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IN THE NAME OF GOD

**EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON PERSIAN:
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH**

BY

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*Dedicated To my caring
mother
and father*

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ABSTRACT

EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON PERSIAN: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

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The following study has a sociolinguistic approach to globalization phenomenon and examines some effects of this seismic social process on Persian with a linguist-eye perspective. It first discusses the two linguistic views on globalization and their consequences on world's languages and then, based on the two views, explicates some sociolinguistic effects of that on Persian. Lexical borrowing, code-mixing and code-switching and English-Persian bilingualism are the three effects which are studied in this research. It also examines four influential factors, created and intensified by globalization, which bring about those effects including: technological, sociological, socio-psychological and socio-economic factors. Needless to say, the study focuses on both positive and negative linguistic aspects of each global factor in order to assess how English- as the global language- has linguistically affected Persian and, on the other hand, how Persian language and literature has been expanded by virtue of globalization.

To achieve the goal, two research methods, questionnaire and personal interviews, were used. The questionnaire was based on the operationalization of both factors and effects mentioned above. 274 university students of English and Persian language participated in the survey. The overall results of the survey showed that globalization has increasingly been affecting Persian, but this orientation is for both better and worse of Persian and in some cases helps to the better globally growth of Persian.

Key Words: Globalization, Homogenization, Heterogenization, Linguistic Imperialism or Hegemony, Linguistic Diversity, Lexical Borrowing, Code-mixing, Code-switching.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CONTENT	PAGE
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Preliminaries.....	1
1.1.1 Two Theoretical Models on Cultural Globalization.....	3
1.1.2 Globalization, Language and Their Interaction.....	8
1.1.2.1 Linguistic Imperialism or Hegemony.....	10
1.1.2.1.1 English in the Age of Globalization and its Consequences.....	12
1.1.2.2 Linguistic Diversity	15
1.2 Definitions of the Term Globalization	17
1.3 Statement of the Problem	20
1.4 Objectives and Significance of the Study.....	21
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.0 Introduction.....	23
2.1 Preliminaries.....	23
2.2 Studies on the Effects of Globalization on World Linguistic System	24
2.2.1 Works Focusing on Globalization and Linguistic Hegemony	24
2.2.2 Works Focusing on Globalization and Linguistic Diversity	28
Studies on the Effects of Some Aspects of Globalizations on Individual Languages.....	33
2.4 Some Persian Studies on Language and Globalization Issues	39
CHAPTER THREE: MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY	
3.0 Introduction	43
3.1 Data Collection.....	43
3.2 Instrument.....	43
3.3 Participants	45
3.4 Scope of the Study.....	46
3.5 Data Analysis	46

CHAPTER FOUR: DISSCUSION AND THE RESULT

4.0 Introduction	47
4.1 Processing of the Data and the Result.....	47
4.2 Discussion and Interpretation of the Materials	50
4.2.1 Effects of Globalization on Persian.....	50
4.2.1.1 Lexical Borrowing.....	50
4.2.1.2 Code-Mixing and Code-Switching.....	54
4.2.1.3 Increase of Bilingualism of English and Persian.....	57
4.2.1.4 Status of non-English Language Learning in Iran and Persian Language Learning Overseas.....	60
4.2.2 Factors of Globalization	62
4.2.2.1 Technological Factors.....	62
4.2.2.1.1 Internet	64
4.2.2.1.1.1 Chat Rooms and E-mails.....	70
4.2.2.1.1.2 Mobile phones.....	72
4.2.2.1.1.3 Satellites	75
4.2.2.2 Sociological Factors.....	78
4.2.2.2.1 Migration.....	78
4.2.2.2.2 Tourism	80
4.2.2.3 Socio-psychological Factor.....	82
4.2.2.3.1 Social Prestige.....	82
4.2.2.4 Socio-economic Factor	84
4.2.2.4.1 Employability.....	84
4.2.2.4.2 English for Advertising.....	85

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.0. Introduction	87
5.1 Summary	87
5.2 Conclusion.....	89
5.3 Implications of the Study	90
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research	91
ENGLISH REFERENCES.....	93
PERSIAN REFERENCES	99
APPENDICES.....	100

LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Pages
Table 3.1 Distribution of participants on the survey.....	48
Table 4.1 Factors loadings for the questionnaire.....	49
Table 4.2 classification of effects and factors identified in the study with their respective means	50
Table 4.3 pair sample statistics for the two variables code-mixing & code- switching.....	55
Table 4.4 pair sample T-test between the variables code-mixing and code- switching.....	55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Pages
Figure 4.1 Percentage of each variable gained by data analysis.....	51

