

Chapter 7

NATIONALISM, RACISM, NEOLIBERALISM AND LINGUICISM/LINGUICIDE IN THE ANTHROPOCENE ERA

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INTRODUCTION

This study is narrow in that it only outlines the problems encountered in social, political cultural and linguistic spheres. The very main idea is that the sovereignty of the English language should be displaced and that diverse language should be introduced to the society, specifically in the realm of education, that is schools. The excluded discourses regarding the world languages should be incorporated into curricula and the agenda of the governments so that the prioritized and normalized English language could be prevented to dominate the world as a discipline and episteme.

The Anthropocene era literally refers to the geological period in which humans have devastating effects on nature, biodiversity, climate change and other nature-related issues. However, in this study, the killing of languages will also be considered a part of the Anthropocene era because language death is often regarded as natural, and its human-induced effects (colonizing cultures) are ignored. Natural selection or in other words social Darwinism in the sphere of linguistic studies is clearly seen when one dominant language arising from its ideological, colonial or imperial position suppresses another language which is considered naïve, inferior and negligible. Modernity in the form of the apotheosis of reason has resulted in three enormous social movements. The French revolution produced the first form of this habit. Nationalism referring to the delimitation of the borders and the descent of human has overwhelmingly prioritized citizenship which is perceived and construed within a border neighbouring other borders which also determine a sharp line between one and another (Anderson, 2006). Nationalism, in this sense, is a form of the beginning of all kinds of rights by sublimating only a citizen

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determined by physical, cultural and social borders (Chatterjee, 1993). The world is theirs. The border is for others. Property is theft. Possessing a border is also theft. Nationalism is the new fortress that protects those insiders and settlers. Nationalism is an invented social object that brings a group of homogenous set together (Means & Ida, 2020). However, this convention is always slippery unless it turns into fascism. The second form supports the first form. Racism ensues or emanates from nationalism (Mosse, 1995). Racism bears no respect for others at all. Racism is related to discrimination, exclusionary practices and negligence of others (Rutland, 2022). Racism is explicitly or implicitly inherent in nationalism. Racism is the end of nationalism on a scale. Therefore, the name of the political party for Nazism is National Socialist Workers' party because they three are all intertwined. The third form uses all political ideas to dominate human spheres. Neoliberalism is a black hole that swallows all kinds of doctrines or ideologies (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Neoliberalism's whole attention is on the accumulation of capital. Cheap labor, mobility of goods, free trade zones, exploitation and profits form the backbone of neoliberalism (Harvey, 2007). Thus, these three ideas have killed other languages to render their language dominant in other cultures.

The killing of languages is related to the killing of biodiversity which is represented in language (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996). Neoliberalism, racism and nationalism have also exploited not only human labor but also natural resources because colonizing nations have increased their profits by exploiting others' natural resources, which has driven humanity into the Anthropocene state over the last few centuries (or millennium), specifically since 1950s. This devastating state seems to have started by silencing and killing other languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2006. What is meant in this idea is that before humans found themselves in danger in nature, the colonizing cultures had already destroyed the languages, the cultures of which were considered inferior (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2010). Killing the languages has been considered a normal practice and natural. The general idea has been that languages are born, live and die as do other creatures. Thus, this discourse has been normalized. By doing so, lingua francas such as French, Spanish and English are normalized and regarded as superior. However, this superiority results from their repressive and oppressive mechanism.

This study aims to criticize these three dominant ideas by presenting the specific example of the British Council, which has altered the state of other languages in the countries where it has been serving after the colonization period.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL AS EMPIRE AND LINGUICIDE

The British Council has emerged as a version of Empire since 1930s in the world by spreading the English language and making it mobile across the world (Pennycook, 2002). The British Council acts as Empire in the form of linguistic representation. This Empire works with the governments of the countries on a legal level to make the English language superior, prestigious and valuable (Pennycook, 2002). While nations ignore other languages in their own countries, they welcome the English language as a positive entity. Thus, the British Councils exerts and exercises linguicide by not supporting other languages, which are always seen as inferior and negligible. The British Empire/Council functions in more than 110 countries by directly affecting the policies of the governments (Pennycook, 2017). There are nations such as Egypt, the Netherlands, India, South Korea and Turkey that hail the practices of the British Council. It can be said that the British Council fears the absence of the English language in the world because its ontology depends on the utterance of the English language. Anglo-Dominion-America can represent themselves only through the English language. Therefore, it can be said that the most common and the most valuable commodity is the English language. It is concrete, material and tangible. It also appears in the form of historical unconscious because individuals who speak it may not be aware of this alienating practice. It alienates individuals from their mother tongues and other local cultural practices. However, this alienation may hardly be noticed by individuals who perceive these practices as normal. When a child steps into a school and encounter the English language, they see this learning practice as a normal component because other languages are not introduced and are deliberately ignored. Thus, nationalism is limited to only one standard and dominant language. Neoliberalism is largely limited to the use of the English language. Racism becomes a silencing practice. The British Council as Empire becomes the agent of linguicide and therefore needs to be criticized. The British Council is totally aware of what it means to do and has a strong background in killing other languages/cultures. The stories of the British culture reverberate in all EFL and ESL classes from pre-school to postgraduate level.

