THE INTERNET AS A GLOBAL SPEECH COMMUNITY
Towards Plurilingualisms and English Lingua Franca

THOMAS CHRISTIANSEN
UNIVERSITÀ DEL SALENTO

Abstract – Languages have traditionally been associated with specific ethnic groups confined to defined geographical areas and sometimes to certain discourse contexts or domains of use (e.g. French for diplomacy). Increasingly, telecommunication and most recently internet has meant that languages are no longer tied to particular geographical territories but may be found in various non-territorial dimensions. This has created a fluid, constantly changing global speech community in which different languages co-exist and interact in myriad ways and to varying degrees depending on the speakers' backgrounds. Within this complex scenario, not only does English become in effect *translocal* language (Pennycook 2007, Blommaert 2010) but English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) variations gain in influence, very possibly replacing traditional native-speaker varieties as the international standard (Seidlhofer 2011, Christiansen 2015). Thus, they will increasingly reflect the plurilingual reality in which speakers typically have at their disposal a repertoire of different languages. English, we can predict, will thus become in itself a microcosm of the wider linguistic situation especially on media such as the internet. In this paper, we will look at how far internet is leading to greater plurilingualism on the part of individuals and at how far ELF variations are emerging to reflect the multifarious linguistic backgrounds of members of the internet-based global speech community. To do this, we will analyse data from a variety of recent sources, comprising both big data (Pimienta et al 2010; Ronen *et al.* 2014) and specific case studies from samples of different typologies of websites (e.g. railway companies).

Keywords: ELF; Lingua Francas; Plurilingualism; Global Language Networks; Translanguaging.

1. Introduction

The rise of internet and digital media that allow instantaneous communication with almost any part of the world is one of the defining features of the post-cold war, post-industrialized world and its implications on languages, cultures and society in general are of interest not only to scholars but also to journalists, and opinion makers. So far, much attention has been devoted to the increasing use of certain languages, particularly English, and the decline of others (see Pimienta *et al.* 2010, Ronen *et al.* 2014,) and also to the way that language itself is being changed by new digital media (see for example Crystal 2001, who describes new linguistic forms whose manifestation in English he dubs *Netspeak*). Furthermore, the concept of *translocality* has been applied to study of the spread of English (see Blommaert 2010; Pennycook 2007), highlighting, how in the process of becoming global, English has also become assimilated within micro cultures (intended both territorially and non-territorially – see Christiansen 2015b) leading to two complementary processes of *englobalisation* and *deglobalisation* (Blommaert 2012). What we want to add to this discussion in this article is specific examination of the way that English, the most dominant language on the internet, is being used by international users, in particular, of how far improvised variations of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) are becoming typical of discourse between non-native speakers.

*L*ingue e
*L*inguaggi

In the sections below, we will deal in turn with (2.0) languages and the internet, English as a Lingua Franca (3.0) and the evidence for use of ELF on the internet. In our discussion, we will move from a review of the literature to a description of various states of affairs regarding ELF and plurilingualism on the internet. In doing so, we will look at data from various sources and present some new research of our own. We will describe our methodology on a case-by-case basis.

2. Languages on the internet

In this section, we will look at three aspects of languages on the internet. Firstly, (2.1), we will look at the evidence for the supposed dominance of English on the internet. Secondly, by means of a case study of railway passenger service websites from around the world, we will look at which languages occur and in which world regions. Finally, in Section 2.3, we look at Ronen *et al*'s (2014) concept of Global Language Networks.

2.1. Degree of dominance of English on the internet

In a 1997 survey by Babel (a joint initiative of the Internet Society and Alis Technologies), which Crystal calls (2001: 216) "the first major study of language distribution on the internet" estimated that English was used for approximately 82.3% of net content.[1] This was in line with many "guestimates" on the part of commentators at the time and it was conventional wisdom that the internet favoured the growth and spread of English to the detriment of other languages. Not everyone – including some English speakers –welcomed such a prospect but there were many who doubted that English's dominance, undoubtedly real, was of such a high order or that other languages were so insignificant. Between 1996 and 2008, Pimienta *et al* (2010) in a UNESCO funded project, embarked on a twelve-year program to chart language distribution on the internet more rigorously. Their method was to compare results for searches for specific words typical of different languages on various search engines.

The apparent simplicity of this approach did not guarantee reliable results. As the authors note, search engines, as currently designed, are not run for scientific enquiry, and do not always collect and filter results in an objective manner.[2] Furthermore, the techniques which they use are subject to sudden, often largely hidden, changes which make it difficult in practice to compare results over time.[3] Below in Table 1, we report the data summarised by Pimienta *et al* (2010: 33):

---

[1] The methodology used was to employ a random number generator to select 8,000 HTTP servers and then to subject a selection of pages to automatic language identification, using software which could recognize 17 languages.

[2] As Pimienta *et al* (2010: 20fn) note: "The number of occurrences displayed by Google for a certain word, setting language and domain parameters to "any" being, counter-logically, much lower than the sum of the number of occurrences of the same word by language or by domain (…)".

[3] For example, around 2005-2006, Google completely reshaped its index and the servers hosting its database, making it no longer a suitable search engine for their study (see Pimienta *et al* 2010: 22).

*L*ingue e
*L*inguaggi

Date	EN	SP	FR	IT	PO	RO	GE	CAT	SUM	REST
09/98	75.0	2.53	2.81	1.50	0.82	0.15	3.75		11.56	13.44
08/00	60.0	5.05	4.40	2.76	2.37	0.22	3.00		17.80	22.20
01/01	55.0	5.20	4.34	2.71	2.44	0.18	6.29		21.16	23.84
06/01	52.0	5.69	4.61	3.06	2.81	0.17	6.98		23.31	24.69
08/01	51.0	5.73	4.66	3.14	2.84	0.18	7.01		23.55	25.45
10/01	50.7	5.76	4.63	3.12	2.84	0.18	7.14		23.68	25.62
02/02	50.0	5.80	4.80	3.26	2.81	0.17	7.21		24.04	25.97
02/03	49.0	5.31	4.32	2.59	2.23	0.11	6.80		21.35	29.65
02/04	47.0	4.84	4.78	2.86	2.05	0.19	7.21		21.94	31.06
05/04	46.3	4.72	4.93	2.85	1.86	0.14	7.88		22.38	31.32
03/05	45.0	4.60	4.95	3.05	1.87	0.17	6.94		21.57	33.43
08/07	(45.0)	3.75	4.59	2.70	1.34	0.23	5.93	0.12	18.53	
11/07	(45.0)	3.80	4.41	2.66	1.39	0.28	5.90	0.14	18.46	

Table 1
Absolute Percentage of Studied languages in the Web (Pimienta *et al* 2010:33 – Table 8).

In column two, they give the estimated percentage for English, followed by percentages for Spanish, French, Italian, Polish, Romanian, German and Catalan (for 2007 only) and then the total for these seven European languages, and finally the figure for the rest of the languages on the internet.[4] They conclude however that these figures, while showing a clear decline in the use of English and rise of other languages, still underestimate the level of this decline (Pimienta *et al* 2010: 33):

> The apparent asymptotic curving of English towards 45% […] is due to the new bias of search engines, rather than a real phenomenon of the linguistic topology of the Web. If the curve of English speaking users is a fair indicator of trends, as it should be […], then the English presence on the Web (as opposed to its presence through search engine indexes) is probably below 40%; the last column values for 2007 suffer from the same problem. The reality is probably above 40% for the rest of the languages, due mainly to a massive Chinese online presence.