LIST OF ABRIVIATIONS

BA	Bachelor of Art
BBC	British Broadcast Corporation
CO	Company
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
EFL	English as a Foreign language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ILI	Iran Language Institute
IT	Information Technology
MA	Master of Art
MCI	Mobile Company of Iran
NO	Number
OED	Old English Dictionary
PC	Personal Computer
PhD	Doctor of philosophy
SMS	Short Message Sys
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TV	Television
UAE	United Arab Emirates
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialists Republics
VOA	Voice of America
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWW	World Wide Web

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

This chapter aims to introduce globalization as a social process and how it is spreading all over the world. Discussing the cultural aspects of globalization, it comes to language and how globalization is related to linguistic studies. It then focuses on the two linguistic models on globalization and how each might affect world's languages including Persian. The statement of the problem and the significance of the study are the two last parts discussed in this chapter.

1.1. Preliminaries

Globalization has been a buzz word in our lives over the past few decades. It is a word that is on everyone's lips nowadays from politicians to businessmen and even laymen. The issue has attracted considerable attention among academic community, civil society and centers of decision-making in recent years. Actually, the fact that 2822 academic papers and about 589 new books were published just in 1998 on the topic (<http://Globalization 101.com>) is convincing evidence indeed. Globalization is believed to pervade contemporary political rhetoric and is said to be a keyword in both academic and popular discourses on economy, society, technology and culture these days.

Generally speaking, globalization is the integration and democratization of the world's culture, economy, and infrastructure through transnational

investment, rapid proliferation of communication and information technologies, and the impacts of free-market forces on local, regional and national economies (Encyclopedia Encarta 2007). It implies increased local diversity by human contact across cultural boundaries as well as speedy exchange of commodities and information (Block and Cameron, 2002). Globalization increases “long-distance interconnectedness, across national and continental boundaries and has been indeed changing the way many people think of each other and other places they have never seen before” (Kuper, 2001, p. 668). Actually, the main idea beneath the concept of globalization is to consider the world as a borderless single society and culture which welcomes international values of other nations all over the world and occupies the planet.

There exist many different speculations about the exact time for the beginning of the process. Some sociologists would argue that the world was globalized just 100 years ago as it is today with international migration (Beaudoin, 2002). Robertson (1992) also believes that processes for which we use the term globalization these days have actually existed for many centuries; but, concentration on globalization issues is a new subject (cited in Khajenouri, 1385, 2006). Many specialists like Waters believe that Globalization is the concept of the 1990s although the word ‘Global’ is over 400 years old (OED 1989 s.v. global).

The word “globalization” has got two completely opposing connotations. Some consider it as an irresistible obligation while others equate it with annihilation and try to avoid it. But, is it really possible? Brodie (2003) believes that the consequences of globalization have been positive for some people and negative for some others (cited in Khajenouri, 1385, 2005). Some have associated it with progress, prosperity and peace while for others it has conjured up with deprivation, disaster and doom (Scholte, 2000). In other

words, some people view it as a process that is beneficial, inevitable and irreversible. These would certainly say it is a good thing, increases international trade, has made us wealthier and allowed us to lead more diverse lifestyles. It has promoted information exchange, led to a greater understanding of other cultures and allowed democracy to triumph over autocracy. However, the other group regards it with hostility and even fear believing that it threatens employment and living standards and increases inequality. For them, globalization is an unstoppable historical force- as Scott (1997) put it. In fact, as Scholte (2000) points out "they believe that although globalization has touched almost every person and locale in today's world, the trend has spread unevenly, being most concentrated among propertied and professional classes, in North, in towns, and among younger generation" (p. 8). This group has consequently created an opposite doctrine toward globalization called *anti-globalization* which emphasizes that globalization is a process that is mediated according to elite imperatives. Beyond pros and cons, globalization seems to be an unavoidable reality that, for better or worse, touches our lives in ways most of us never stop to think about.

1.1.1. Two Theoretical Models on Cultural Globalization

The accelerating pace of globalization is having profound effects on every aspect of our life and its topic has often drawn sociologists into interdisciplinary debates with political scientists, anthropologists, economists and even linguists. As a result, a number of approaches to this world-wide phenomenon have been proposed. Waters (1995) traces globalization through three arenas of social life that has come to be recognized as fundamental in many theoretical analyses:

1. The economy: social arrangement for the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods. From an economic point of view, globalization is the 'triumph of capitalism'. The main fundamental of this perspective is trade which connects geographically distant producers and consumers all over the world, creating a relationship of identification and interdependence (Waters, 1995, p. 66).