NEO-COLONIAL PRACTICES OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN TURKEY

The British Council as Empire has been in Turkey for more than 65 years and seems to have reached its aim because the number of English-related departments has

exceeded 500 in Turkey where only 30 languages out of more than 7000 languages spoken in the world are represented excluding the Turkish and English languages. The English language comprises almost 50 % of the languages taught in Turkey. The British Council proper opened the English language teaching departments in Turkey in 1940s. After Turkey adopted and appreciated neoliberalism in 1980s, the number of English-related departments (English language teaching, American language and literature, British language and literature, English linguistics, English-Turkish Translation and Interpreting etc.) increased exponentially as an extension of neoliberal practices.

In Turkey, a prevailing ideology persisted for a significant duration, positing that the nation's advancement into the modern era could be facilitated through the augmentation of its proficiency in Western languages. However, the objective of doing this assignment failed to materialize in actuality. The insufficiency of an individual's proficiency in the French and German languages at the early stages of modernization endeavors can be interpreted as an indication of the overall inadequacy of the modernization initiative. During the period spanning from 1940 to 1950, the prevalence of British-based and Anglo-American ideology in Turkey led to a notable increase in the popularity of the English language. Following the year 1950, Turkey initiated a series of policy changes that exhibited a more favorable inclination towards the United States, so facilitating the perpetuation of this trajectory. However, despite the extensive endeavors undertaken, Turkey is unlikely to attain complete proficiency in Western languages, as aspired by the year 2023. Academic literature extensively examines the intentional imposition of the idea of modernity onto other cultures. The analysis of the expansionist and neocolonial policies of Western languages is a common focus in academic discourse, often examined through the lens of Marxist and Foucauldian ideas. The theories that provide frameworks for the evaluation and discussion of this subject are usually known as Marxism and Foucauldian ideas, respectively. Critics of the Marxist perspective contend that it is defective because to its reductionist nature. They argue against Marx's thesis, which posits that the base should be seen as the determining factor for the superstructure. The perceived divergence between Foucault's discourse analysis and collective action, together with his intense focus on the implications of a reality shaped entirely by discourse, have been identified as points of contention raised by critics of the philosopher's scholarship. Nevertheless, it is evident that the critiques pertaining to both perspectives are restricted within a narrow framework. This assertion is grounded in the findings of contemporary research, which indicate

that the reductionist methodology commonly attributed to Marx is inadequate. Marx and Engels argued that a comprehensive analysis should not solely focus on the infrastructure, which encompasses economic and production-related ties. They emphasized the importance of also considering the superstructure, which encompasses political, media, and religious relations connected to production. The dynamics of connections that do not exist are marked by a notable level of intricacy owing to the absence of any initial interactions.

COLLECTIVE ACTION AND LINGUISTIC HUMAN RIGHTS

Collective action can be taken against the dominance of the British Council, and linguistic human rights can be discussed to be familiar with other languages other than the English language that the British Council has been imposing on people. The excluded languages need to be introduced to Turkish society and educational institutions so that they can be aware of other languages. Translanguaging can be one of the practices that may work in schools so that languages can be maintained instead of spreading the English language (Garcia, 2020)

Those individuals who are engaged in the instruction of the English language and academic subjects, as well as those individuals who are employed in fields associated with the English language, such as English language education, English language studies, and literary studies, bear ethical responsibilities that they are obligated to discharge (Phillipson, 1992). Those individuals who are engaged in the instruction of the English language and academic subjects also include those individuals who are engaged in the instruction of fields associated with the English language. As part of these obligations, we are obligated to follow ethical standards and to conduct ourselves in a manner that is congruent with those values. Linguistic human rights need to be considered in Turkish society so that the voices of other languages can be heard. In addition, some emancipatory or revitalizing practices can be supported through radical and participatory democracy.

CONCLUSION

Nationalism, racism and neoliberalism have led to the practice of linguisticide and linguisticism. Therefore, these political and social ideologies need to be negotiated in pedagogical spheres where individuals can find space to express themselves and can be familiarized with other languages. Because of the educational policies and procedures that are followed in Turkey, minority languages are being pushed to the side (Phillipson, 1992). As a result, it is absolutely necessary for students

and teachers to put pressure on educational authorities to adopt progressive instructional strategies. In addition, it is of the utmost need to seriously explore integrating studies of critical linguistics and human rights into the curriculum of educational institutions. To anticipate the establishment of human rights and diversity beyond what is acceptable is unreasonable. The economic system known as capitalism, which is characterized by private ownership of the means of production and the pursuit of profit, has been a powerful force throughout history. Neoliberalism, the operations conducted by the governments of the United States, worldwide statements, and the policies adopted by individual governments all fall under this category. There is absolutely no guarantee that the protection of human rights will be ensured in any way, executing both their obligations and the benefits bestowed upon them by society. The identity of a nation can be deduced, at least partially, from a number of factors, such as the routines and institutions of daily life, as well as educational settings. On the other hand, there is a widespread and pervasive inclination to ignore human rights standards and regulations, and these policies are only occasionally carried out. The United States of America as well as the United Kingdom have had a significant impact on the development of the English language. In spite of objections from the United States of America, a number of countries have taken the initiative to incorporate a variety of instructional methods into their English language education programs. Institutions such as the British Council and the World Bank, both of which have a history of being linked to violations of human rights, have been called into question. The countries in the world need a more radical transformation to maintain the languages spoken so that ignored languages can be represented and prioritized.

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