Although the precision of Pimienta *et al*'s research is in doubt – an issue that the authors themselves do not try to hide – the general idea that English no longer accounts for anywhere near a figure of 80% of the internet finds confirmation elsewhere. Graddol (2010: 44) reports that:

> In 1998, Geoff Nunberg and Schulze found that around 85% of web pages were in English. A study by ExciteHome found that had dropped to 72% in 1999; and a survey by the Catalan ISP VilaWeb in 2000 estimated a further drop to 68%. It seems that the proportion of English material on the internet is declining, but that there remains more English than is proportionate to the first languages of users.

The web technology survey provider, w3techs.com, has, since 2014, provided figures for, among other things, distribution of languages on the internet. In 2014 and 2015, it put the number of websites in English on the net at respectively 55.8% and 55.3% of the total.

---

[4] The way that they arrive at these results does not always involve direct counting of instances of languages found in samples: "The […] table provides an estimate of the absolute presence of languages on the Web. It was obtained by making an estimate of English and then applying the comparative percentages for other languages from the study. The estimation for English is made by iteration, playing with the value of the rest of languages" (Pimienta *el al* 2010: 32).

Lingue e Linguaggi

Although each is a much higher figure than that estimated by Pimienta *et al* (2010), they confirm the downward trend in the proportion of the internet in English.

Pimienta *et al* (2010) concentrated on a limited set of European languages but remarked on a possible rise in Asian languages. The website *Internet World Stats*[5] provides figures on the growth of internet users according to language, calculated by measuring increase in individual territories and extrapolating from this data the increase in corresponding languages. In Figure 1, we show how much internet use in different world regions has increased between 2000 and 2015, here as elsewhere in this article giving figures to at most two decimal places:
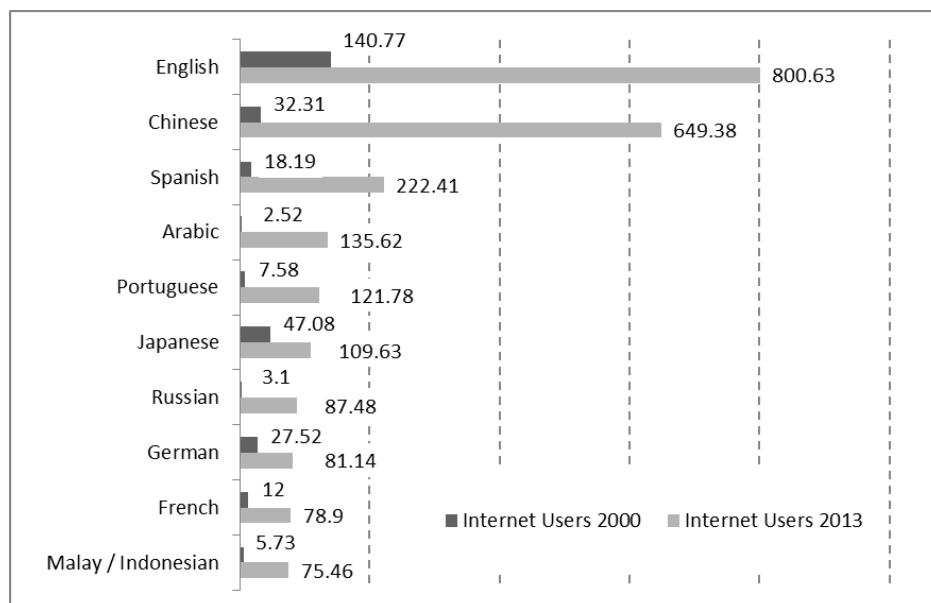

Figure 1
Comparison of internet users according to language (in millions) in 2000 and 2013
according to *Internet World Stats*.

As can be seen, although English remains the dominant language on the internet, the rise in users between 2000-2013 was relatively modest. Percentage increases for each of the languages listed on Figure 1 are given in Table 2:

Language	% increase 2000-13
Arabic	5,296.6
Russian	2,721.8
Chinese	1,910.3
Portuguese	1,507.4
Malay / Indonesian	1,216.9
Spanish	1,123.3
French	557.5
English	468.8
German	194.9
Japanese	132.9

Table 2
Percentage increase languages on the internet 2000-13 according to *Internet World Stats*.

---

[5] http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm.

It is interesting that of the top five languages, four do not use the Roman script (the exception being Portuguese). Until 2007, such languages were disadvantaged to a degree because in the early years of the internet only Roman script could be used in domain names and in key parts of the URL (e.g. *.com*, *.org* etc.). This meant that, even if site content was in another kind of script (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic), the user was still obliged to type some Roman characters to access the site.[6] This may indicate that the high percentage increase is partly due to an abnormally low starting figure followed by an explosion in content once the internet had been made more accessible, also in terms of general availability, to users of such languages. Indeed, it is revealing to look at the rise in internet use in the period of 2000-15 in the various world regions (Figure 2).
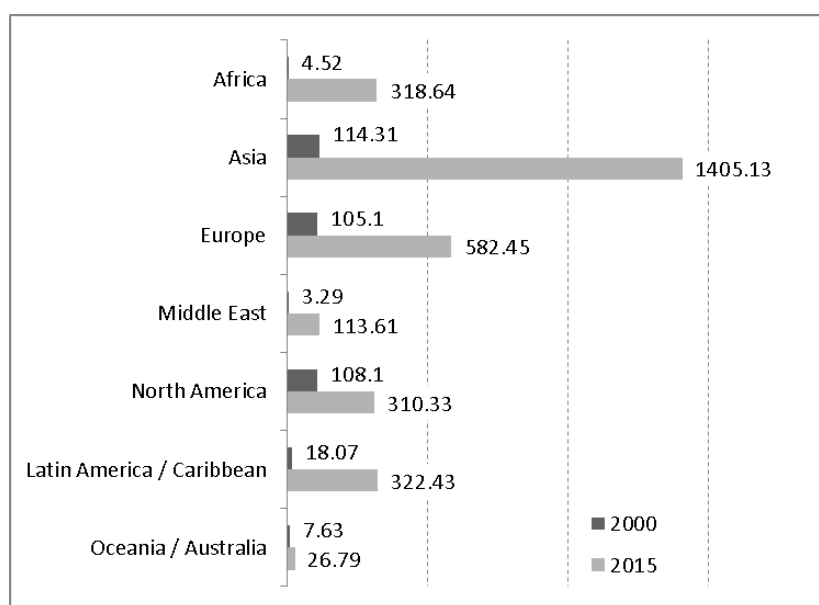

Figure 2
Increase in number of users of internet in millions (rounded to nearest 10,000) by world region 2000-15 according to *Internet World Stats*.

At present, the parts of the world with the most internet users are, in order: Asia; Europe; Latin America / Caribbean; Africa; North America; the Middle East; and Oceania / Australia. Fifteen years ago the regions with most users were: Asia; then North America; Europe; followed, with a wide margin, by Latin America / Caribbean; Oceania / Australia; the Middle East; and Africa.[7] The rise in internet use in various regions corresponds to the rise in languages commonly used in such areas: Arabic (the Middle East); French (Africa); Portuguese (Latin America / Caribbean); and Chinese[8] and Malay/Indonesian (Asia).

---

[6] Crystal (2001: 19) notes that the use of *www* in domain names in effect adds the letter *w* to languages like Spanish and Portuguese.