2. The policy: social arrangement for the concentration and application of power.

3. The culture: social arrangement for the production, exchange and expression of symbols that represents facts, affects, meanings, beliefs, preferences, tastes and values. Interestingly enough, Waters believes that the degree of globalization is expected to be even greater in the cultural arena than either of the two others. He then adds that these three arenas are interrelated which means that the effectiveness of one set of arrangement modifies and penetrates the arrangements in the others (ibid, p. 8)- This third approach, cultural globalization, is what we deal with in this thesis and therefore will be discussed rather fully because language is an inseparable part of culture.

Nowadays, we can easily recognize that globalization is having a significant impact on issues such as local cultures, matters that are less tangible and hard to quantify, but often fraught with intense emotions and controversy. Held et al (1999) point out that globalization materializes the extensive, intensive, rapid and high-impact spread of culture (cited in Block and Cameron, 2002). Although globalization and its effects on culture has become an immensely popular topic these days among sociologists- as Diana Crane (2002) asserts, it is poorly defined and systematically difficult to research.

Williams (1976) claims that 'culture' is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. Beaudoin (2002) introduces culture as the main instrument in defining identities, fostering solidarity, expressing constructive dissent, finding ways to manage institutional and social changes and providing a perspective from which we can engage in positive interactions both within the society and with the rest of the world.

Many societies, particularly indigenous people, view culture as their richest heritage, without which they have no roots, history or soul. Every culture has its own history, values, customs, shared beliefs, institutions and methods of expressions (or language). Language, being a code shared with other people, is intimately tied to culture:

Knowledge of a language is undeniably part of one's cultural heritage. A good portion of one's identity as a member of a cultural group comes from being able to speak the group's language. Much of our cultural knowledge is expressed to us in that language. (Baker, 2001, p. 20)

At the tenth meeting of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (2005) languages were called the "DNA of culture"- since they encode the cultural knowledge that people have inherited from their ancestors, and each generation continues to add to this heritage.

We can perhaps conclude that a language mirrors a culture because it is itself part of the culture. Changes affecting it reflect changes in a particular culture. And reciprocally, changes affecting culture reflect changes in a particular language. Therefore, any effect on the cultural system of a society directly affects the linguistic system of that community as well.

Rather in line with Waters' definition of cultural globalization, Crane (2002) views it as the transmission or diffusion of various forms of media, art and any cultural products across national borders (p. 1). About four different

theoretical models of cultural globalization have been proposed, but two models seem to be well-known among most social scientists which will be discussed below:

1. Cultural Imperialism
2. Cultural Flows/Networks

These two opposite models reflect the 'paradoxical nature' of the process of globalization and they have posed numerous crucial and controversial questions with respect to cultural globalization: whether globalization makes the people more the same or more different. In other words, does it lead to homogenization or heterogenization? Giddens (2000) points out that these polarized views are generally held by those authors who place economics at the heart of their analyses.

A strong version of cultural imperialism refers to the domination of a powerful culture over the weaker culture and nation. According to the first model, globalization equals *homogenization* which has harmonized and unified the world. It is often crushing the local and traditional ways of life especially if it is deviant from the dominant pattern. In this way, globalization introduces a 'single world culture' based on consumerism, mass media, American and English language (Scholte, 2000, p. 23). Many sociologists renamed this model as *Americanization* through which Western and particularly the United States' values, beliefs, knowledge, food, lifestyle, way of thinking and even *language* dominate all other nations. This hegemonically western perspective characterizes globalization rather dystopic (Ritzer, 1996, 1998). Ritzer imagines a homogenized global culture which leads to a soulless disenchanted existence. Perhaps the most influential essay on the western's cultural imperialism in the last twenty years was written by Benjamin Barber in an issue of the Atlantic Monthly 1992. Entitled "Jihad vs. McWorld," Barber's article argues that most of the third world was being commercialized by the

west. He uses the term Americanization to introduce global world as a 'McWorld' where people's desire to identify themselves with Americans increases everyday. Latouche (1996) talks about the westernization of the world as a progressive 'worldwide standardization of lifestyle in which the United States becomes the norm. He warns the readers of the creeping uniformity in all aspects of our life from how we dress to how we eat. Saeedi (1381, 2002) believes that in our global era cultural globalization has faced a situation which he calls "melting-pot" in which all cultures are uniformed into a hegemonic culture while ignoring other local cultures.

Crane (2002) even goes further to claim that globalization is a purposeful and intentional process which he believes to be for the benefit of political interests of the US and other powerful capitalist societies.

