

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology: Division of Humanities/Center for Language Education

HUMA 1000: Cultures and Values: **Cover sheet for final essay**

Full name	
Student ID	
Writing workshop section number	
Writing workshop instructor	
Title of essay (please copy and paste from the document on Canvas)	What is your position in the following debate? Give detailed reasons to support your stance: Will the spread of English as a global language lead to the displacement of local language(s) and cultural identity(ies), or does it stimulate hybrid cultural forms and thus create cultural heterogeneity

Declaration: The attached essay represents my own work. I have read and understood the University's policies on academic honesty and I confirm that the attached work conforms to these policies.

Please type your name:

Response to feedback: note here the comments from your instructor you have responded to (you can copy these from your feedback sheet).

- 1. The introduction contained problematic background: English should not be mentioned in terms of compulsory educated language (this has already been deleted) and the thesis statement had not prepared for further argument (the introduction has contained a clear scope)**
- 2. Three paragraphs had contained problematic topic sentences, controlling ideas and not unifying around the controlling ideas. (each of the ideas have been changed and paragraphed)**
- 3. The essay had not cited any of the course materials. (cited two times in main argument 3 → pop music culture)**
- 4. The conclusion has problem in containing new ideas and not clearly restated the main idea in the essay (deleted all new ideas related and clearly state the main arguments)**
- 5. The essay has not met the word limit (now the essay has words of 994)**
- 6. The essay has inconsistent font size and font style. (now all are Calibri with size 12)**

Hong Kong is a well-known international city with wide range of English usages and western cultures, but since most of the citizens are Chinese, both of its cultures and usages are still behind Cantonese and Chinese traditional cultures. However, as globalization is spreading worldwide day by day, there is doubt if displacement of local languages and cultures will be occurred, yet I disagree with this view instead suggest that it helps stimulating hybrid culture. In the following paragraphs, the essay will verify the statement in three aspects, languages culture, movie culture and pop music culture.

In terms of local languages, it is common to see hybrid forms of languages. Taking “Chinglish” that emerged in Hong Kong as an example. This hybrid language in fact generated from English and Cantonese, local speaking language of Hong Kong. Unlike other countries, Hong Kong has English introduced far earlier since it was once a British’s colony with English being the only official language till 1974. Since then, English has started to merge into local’s daily life instead of merging. Till now, there is even a new language, named “Chinglish”, defined as a spoken or written English language that is macaronically influenced by the Chinese language (Xiao&Zuo,2006). It is widely used in texts as well, such as “I now eat rice la”. This grammatically incorrect English has integrated Cantonese word “食飯”, a Cantonese slang “la” and structure into an English sentence “I am now going to have lunch.” However, even under such a circumstance, neither English or Chinese has been over-emphasized from one and other, they both mixed together well will equal status. Through integrating both English and Chinese cultures, this new language has been developed, creating cultural heterogeneity in terms of languages.

In terms of local movie culture, it is common to see hybrid movie cultures, mixture of English and local elements throughout the movie content. Taking Bollywood movies as an example, movies generated under the combination of word “Bombay”, capital city of India, and also “Hollywood”, symbol of western English movies. (Rajghatta, 2016). Although Bollywood movies are usually using English as their medium of communication, they still keep various local culture elements, most obvious ones will be their Hindi Dance Music and chorography, a signature style of songs and dance that combines rich texture of Indian classical and folk dances ("About Bollywood Dance Artform and History of Indian Dance in Houston and Sugar Land", 2016). It then become a symbol for Bollywood movies for having their actors and actresses, some wearing modern western style clothes while some dressed in their traditional clothing dancing to those Hindi Dance music. Such as the movie “Slumdog Millionaire”, released in 2008, the ending scene of the movie is exactly all the actors

and actresses dancing to the music despite the whole movie is acted in English and surrounded the British English program “Who wants to be a millionaire”. The movie has perfectly merged English as their dialogue medium with its own Indian cultures, Hindi Dance, displaying the integrated movie culture.

In terms of pop music, it is also common for composers to write mixed languages lyrics, with both local languages and English. Taking K-pop as an example, there are mixed languages lyrics of Korean and English. Famous Korean rapper, Tasha’s “Smiling Tears”, produced in 2002, has lyrics such as “If I fall two times I come back on my third” and “and that’s my word” mixed into her Korean rap’s lyrics (Pun, 2016). We then can be able to see that English has become an alternative language for Korean singer or rapper to include in their songs, yet, still preserving Korean languages lyrics. It is not odd to witness such a trend as after all English according to Braj Kachru’s Concentric Model, to Korean, is learnt as a foreign language that located in the expanding circle (Pun,2016), the majority of them may not have such a high understanding and proficiency of it. As lyrics are written to send out the message of the song, it will not be effective if all are written in English. From this example, we can observe that English language indeed started to merge into different countries, yet, even though, English still fail to displace the local language due to the level of understanding and proficiency, this then lead to a mixture of both languages in terms of pop music lyrics.

However, someone may argue that the society is having an inclined emphasis on English than Chinese especially for working culture due to globalization, which occurs mainly in eastern countries, such as Hong Kong, leading to more contact with western cultures instead of locals and decreased usage of Cantonese. Although it is true that more and more people speak English in workplace because they have to interact with foreign clients or colleges. However, it is only limited in workplace or business-oriented area such as Central or Sheng wan in Hong Kong. Other parts of Hong Kong still focus on the usage of Cantonese with some mixture of English. For example, in small scale retail stores or “Cha-Chaan Teng”, local tea restaurants, they are still maintaining Cantonese as their communicating language with their menu written in Chinglish, such as “Top soup dumplings” for the translation of “上湯雲吞” (Fairhead, 2013), directly translating the Chinese meaning with corresponding English words. Therefore, we can see that English has only been dominating used in certain occasions and areas, instead of fully occupied the whole Hong Kong and diminish local languages.

All in all, we can see that the spread of English has only allow more diversified cultures to flow, maintaining countries' status of being a competitive global. Still, because of the local practices and traditions, English still fail to displace local cultures, explained in terms of pop songs culture, movie culture and language culture, which then generates a new culture and practices, instead of fully hegemony ones and lead to the opposing being diminished. (994 words)

Reference

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5. Pun, W. (2016). *Braj Kachru's Concentric Model*. Presentation, Week 9 Globalization, Popular Culture and Intellectual Communication, Huma 1000, 2016 Spring.
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