[7] Percentages for growth between 2000 and 2015 are, for Africa, 6,958.2%; for Asia 1,129.3%; Europe, 454.2%; Middle East, 3,358.6%; North America, 187.1%; Latin America / Caribbean, 1,684.4%; Oceania / Australia, 251.6%.

[8] Chinese, of course, is a set of more or less related languages: Mandarin (considered the standard for official use), Yue, Hakka, and Jinyu (to name but four out of China's 15 institutional languages). In our calculations in Section 2.2, we listed all instances of Chinese merely as Chinese without specifying which different variety, unless different varieties are offered on the same site. This is the case with the Taiwan

Because it is an international lingua franca, English has probably benefitted from growth in all of these areas. It is however interesting that no uniquely African language such as Hausa, Yoruba, Swahili, or Xhosa appears in the top ten list (but there are many such languages, which may dilute the influence of individual examples). Similarly, in Asia, whereas Chinese and Malay/Indonesian make their presence felt, there are notable absences, not least languages originating in South Asia: Hindi; Bengali; or Lahnda. These are major languages in their own right, each appearing in the *Ethnologue* list of top ten world languages.[9] According to Internet World Stats in 2014, South Asia accounted for 23.1% of internet users in Asia as a whole (China, by contrast is 46.3%).[10] This suggests that in South Asia, unlike in China, other languages are used on the internet instead of traditionally regional languages; the most obvious candidate would have to be English.[11]

2.2. Multilingualism on railway passenger service websites

A more detailed idea of the multilingual nature of the internet can be gained by examining the languages used on specific types of websites and noting firstly how many different languages are used and in which combinations. To do this, we took a random sample (51) of all the websites of national passenger railways available (117 according to our investigation).[12] The survey itself was conducted in June 2015 and it is of course conceivable that since then changes have been made to the number and kinds of languages offered on the sites.[13] That said, our intention is to examine a brief snapshot of the situation, not to describe it in depth in a longitudinal study.

Railway company websites represent a standardised genre offering typical passenger services (timetables, prices, online booking facilities) with which to draw comparison between languages. While it is true that, in many countries, there is either no rail network at all or only one which is old and fallen into disrepair – a relic often of the early days of industrialisation or of a colonial past, often existing only to provide freight services – in many more, there are efficient well-used networks serving not just locals but also tourists. Many states have introduced at least some privatisation and competition into rail services, in which case, we opted for what appeared to be the largest provider, or for the only one of the available alternatives which has a website.

The geographical distribution of sample railway websites are as listed in Table 3. A third of those sampled are in Europe (including not just the EU but also countries such as the Ukraine and Russia). This reflects the fact that this region is divided into many nations both big and small, each typically with its own rail network, however insignificant (e.g. Luxembourg, or Slovenia):

Railway Administration site, which has separate versions for Mandarin Chinese (the official standard in both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China / Taiwan) and Taiwanese Hokkien (a *de facto* standard in Taiwan spoken by 70% of the population).

[9] https://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/size.
[10] http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm.
[11] See Kachru 2005, who defines South Asian English as an influential, "non-canonic" variety of English.
[12] The optimal sample size, aiming for a confidence level of 95%, and a confidence interval (margin of error) of 10, see: http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#one.
[13] For example, since the winter of 2015-6, the Italian *Trenitalia* site has added French and German, to the existing Italian, English and Chinese.

World Region	No. of sites	% Total	World Region	No. of sites	% Total
Europe	19	37.25	South East Asia	3	5.88
Sub Saharan Africa	7	13.73	Central Asia	2	3.92
South America	5	9.80	North Africa	2	3.92
East Asia	4	7.84	North America	1	1.96
Central America	3	5.88	Oceania	1	1.96
Middle East	3	5.88	South Asia	1	1.96

Table 3
Distribution by world region of railway websites sampled (June 2015).

The majority of the sites, 43.14%, were bilingual. Of the rest, 29.41% were monolingual, 25.49% had between three and five languages. One site (1.96%), that of *Deutsche Bahn*, offered no less than 10 different languages. In Table 4, we give the general figures for all the languages found in the sample:

Language	Freq.*	% Total	Language	Freq.*	% Total
English (EN)	41	32.03	Croatian (CR)	1	0.78
French (F)	20	15.63	Czech (CZ)	1	0.78
Spanish (SP)	10	7.81	Danish (DK)	1	0.78
German (G)	7	5.47	Flemish (FL)	1	0.78
Chinese (CN)	6	4.69	Finnish (FN)	1	0.78
Russian (R)	6	4.69	Hebrew (HB)	1	0.78
Arabic (A)	5	3.91	Kazakh (KZ)	1	0.78
Italian (I)	3	2.34	Norwegian (N)	1	0.78
Bosnian (BS)	2	1.56	Portuguese (P)	1	0.78
Japanese (J)	2	1.56	Romanian (RM)	1	0.78
Korean (K)	2	1.56	Serbian (SB)	1	0.78
Malay / Indonesian (M/I)	2	1.56	Slovak (SK)	1	0.78
Polish (PL)	2	1.56	Slovene (SLO)	1	0.78
Swedish (S)	2	1.56	Turkish (T)	1	0.78
Bulgarian (BG)	1	0.78	Taiwanese Hokkien (T.H.)	1	0.78
Bengali (BNG)	1	0.78	Thai	1	0.78

*key: Freq. = frequency

Table 4
Languages found in sample of national railway sites (June 2015).

In Table 5, we show the frequency of languages[14] that occurred on sites featuring one, two, three, four, five and ten languages[15], first for frequency (how many sites they are found in) and the percentage of the total for this category of site (one, two languages etc.) that this figure represents:

[14] For clarification on abbreviations in language column (far left), see languages listed on Table 4.

[15] In fact, the one site that we list as 10 languages, *Deutsche Bahn*, actually had separate German versions for Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, and separate French versions for France and Belgium as well as separate English versions for the UK/Ireland and the USA, bringing the total to thirteen. In our calculations, we did not count these separately but treated them together as a single instance of German, French, or English.

Language	1		2		3		4		5		10	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
A			2	4.55	2	16.67	1	3.57				
BG			1	2.27								
BNG			1	2.27								
BS			1	2.27			1	3.57				
CN	1	6.67	1	2.27	1	8.33	2	7.14	1	20		
CR			1	2.27								
CZ											1	10
DK											1	10
EN	5	33.33	22	50	4	33.33	7	25	1	20	1	10
F	2	13.33	1	2.27	2	16.67	3	10.71			1	10
FL											1	10
FN							1	3.57				
G			1	2.27			3	10.71			1	10
HB							1	3.57				
I					1	8.33	1	3.57			1	10
KZ					1	8.33						
J							1	3.57	1	20		
K							1	3.57	1	20		
M/I	1	6.67	1	2.27								
N			1	2.27								
P			1	2.27								
PL							1	3.57			1	10
RM	1	6.67										
R	1	6.67	1	2.27	1	8.33	3	10.71				
SB			1	2.27								
SK			1	2.27								
SLO			1	2.27								
S							1	3.57			1	10
SP	4	26.67	4	9.09			1	3.57			1	10
T			1	2.27								
T.H.									1	20		
Thai			1	2.27								

Table 5
Languages found on national railway sites featuring versions in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 languages (June 2015).

