeit not entirely convincingly: "It's the strategy of the weak toward the strong: mastering the language of dominant usage permits one to better defend the identity of one's own language" (qtd. in Gopnik 58, 60).

[7] Evoking consequences even more dire than "linguistic imperialism," Tove Skutnabb-Kangas has entitled her latest book *Linguistic Genocide in Education; or, Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights*. Linking the destruction of languages and of the environment, she argues that biodiversity cannot be protected unless language genocide is halted.

[8] This can involve two or three different courses meeting at the same hours, with different numbers that correspond to their home departments and whose enrollments are credited to each department.

Works Cited

Barber, Benjamin R. *Jihad vs. McWorld: How the Planet Is Both Falling Apart and Coming Together—and What This Means for Democracy*. New York: Times, 1995.

Behn, Aphra. *The Rover, Part 2*. London: Jacob Tonson, 1681.

Davidson, Cathy. "What If Scholars in the Humanities Worked Together, in a Lab?" *Chronicle of Higher Education* 28 May 1999: B4.

Duvick, Randa. "Sustaining Foreign Language Enrollments through Collaboration: An Interdisciplinary Major." *ADFL Bulletin* 33.2 (2002): 105–10.

Edwards, John. "Languages and Language Learning in the Face of World English." *ADFL Bulletin* 32.2 (2001): 10–15.

Fanon, Frantz. *Les damnés de la terre*. Paris: Maspero, 1961.

———. *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Paris: Seuil, 1952.

Gopnik, Adam. "Ink: The *Times*, V.O." *New Yorker* 22–29 Apr. 2002: 58–60.

Hutcheon, Linda, ed. "Creative Collaboration: Alternatives to the Adversarial Academy." *Profession 2001*. New York: MLA, 2001. 4–38.

Philippson, Robert. *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

Shakespeare, William. *Love's Labour's Lost*. Arden ed. Surrey, Eng.: Nelson, 1998.

Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove. *Linguistic Genocide in Education; or, Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights*. Mahwah: Erlbaum, 2000.

Tonkin, Humphrey. "Language Learning, Globalism, and the Role of English." *ADFL Bulletin* 32.2 (2001): 5–9.

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977.

https://doi.org/10.1632/003081202X61160 Published online by Cambridge University Press