In contrast to the cultural imperialism in which the sources of cultural influence come from western civilization, with non-western and less developed countries on the periphery, the *cultural flows or network* model claims that cultural globalization corresponds to a network with no clearly defined center or periphery (Crane, 2002). It defines globalization as the accelerator of 'cultural diversity' which equates globalization with *heterogenization*. It argues that globalization offers the potential to enrich the world culturally. This means that global communication is often adopted to fit diverse local contexts so that people all over the world have the chance to know about others' values, beliefs, knowledge, religions, ways of thinking and even languages. Other sociologists introduce concepts such as *hybridization* (Pieterse, 1995) and ¹*glocalization* (Robertson, 1995) in line with heterogenization to point out that globalization entails synergetic relationship

¹. The concept of "glocalization" originated in Japan as a popular business strategy. Professor Roland Robertson, a sociologist at the University of Pittsburgh, introduced this concept to the Western social scientific discourse.

between both global and local factors (Block and Cameron, 2002). As an advocate of this theory, David Groddal (1997) reinforces that globalization seems to create new hybrid forms of culture, language and political organization rather than a phenomenon which leads to homogeneity.

Taking the two paradoxical models, Appadurai (1990) states that “the central problem of today’s global interaction is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization” (p. 295).

Despite these two rather polarized models, there are sociologists such as Albrow (1996), Beck (1992), Giddens (2000), Held et al. (1999), Nash (2000), Robertson (1992) and Tomlinson (1999) who take the moderate view. They accept globalization as a real phenomenon which differentiates present from past, but they also recognize that the process is neither complete nor similar everywhere. For them, globalization brings some negative consequences together with some positive opportunities (Block and Cameron, 2002). This fairly moderate view on globalization process seems to be closer to the reality for people to understand and more convincing for researchers to conceptualize in their studies.

1.1.2. Globalization, Language and Their Interaction

We have entered a period in which language and communication play a more central role than ever before in economical, political and cultural life. Globalization has removed both time and space limitations which means that each individual can be a person and at the same time a member of the global world. Such circumstances present a new concept of ideology, culture and even ‘communication system’ in which all barriers have been taken away (Sari’ol ghalam, 1384, 2005).

It was Previously mentioned that language is an integral part of any culture, and thus, any change on culture does have a direct impact on its language. Languages are the essential medium in which the ability to communicate across cultures develops. Sociolinguistically speaking, globalization can be considered as a *cross-border linguistic phenomenon*. Thus, languages are the very lifeline of globalization: without language (or communication), there would be no globalization. In fact, when globalization is called the explosive growing of communication we get the idea that language is the essence of this seismic social change.

As was already mentioned, globalization is not just an economic phenomenon. It changes power relations and brings about political and cultural shifts at both global and domestic levels, and thus has a bearing on linguistic patterns and language hierarchies. In fact, many sociolinguists believe that globalization has turned to be the most acute concern of our time in regard to the linguistic condition of the world of the late modernity. They argue that language and linguistic changes have partially had non-linguistic factors. The advent of globalization has been a significant social (or non-linguistic) factor for this linguistic change. That is why some scholars like Hjarvard (2003) calls globalization “a new epoch in linguistic history”. Therefore, we can say that all world languages are potentially apt to change through imposed effects of globalization manifestations such as computer, internet, satellite, mobile phone, etc.

Maurais and Morris (2004) warn that “there will be, in the twenty-first century, a major shake-up of the global language hierarchy” (p. 1). They actually relate this shake-up of the global language hierarchy to some political and social events related to the globalization process. The idea of integration of all aspects of societies through globalization and making a ‘global culture’ needs, as Block and Cameron (2002) have said, “a global communication

which requires not only a shared channel (like the internet and video conferencing) but also shared linguistic code” (p. 1) which is not dependent on geographical proximity.

The most crucial question in the relationship between globalization and language is related to the linguistic future of the planet- as is called by Maurais and Morris (2004)- a lowering of linguistic diversity? Or, on the contrary, a fragmentation of the big languages? This question is exactly originated from the theoretical models on cultural globalization discussed before. Based on the two main theoretical models on cultural globalization, we can speculate two models on the relationship between language and globalization- or linguistic globalization.

1.1.2.1 Linguistic Imperialism or Hegemony

The first one is exactly in line with cultural imperialism theory and therefore is called *Linguistic Imperialism*. Broadly speaking, it states that languages may be seen as occupying a dominant or dominating role in a society (Aryadoust, 2007). Just as in cultural imperialism, the theory suggests that globalization leads to a *linguistic homogenization* which means ‘using a uniform way of talking’. It argues that due to the complexity and rapid growing of global communication, there should be a ‘global code’ which is unique and can be used everywhere. Cameron (2002) asserts that globalization has made a new twist to the idea that linguistic diversity is a problem while linguistic uniformity is a desirable ideal. This quest for linguistic unity was even pursued by the invention of international artificial languages such as Esperanto for world-wide communication although it was not warmly welcomed by nations. According to this model, linguistic uniformity may gradually change into a