The majority (68.75%) of monolingual sites (marked 1 on the top row) were in English, Spanish or French. Sites in English only were (Éire,[16] Malawi, Namibia. New Zealand, Tanzania, and the UK), in Spanish (Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador and El Salvador,) and French (Madagascar and the Republic of Congo). It is interesting that, with both Spanish and French, monolingual sites are found only in certain ex-colonial regions (Latin America for the former, Africa for the latter) while English extends from so-called inner circle[17] countries (where English is a first language) to the outer circle (where it is a second one).

---

[16] Paradoxically perhaps, English is only *second official language* in Éire, Modern Irish being designated the *official national language* even though only a small minority of citizens have more than a passing knowledge of it (see Christiansen 2009). It is, however, normal practice on sites run by public bodies to have both English and Irish versions.
[17] See Kachru 1985.

The Internet as a Global Speech Community. Towards Plurilingualism and English Lingua Franca

85

Looking at the sites where at least two languages are used (2, 3, 4, 5 and 10), it is highly significant (but not immediately apparent on Table 5)[18] that English is, without any exception, always one of these languages, underlying its function as the default international lingua franca. It is also revealing that even on the site with 10 languages (*Deutsche Bahn*), where the rationale for language selection seems to be to include the languages of all Germany's close neighbours, as well English and Spanish (possibly each serving as a global lingua franca), English is also used for the catch-all category *other*.

The figures for sites with five and ten languages are anomalous because in each case there is only one such site. This makes it appear that the status of English is equal to that of the other languages found. In all the other multilingual sites, from 2-4, English is clearly the most frequent language.

A more focused picture regarding depth and breadth of the distribution of English among the sites sampled can be gauged by comparing its frequency in the world regions listed on Table 3 with than of the other most frequent languages as listed on Table 4 (with from 3 to 20 occurrences): French; Spanish; German; Chinese; Russian; Arabic and Italian:

World Region	EN	F	SP	G	CN	R	A	I
Central America	2		3					
Central Asia	1					2		
East Asia	3				4			
Europe	18	3	1	5	1	3		3
Middle East	2					1	2	
North Africa	2	2					2	
North America	1	1	1		1			
Oceania	1							
South America	1		5					
South Asia	1							
South East Asia	2							
Sub Saharan Africa	5	3					1	
Number of regions	12	4	4	1	3	3	3	1
Number of sole #1	5	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
Number of joint #1	3	2	1	0	1	0	2	0

Table 6
Most frequent languages found in sample according to world region (June 2015).

Of the languages listed on Table 6, English is the only that occurs in websites in every region (12 in all: third row from bottom). French, for example, though found in half as many sites as English, is concentrated in only four out of twelve regions.

The cells shaded in dark grey show which language is most dominant in that specific region. English is the single most dominant language (sole #1) in five different regions: Sub Saharan Africa; Europe, Oceania, South Asia and South East Asia, and is joint dominant (light grey cell) in the Middle East, North Africa and North America. The occurrence of a certain language in particular regions would seem to be either because the region in question represents its historical base (e.g. China in East Asia, or Arabic in the Middle East) or because the region in question has historical links to the country of origin of that language (e.g. from an imperial past) e.g. Spain (Central and South America);

---

[18] Constituting half of bilingual sites, a third of trilingual sites and so on: the maximum score for any single language in each type of site.

*L*ingue e *L*inguaggi

France (North Africa) or Russia (Central Asia). By contrast, German, for example (stripped of her colonial possessions at the end of World War I), is a major language only in Europe (where however it comes in second place to English, before either French or Spanish).

Only Chinese and Spanish would seem to have a reach which goes beyond either their historical bases or areas in which they have historically had influence.[19] The former occurs in websites both in Europe (that of the Italian *Trenitalia*)[20] and in North America (Canadian National Railway) and the latter also in North America, on the same site.

Table 6 allows us to indicate those regions where English is strongest: where, in effect, not only is it sole dominant but also lacks rivals from any but local languages. These are: Oceania (in this case, New Zealand); South Asia (Bangladesh); and South East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand). Conversely, we can also identify where it is weakest due to the existence of a rival, more powerful, regional lingua franca: South America (Spanish) and Central Asia (Russian).

It is also revealing to look at which languages occur with most other different languages. Table 7 shows the number of different languages that the various languages found in our sample co-occur with on the various sites:

Language	Co-occur	Language	Co-occur	Language	Co-occur	Language	Co-occur
EN	30	CZ	9	J	3	N	1
F	11	DK	9	K	3	POR	1
G	11	R	8	HB	2	SB	1
I	10	CN	7	BG	1	SK	1
PL	10	A	4	BNG	1	SLO	1
SP	10	TH	4	CR	1	T	1
S	10	BS	3	M/I	1	Thai	0
FL	9	FN	3	KZ	1	RM	0

Table 7
Number of co-occurrences with different languages found on sites in sample (June 2015).

Again, English comes top of the list co-occurring with 30 different languages, that is, with every other language found in the sample, including those that only occur with one other language, except Romanian, which however only occurs on a separate monolingual site. European languages tend to co-occur with many more languages than those from elsewhere in the world (e.g. Chinese or Arabic) but this is because they all co-occur on the *Deutsche Bahn* site (10 languages in all) somewhat distorting the figures. Czech, Danish or Flemish for example, are only found on this one site (see Table 4) yet each gets a score higher than Arabic, Chinese, or Russian.

It is also interesting to look, not just at the total number of different languages in the sample with which a given language co-occurs but also at precisely which and with what frequency. In Figure 3, we show the co-occurrence patterns of the most frequent languages as identified on Table 4 (see also Table 6): English; French; Spanish; German; Chinese; Russian; Arabic; and Italian, looking at co-occurrences with other languages at a

---

[19] China never had an overseas empire and did not seek colonies outside its territorial central mass. Instead, like Russia, it expanded over the centuries enlarging its own borders.

[20] Trenitalia only offers the languages: Italian, English and Chinese. Among the various European sites sampled, it is the only one to offer a language from outside Europe. The absence of Arabic from any European site sampled, when there are large well-established Muslim communities across Europe and in neighbouring regions, is worthy of note.

frequency of two or greater. The numbers of links are given beside each line (the thickness of which also indicating number of occurrences), the thin grey lines indicating two co-occurrences on the websites in the sample:
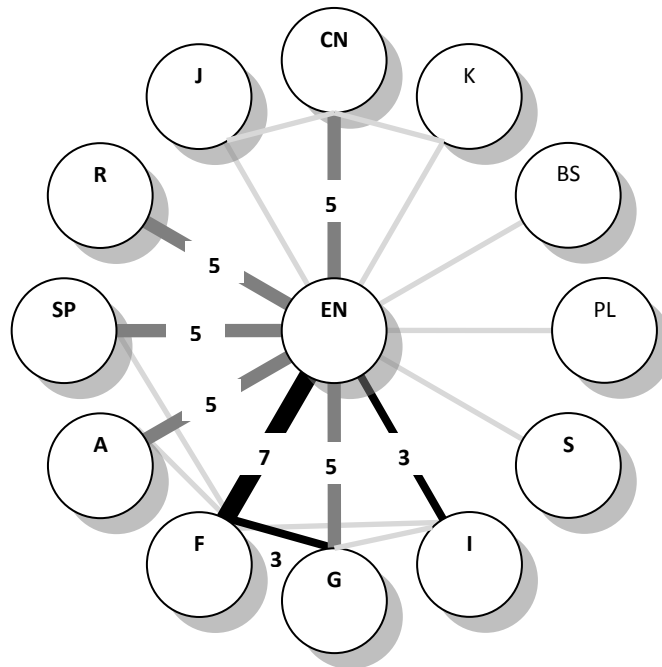

Figure 3
Co-occurrence frequency of most frequent languages as listed in Table 4.

From Figure 3, it emerges that English co-occurs with the widest range of languages; firstly, with French (historically its predecessor as dominant international language and still an important regional lingua franca in Africa and Europe) and next in equal measure with the major regional lingua francas (see Table 6): Arabic (the Middle East and North Africa); Chinese (East Asia); German (Europe); Russian (Europe and Central Asia); and Spanish (South and Central America). French and Chinese each form their own mini-networks within the larger English-dominated web. French has strongest links to German (3), this being the only case where two languages other than English are linked more than twice, and then to Spanish, Arabic and Italian (2 each). Chinese forms links with Japanese and Korean (2 links). Russian has strong links to English (5) but to no other language.

Of the other languages, again English's importance is confirmed. In every case, it is the language that they most commonly occur with. As regards the total number of languages which occur with more than once, French comes second (five) occurring more than once with languages in sites from Europe and North America (English and Spanish) and North Africa (Arabic), followed by German and Chinese (three each) and in each case with languages from neighbouring countries in their own world region. Of the remainder, Spanish, Arabic and Italian each occur with two other languages (in both cases English and French).

In Table 8, we show the total number of co-occurrences greater than one with other languages. With a score of 35, English (over twice the figure for French, its closest rival) then is clearly the best-connected language by this measure as well.

EN	F	G	A	SP	CN	R	I
35	16	10	7	7	5	5	5

Table 8
Total number of co-occurrences greater than one with other languages as listed on Figure 3.

Figure 3 in effect shows which languages are commonly used as alternatives for each other – the user of a site being offered a choice of which language to view the site in – and thus the relationship between the various languages and English can be seen as essentially contrastive. From this perspective, it is significant that English is considered as an alternative for all of the languages in the sample except for one found on one monolingual site and co-occurs more than once with twelve out of the 32 languages found in the sample, that is, over a third.

In Section 2.3, we will turn to the related area of how languages on the internet may be connected and used in conjunction with each other.

2.3. Global Language Networks

As shown in the previous section, the relative frequency of different languages on a sample of railway websites confirms that, while English is not the only lingua franca used on the internet, it is the dominant one, but with other regional lingua francas existing in specific world regions. While this is confirmation of the situation described by Weber (1997), it is interesting to note that despite the relative "decline" in the dominance of English as other languages, historically and currently important in the real world outside the virtual world of the internet, naturally make their presence felt on the web (as evidenced in Section 2.1), the position of English at the top of the hierarchy of world lingua francas seems secure for the moment.

The realisation that the internet rather than moving towards monolingualism (i.e. the complete dominance of English) is moving instead towards plurilingualism, where individual users increasingly have access to varied plurilinguistic (and pluricultural) repertoires[21] (their own first language(s), and perhaps English and another regional lingua franca), raises the question, as also touched upon in discussion in Tables 7 and 8 above, of how the different languages commonly found on the internet relate to and coexist with each other and of course with English.

In their study into how the languages that a person uses influence their chances of achieving global fame, Ronen *et al.* (2014) examine how languages on the internet are connected to one another through bilingualism or translation. As a result of their analysis, they are able to draw up highly detailed charts of connections between languages – reminiscent of Figure 3 but much more sophisticated – and thus indicate those which are more isolated or peripheral and those which are more central (just as English and French emerge as most common on Table 8, and languages like Swedish or Polish least so). The most frequent languages turn out to be central within so-called Global Language Networks (GLN), serving in effect as *hubs* (to use the authors' analogy with airports)

Firstly, Ronen *et al* (2014) look at the UNESCO database of translated books 1979-2011 (containing over 2.2m works); secondly, they look at the different languages

---

[21] The two terms, *plurilingual* and *multilingual* are often confused. Here we use *plurilingualism* to refer to the ability of the individual speaker to manage communication in different languages, and within different cultural contexts (see Council of Europe 2001: 4-5). Some scholars (see Jenkins 2015) argue that this distinction is however unimportant.

that individual *Wikipedia* editors use, the rationale being that a bilingual who translates books or edits articles in two languages strengthens the bond between those two languages; finally, in a similar way, they examine the different languages employed by individual *Twitter* users. In the last case, they argue that users who tweet at least six full sentences in an L2 reinforce the link between their L1 and that language. A weakness with this research, as the author's admit, is that, due to the specific media concerned (book translations, *Wikipedia* and *Twitter*), it is limited to observing the behaviour of an educated elite.

As regards translations, the data reveals (Ronen *et al.* 2014:2, Figure 1) that in the period examined (1979-2011) English and Russian were the most central: each forming its own hub with Russian linked most closely to central and eastern European and central Asian and Siberian languages (the ex-Soviet Union and allied countries) and English linked to the rest of the world with French, Spanish and German forming smaller hubs of their own. Other languages that have strong links to English, are Japanese and many central European ones such as Czech and Polish (linked to Russian as well) in addition to the Scandinavian languages (which also have strong links with each other). Chinese also forms a separate hub in the same way that Russian does but has a more limited range of links mainly to other languages from China itself as well as Vietnamese and Romanian.

This data reflects clearly the geopolitics of the Cold War era, which ended about 25 years ago, as indeed the period covered starts from 1976, (with China and Russia, as part of the Soviet Union, the two, largely competing, powers of the communist bloc). The reason why the opening up of the ex-Soviet bloc and China towards the rest of the world is perhaps not more apparent, may be due to a general decline in book translations over recent years, especially as many books in academia are now written directly in English, whatever the writer's L1 and where they are based.

In examination of *Wikipedia* editors (Ronen *et al.* 2014:2, Figure 1), the centrality of English is more marked, but then *Wikipedia* is a much newer medium (dating from 2001). English forms the hub for virtually every language with only a few notable sub hubs such as, Russian, Italian, French and Spanish. In a clear majority of cases however, bilingual editors will use English together with another language. On *Wikipedia*, English is more central than in the book translations. Indeed, there are also some direct links between English and even some regional varieties of other languages (e.g. for Italian, Lombard, Reggio Emilian, or Sicilian) and not indirectly through the relevant standard language.[22]

The analysis of *Wikipedia* reveals a more exotic collection of languages than does that of book translations mainly because the former reflects the diverse linguistic backgrounds and intellectual interests of the individual *Wikipedia* editor and the latter depends on the demands of the publishing industry.[23] Furthermore, the figures for Asian languages, in particular Chinese or Hindi, are dwarfed by those for European languages (even, in some cases, regional varieties of these). Indeed, the low figure for Chinese can,

---

[22] This may be taken to suggest that, in some national contexts, English is replacing the national standard. Instead, it may be a deliberate strategy on the part of individuals to assert their regional identity (by markedly using the local variety or language and not the "imposed" national standard) and also appeal to the wider international community. Another explanation may be that individuals do not know the national standard, perhaps because they are part of an international diaspora (e.g. someone with a Sicilian background living in an English-speaking country). However, the fact that they choose to edit *Wikipedia* in a regional variety (often not widely used in written form) would suggest a deliberate agenda of some form and at some level.

[23] See Venuti (1995) for criticism of the attitudes towards translations of the publishing industry in English-speaking countries.

as the authors point out, be explained by the existence of a rival collaborative encyclopaedia popular in China: *Baidu Baike*.

Finally, turning to the data regarding the languages used by *Twitter* users (Ronen *et al.* 2014:2, Figure 1), the picture is similar to that of *Wikipedia* but with a smaller set of languages, with far fewer lesser-spoken ones or regional varieties. English again seems most central, sitting at the hub of the network, with Arabic, Japanese, Malay, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish functioning as sub-hubs. The most closely connected languages to English are Spanish and Portuguese (which may reflect the popularity of *Twitter* in the Americas). Asian languages, like Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Thai, and Vietnamese would seem to play a more prominent part than they do on *Wikipedia*, but again, Hindi's and Chinese's roles appear only minimal considering their status as the languages with respectively the largest and fourth largest numbers of speakers in the world.[24] The peripheral nature of Chinese in particular, with strong links only to English, Korean and Japanese (interestingly the same languages as evidenced on Figure 3 above) would seem, as with *Wikipedia* and *Baidu Baike*, to be attributable to the existence of an alternative to *Twitter*, *Sina Weibo,* which is more popular among Chinese speakers.

3. Translanguaging and English as a Lingua Franca on the internet

Section 2 has established that, while English is the most influential language on the web, the internet is inherently multilingual, as is the physical world with which it co-exists. In this section, we will look at the way in which the English typically used on the internet reflects the plurilingual nature of the medium and its users. To do so, we will take the perspective, not of traditional standard varieties of English as associated with native speakers, but of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), that is the variations of English typically produced by native speakers of different languages (some of whom may be native English speakers). In such contexts, adherence to abstract standard or native speaker models as found in conventional descriptions of the so-called *interlanguage* (see Selinker 1972) of second language learners takes second place to concerns of communicability and intelligibility. ELF variations[25] are therefore seen as more endonormative (See Jenkins 1998, 2007; Seidlhofer 2004, 2011). Christiansen indeed (2015a) emphasises the improvised nature of much ELF discourse as opposed to the orchestrated one of typical interlanguage produced when users (as learners rather than full members of the ELF community) strive to emulate some standard or native speaker model. This propensity to experimentation and creativity is also a feature of language in general on new electronic media, as Crystal points out in his study of what he calls *Netspeak*

---

[24] See *Ethnologue* 2015 (www.ethnologue.com).

[25] It should be noted that ELF does not constitute a distinct variety or set of said. By its nature, it is an inherently fluid phenomenon (see Seidlhofer 2011) where meaning is negotiated not out of a fixed catalogue of features but rather by means of general communication strategies such as accommodation that depend not so much on the speaker's origins and background (as is the case with social or regional varieties) but on those of all participants engaged in a discourse, as well as the specific goals of that discourse. Each discourse event is typically unique so the concept of a fixed variety gains no purchase.

The Internet as a Global Speech Community. Towards Plurilingualism and English Lingua Franca

91

(2001), which, with its informality and immediacy, is oriented towards speaking rather than traditional writing.[26]

In this section, we will focus on the way that ELF, as found on a typical discussion forum on the internet, reflects the fact that users are often plurilingual and will sometimes use whatever linguistic resources that they have at their disposal (be these L1, English, or some other language in the user's linguistic repertoire)[27] not only as a distinct communicative activity where languages are not treated as separate systems but are all used as a single resource .[28] The linguistic fluidity of such a view of ELF is in harmony with the situation on the internet, where languages co-exist and alternate, sometimes mixing and constituting a situation where a plurilingual user has clear advantages over a monolingual one.[29] Indeed it can be seen how the creation and spread of the internet, and the growth of globalisation of which it is the result, have provided one of the main *raisons d'etre* and breeding grounds for ELF, if no other were needed.

Christiansen (2016) compiles a corpus made up of posts from the English-language site *Studentsville*[30] for international students looking for accommodation in popular university cities in Italy. It comprises 2,995 posts, dating from 2006-2014 (January) amounting to approximately 143,998 words. The posters represent over an estimated 80 different nationalities. Each post was categorised according to speaker origin according to Kachru's (1985) three circle model (inner circle, IC; outer circle, OC; and expanding circle, EC), with a separate category for Italian L1 speakers (IT),[31] technically part of EC but treated as a separate group as they represent speakers of the local language in the specific context.

Below some examples, from each of the speaker categories identified above, of many the posts in which translanguaging occurs.[32]

1) EC
   Ciao tutti I am searching room in Perugia for one month duration in this March. It wuold be better in center of Perugia or near to language school. Let me to know **Molte grazie**

                                                                    (Posted from Armenia)

---

[26] One sign of this is the widespread use of emoticons, which had previously never been used in written discourse. According to Crystal (2001:38): "What is interesting to the linguist, of course, is why these novelties have turned up now. Written language has always been ambiguous, in its omission of facial expression, and in its inability to express all the intonational and other prosodic features of speech. Why did no one ever introduce smileys there? The answer must be something to do with the immediacy of Net interaction, its closeness to speech".

[27] This has been called *translanguaging* by (Garcia and Li Wei, 2014) and is a key feature of what Jenkins (2015) argues should be a new evolving approach to ELF "re-theorised" as *English as a Multilingua Franca*.

[28] As Jenkins says, advocating an approach to ELF that emphasises its multilingual nature rather than focussing merely on its attribute of being a variation of English (2015: 74): "English as a Multilingua Franca refers to multilingual communicative settings in which English is known to everyone present, and is therefore always potentially 'in the mix', regardless of whether or not, and how much, it is actually used".

[29] Indeed, Jenkins (2015: 74) argues that the most significant parameter in ELF may not be between native and non-native speakers of English but between "ELF using multilinguals / Multilingual EFL users" and "ELF using monolinguals / Monolingual ELF users".

[30] Date of retrieval 04/03/14: http://www.studentsville.eu/italyforum/forums/default.asp.

[31] In the original study, extra categories were added for more problematic cases such as OC? (presumed outer circle) or OC/EC (it could be either outer circle or expanding circle).

[32] The former entailing alternation between codes, the latter a hybridisation of them – see Romaine and Kachru (1998).

2) IT

   Come and have a look at our affordable rooms, flats and studios in the Porta Pesa area of Perugia. This is a great location that will suit both students and professionals. **Universita' per Stranieri** is just 2 mins away and the whole city centre is within walking distance. Please visit [web address] for photos, costs and availability. Good news for you: we're not an agency, so you'll save money. We have more than 15 years experience in lettings and we are happy to offer references from tenants coming from all over the world. So, feel free to browse the site, check the photos and get in touch to book your place in Perugia! **A presto**,

   (Posted from Italy)

3) OC

   I am 24 years old female originally from India graduated from Dubai, UAE and I am looking for a long term accommodation in **Milano**. I will be studying my Masters in Fashion - Marketing from IED,close to the **Centro Storico**, Viale Corsica, Viale Cermenate, Ortomervato. I prefer Paying Guest / Sharing /single room in appartment near my college campus. Price max. 400E/month all inclusive. I will need the accommodation from 23 January 2012. I am quite friendly and speak fluent english. Non smoker. Need internet. Please contact me at [email address]. Thanks.

   (Posted from Dubai)

4) IC

   I'm a student who will be conducting research in **Milano** for 2-3 months this winter. I need an affordable place to stay (shared apartment or studio apartment) for January, February and a week in March. **Grazie**!

   (Posted from the USA)

In examples 1-3, the instances of expressions or forms from Italian are highlighted in bold. It can be seen that, in each case, the items seemed to have been deliberately selected and are not the products of unconscious *interference* (Weinreich 1953) or transfer from Italian which is often the conventional explanation for code-switching and mixing that sees either as a sign of deficiency or confusion at some level." It is also evident that such translanguaging is found by all types of speaker: EC, OC, IC and IT.

   In the entire corpus, it was found that the use of these within the ELF variations was actually lower among IT (accounting for just under 1% of their use) and highest among EC followed by OC and then IC. If such occurrences were the product of unconscious transfer, then one could reasonably expect Italian speakers to among be "the worst offenders". Furthermore, according to this theory, L1 English speakers, by contrast, would be least likely to code mix, if at all. In fact, although in the corpus they used Italian relatively rarely (around 5%), they did so considerably more than L1 Italian speakers.

   The conclusion one could draw would be that it is the mostly non L1 English, non-L1 Italian ELF users in this Italian Forum who show the greatest propensity to Italianise their ELF discourse. Christiansen (2016) speculates that, by doing so, they are showing a tendency towards identification and association with the local Italian context. By contrast, L1 Italians, the locals, by *not* using Italian, are identifying themselves with the international ELF users.

   Within the ELF discourse, the use of terms from Italian or from other, unidentifiable sources – sometimes it was difficult to identify the precise origin of certain non-English features (e.g. *accomodations*, *turistic*, *University Bocconi*, the latter displaying the right branching head-modifier word order typical not just of Italian but also of many, if not most, languages.) – could be traced to ten distinct semantic contexts, with an extra category for miscellaneous cases (*bonifico* vs. *postal/bank payment order*;

fidanzato/a vs. (*steady*) *boy/girlfriend*). Below in Figure 4,[33] we list these categories and compare the number of occurrences of Italian and non-English forms in general with those for English in each:
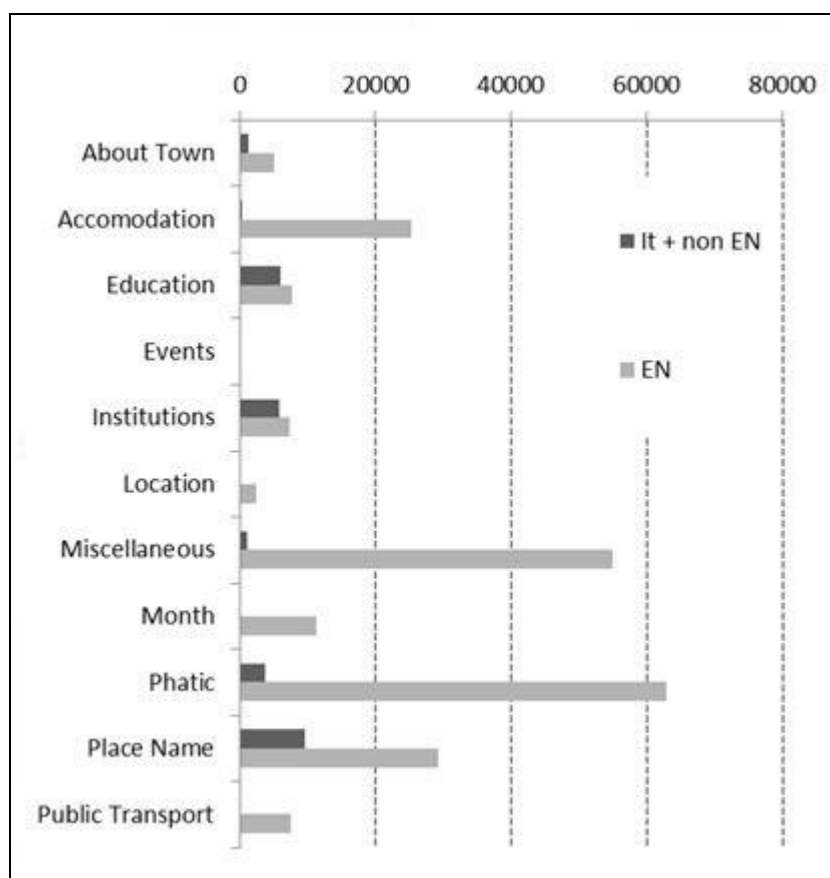

Figure 4
English vs. Italian / Non-English forms according to semantic field.

From Figure 4, it emerges that in every category, English terms outnumber the Italian and non-English forms except for Place Names (e.g. *Milano* vs. *Milan*) and Names of Institutions (*Università Bocconi* vs. *Bocconi University*). It is common practice for names in general to be left in the local or source language except in a few historical cases where conventional translations do exist (see Taylor: 1998:30). Indeed, there are English versions of the names of many Italian cities (e.g. *Naples*, *Florence*, *Rome*), nonetheless in the corpus it transpires that although the English forms are generally preferred, the local, Italian, forms are in wide use among ELF users – interestingly more so in the case of some cities than others (e.g. *Milan is generally preferred over Milano* but *Roma* is more frequent than *Rome*). The other categories where Italian and non-English items are fairly common are About Town (e.g. *duomo* vs. *cathedral*), Education (e.g. *dottorato* vs. *PhD*), and Phatic (e.g. *grazie* vs. *thanks*).

Together these constitute areas of daily life where international students have most contact with the local population. Phatics are particularly significant in that they consist of phrases, expressions and formula used to establish and maintain social relations. The

---

[33] Adapted from Figure 4 in Christiansen (2016).

occurrence of Italian forms within ELF discourse can hardly be put down to some competence gap in non-native speaker ELF users because the category of IC use them too, and in any case words like *hi*, *please*, *thanks*, are part of the repertoire of even the most elementary language learner. Rather, their use strongly suggests that a degree of affinity exists between the ELF user and the local community and culture, which is so strong that such phatic items are adopted, consciously or not, for use also for interaction between ELF users, very possibly, together with the other examples of code mixing with Italian, as a specific in-group marker.[34] Allied to the area of phatics is the use of colloquial expressions in general, both English (e.g. *cheers*; *thanx; roomi*) and Italian (e.g. *salve* – hi; *ragazzi* – guys). Like slang terms (and the distinction is often blurred – see Christiansen 2008), one would expect these to be used either by the initiated, i.e. native speakers, or at least by non-native speakers with a high level of familiarity with the language (and indeed, such items are frowned upon in traditional foreign language curricula and hence normally have to be picked up through authentic practice). It transpires that while Italian colloquialisms are relatively rare, here again they are used most by the categories of EC, and also OC not, as may have been expected, by IT. Similarly, use of English colloquialisms is most prevalent among EC followed by OC, and not IC. The fact then that some EFL users who are non-L1 English make ample use of colloquialisms in English and to a lesser degree in Italian shows that they feel comfortable enough in both languages to consider themselves insiders and consequently their code mixing and switching can be seen as a form of translanguaging.

4. Conclusions

As is apparent from Sections 2 and 3, although English continues to be the most dominant language on the internet, the web is by no means moving towards greater monolingualism: the reverse in fact. It would of course be possible in theory for the internet to exist as a series of interconnected but separate language domains with most users remaining monolingual, especially those who are L1 speakers of major languages such as English, Chinese, or Spanish. This would not in itself constitute plurilingualism. However, the numbers of plurilingual users is rising, partly no doubt also because of the very existence of internet, as it creates opportunities for people to use and practice diverse languages; as Crystal 2001:220-221 notes, many lesser-spoken languages now have better survival prospects precisely because of their presence on the internet even if this "cyberpresence" is relatively insignificant compared to other languages. Internet citizens have the ability to truly translanguage, that is conduct different activities, whether web-based or not, in different languages at the same time. For example, a student in Italy may look up information for a school project from internet sites in English, to then write a report in standard Italian, with Latin music in Spanish or Portuguese playing in the background – all while messaging their friends in their local dialect.

Indeed, because of the ease of access to different languages (and cultures) which the internet offers, people have more opportunities to expose themselves to other

---

[34] As Romaine and Kachru (1998) point out, code switching can be used as a subtle form of deictic device to differentiate between close versus distant, 'in' and 'out' groups, as well as informal versus formal. The examples that they discuss, however, focus on the use of L1 and L2; here, we have arguably the same phenomenon but with the switching occurring between English and the local language (an L+ as it were), Italian, used by ELF users to indicate closeness to the local or host community.

The Internet as a Global Speech Community. Towards Plurilingualism and English Lingua Franca

95

languages, not just English. English, as we see in Section 3, is the single language that is found almost everywhere across the world and across cyberspace. It is also the most widely taught second or foreign language in schools around the world, which means that many people have not just easy access to it but also exposure to it at increasingly young ages through instruction. Indeed English L2 learners have the opportunity, which their peers in the past did not always have, to immediately start employing the language mainly because of the internet (consequently, in this way, the traditional distinction between English as a Foreign and as a Second Language is breaking down). This is why, in this particular context, as in ELF ones in general, focus must be placed on the non-native speaker as user (regardless of their level of competence against some abstract scale such as the Common European Framework of Reference – Council of Europe 2001), and not merely as a learner, which implies someone receiving explicit instruction to do something to practice only at some later date.

The implication of this is that non-native speakers are habitually engaging in natural spontaneous discourse in English even at lower levels of competence, and their objectives are not so much emulating native speaker behaviour as accomplishing real world tasks (consulting information, shopping online, or as in the corpus discussed in Section 3.0, renting student accommodation). Naturally, in such a context, linguistic competence *per se* takes second place to communicative performance: getting something done. This might mean that many ELF variations may display features of pidginisation or creolisation, such as some innovation and simplification (Mufwene 2001)[35] – simplification being to some extent inevitable as the language spreads (McWhorter 2007) – as well as transfers from other languages – not just the various speakers' L1s but also other influential languages in the region (e.g. Spanish in South America, Arabic in the Middle East and North Africa) or field (e.g. French in Haute Cuisine; Italian in coffee bars – see Christiansen 2015b). ELF will thus become gradually more lingua franca[36] and arguably less English with ordinary users becoming more sophisticated at mixing and matching languages from their linguistic repertoires in order to communicate in the globalized context that the internet has brought into their lives.

Bionote: Since 1987, Thomas Christiansen has taught in various positions at various universities in Apulia (Italy), the UK, and Poland. In 2001, he completed his PhD at Salford (UK). He has researched into various areas of linguistics including systemic linguistics and functional grammar, varieties of English, ELF, teaching English, language testing, and analysis of different corpora, including spoken discourse. He has also worked as an expert consultant for Cambridge Assessment for many years. He is an associate professor in English Language and Translation at the Università del Salento (Lecce, Italy). He has read papers at many national and international conferences including: Albania, Austria, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Finland, Turkey, and the UK. He has authored many articles and three books, most recently *Cohesion: A Discourse Perspective* (Peter Lang, 2011).

Author's address: thomas.christiansen@unisalento.it

[35] Although it is tempting to equate ELF with creolisation, it should be remembered that creoles are language varieties while instances of ELF are variations (see note above) and a given speaker may innovate, simplify and even transfer in markedly different ways and to different degrees depending on the specific speech event.

[36] That which Jenkins (2015: 74) has dubbed *English as Multilingua Franca*.

Riferimenti bibliografici

Blommaert J. 2010, *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Blommaert J. 2012, *Supervernaculars and their Dialects*, in "Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics" 1 [1], pp. 1-14.

Christiansen T. 2008, *Trends in the use of slang in the panel show Just A Minute in the period 1967-2006*, in Kermas S. and Gotti M. (eds.), *Socially-conditioned Language Change: Diachronic and Synchronic Insights*, Edizione del Grifo, Lecce, pp. 445-469.

Christiansen T. 2009, *English in Ireland and Irish in English. Hiberno-English as exemplar of World English*, in Dolce M.R. and Natale A.R. (eds.), *Bernard Hickey, a Roving Cultural Ambassador: Essays in His Memory*, FORUM, Udine, pp. 61-83.

Christiansen T. 2015a, *Anaphora in question-answer sessions in university ELF contexts*, in "Lingue e Linguaggi" 13, pp. 87-105.

Christiansen T. 2015b, *The rise of English as the global lingua franca. Is the world heading towards greater monolingualism or new forms of plurilingualism?*, in "Lingue e Linguaggi" 15, pp. 129-154.

Christiansen T. 2016, *The localisation of ELF. Code mixing and switching between ELF and Italian in Italian internet accommodation forums for international students*, in Tsantila N., Mandalios J. and Melpomeni I. (eds.), *ELF: Pedagogical and Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, DEREE – The American College of Greece, Athens, pp. 60-69.

Council of Europe 2001, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Crystal D. 2001, *Language and the internet,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

García O. and Wei L. 2014, *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke.

Jenkins J. 1998, *Which pronunciation norms and models for English as an International Language?*, in "ELT Journal" 52 [2], pp. 119-126.

Jenkins J. 2007, *English as a Lingua Franca: Attitude and Identity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Jenkins J. 2015, *Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a Lingua Franca*, in "Englishes in Practice" 2 [3], pp. 49-85.

Kachru B.B. 1985, *Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle*, in Quirk R. and Widdowson H.G. (eds.), *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 11-30.

Kachru B.B. 2005, *Asian Englishes: Beyond the Canon*. Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong.

McWhorter J. 2007, *Language Interrupted: Signs of Non-Native Acquisition in Standard Language Grammars*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Mufwene Salikoko S. 2001, *The Ecology of Language Evolution*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Pennycook A. 2007, *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows*, Routledge, London.

Pimienta D., Prado D. and Blanco Á. 2010, *Twelve years of measuring linguistic diversity in the internet: balance and perspectives*, UNESCO, Paris.

Romaine S. and Kachru B.B. 1998, *Code-mixing and code-switching*, in McArthur T. (ed.), *Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 228-229.

Ronen S., Gonçalves B., Hu K.Z., Vespignani A., Pinker S. and Hidalgo C. 2014, *Links that speak: The global language network and its association with global fame"* in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, December 2014.

Seidlhofer B. 2004, *Research perspectives on teaching English as lingua franca*, in "Annual Review of Applied Linguistics" 24, pp. 209-239.

Seidlhofer B. 2011, *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca: A Complete Introduction to the Theoretical Nature and Practical Implications of English used as a Lingua Franca*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Selinker L. 1972, *Interlanguage*, in "International Review of Applied Linguistics" 10, pp. 209-241.

Taylor C. 1998, *Language to Language: A practical and theoretical guide for Italian / English translators*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Venuti L. 1995, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History Of Translation*, Routledge, London.

Weber G. 1997, *Top Languages: the World's Ten Most Influential Languages*, in "Language Monthly" 3, pp. 12-18.

Weinreich U. 1953, *Languages in Contact*, Mouton, The Hague.