The Prestige Language: A Kahanian Approach to Classical Sanskrit and Modern English

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Abstract

Kahane's *A typology of the prestige language* (1986) outlines patterns that prestige languages presumably all share. However, his typology focuses solely on western prestige languages, and it implies a definition of prestige where the languages spread in a dominant fashion to linguistic communities of various cultural backgrounds, leaving out prestige languages like Sanskrit which spread in a different, less openly dominant, fashion. The literature concerning the general concept of prestige is inconsistent, and it often skews towards a western ideal. For these reasons, I analyze Sanskrit, a classical eastern prestige language, and English, a modern-day prestige language, using Kahanian typologies which are focused on a western prestige ideal to highlight a hole in the literature on the intersection of prestige and language, where often western languages take the focus.

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1 Introduction

Language is highly intertwined with culture. Within cultures, language is also associated with prestige and power (Kahane, 1986; Thomas, 2005; Lippi-Green, 2012). Throughout history, societies have seen many dominant and prestigious languages; in the Western world, such languages have included Koiné Greek, Latin throughout the Roman and Byzantine Empires and the Middle Ages, Old French and Old Occitan of northern and southern France respectively during the castle culture of the ninth to fourteenth centuries, Italian as the lingua franca of the Mediterranean and language of the Renaissance; and French in the 17th and 18th centuries of court culture. These are the languages that Henry Kahane mentions in his paper *A typology of the prestige language* (1986), in which he attempts to create an outline of the patterns and similarities that prestige languages presumably all share. However, his paper only examines western prestige languages, and in his paper, he generally equates the prestige status of his chosen western languages with their dominance as languages that were able to spread to more distant places, places which often had native languages that were less related to the prestige language itself, and where the prestige language became spoken by more and more people, usually as the result of contact between dissimilar language communities. In a way, this constitutes a definition of prestige: a language of high influence which is able to spread throughout all levels of a contacted society. In my thesis, I explore another prestige language, Sanskrit, which is a prestige language of the East that did not rise to its prestigious status as a result of the same dominance-oriented kind of spread. Instead, its prestige stemmed from its place in Hindu tradition, and it remained a language which only a socially elite minority had the privilege to speak, study, and understand. In contrast, I also analyze Kahane's typology with

English, another western language which Kahane believes will likely follow the patterns of his typology throughout its existence as a prestige language.

In addition to Henry Kahane's *typology of the prestige language*, I will rely on Henry and Renée Kahane's *Decline and Survival of Western Prestige Languages* (1979) to examine English and Sanskrit through the lens of post-prestige language survival, as well as to clarify some aspects of Henry Kahane's typology, particularly in reference to the decline of prestige languages. Through these two Kahanian texts, I observe how well these typologies represent the prestige languages of Sanskrit and English, with Sanskrit being a language outside the implied western scope of Kahane's typology, and English being a prime candidate for testing the accuracy of the typology within a western scope.

2 Prestige

In Henry Kahane's (1986) typology, he seems to imply that the prestige of a language is synonymous with their ability to spread throughout all levels of a contacted society and gain high influence in the new society, as is the general pattern of the languages that he reflects on as western prestige languages of the past. While this is understandable in the case of these prestige languages, it is not the case that all prestige languages have spread in this way. He also never explicitly defines what he means by prestige, leaving us to assume that the languages he names are indicative of prestige languages, but not necessarily what that means about them, leaving one to try to decipher his meaning through the context given in his paper. However, apparently vagueness with the definition of prestige is a rather common occurrence within the literature regarding prestige as a concept; even now, there is no single well-defined meaning of 'prestige' in the academic field, even within the same subfield (Berl III, 2019). In fact, in one research

project conducted by Berl III (2019), it was found that upwards of 40% of the 226 studies examined that focused on the concept of prestige either cited some other work that defined the term *prestige* or avoided a definition of the notion of prestige altogether, and in general, "the literature discussing prestige is highly fragmented and inconsistent" (Berl III, 2019, p. 22), and it is mainly focused on societies that are WEIRD, that is, western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (Berl III, 2019, p. 16). All of these facts serve to easily create a western bias in prestige ideology where cross-cultural notions of prestige may be missed due to the predominantly western focus on prestige, potentially leading to "deeply flawed generalizations of how prestige operates across diverse human societies" (Berl III, 2019, p. 16). The literature on prestige is already highly fragmented and focused on WEIRD societies, and with many studies echoing definitions of prestige from this already-western-focused echo chamber, ideas on prestige likely are already skewed towards western ideals. This point is essential to my thesis; in Kahane's implicit definition of language prestige as the dominance of these western languages over distant communities, he does not account for the prestige of other languages such as the eastern prestige language of Sanskrit. Indeed, within the title of his paper, *A typology of the prestige language* (1986), and the ideas put forth within it, he implies that only western prestige languages exist, or at least that only western prestige languages are important to study, since he only discusses western prestige languages in his typology but he created a title that implies claiming a typology of any generic prestige language. And, perhaps it does apply to more than just western prestige languages, but perhaps it doesn't even apply to all western prestige languages. Towards the beginning of the paper, Kahane mentions English as a potential case study for his typology since it is a present prestige language, stating that the patterns we see in English's rise to prestige on a global scale are not new (although they are larger in size), and that

we can learn more about English's life as a prestige language from examples from the past (Kahane, 1986, p. 495). Thus, English presents a good candidate for present analysis of Kahane's patterns.

Unfortunately, none of these observations help get closer to a definition of prestige, or what determines prestige. In Berl III's findings, they found that there are several varying propositions of the determinants of prestige, ranging from respect, skill, or esteem, to inherent, unique know-how (Berl III, 2019, p. 16). However, these determinants seem to be more applicable to people than to languages. There are also different types of prestige, like occupational prestige and social prestige, creating multiple definitions of *prestige*, depending on the context or type. Of course, once again, these definitions apply better to people than to languages. In Kahane's implied definition of (western) prestige languages, these languages spread in a dominant fashion throughout all levels of other contacted communities with different languages, and this of course, also involved people. But to constrain prestige languages to only those where this type of dominance occurred throughout all levels of dissimilar societies leaves out a language like Sanskrit, which presents a fascinating example to test the capabilities of Kahane's typology, as Sanskrit rose to its prestigious status surrounded by other Indo-Aryan languages, but not necessarily by spreading proficiency in the language to greater magnitudes of people. Therefore, Sanskrit constitutes a suitable case study for examining the applicability of Kahane's typology to other prestige languages that do not fit the western ideals or definitions of a prestige language.

Thus, my focus is to compare and contrast Sanskrit and English as prestige languages, using Kahane's typology of *western* prestige languages. While there are several different definitions for prestige, there is no doubt from the literature that Sanskrit is considered a prestige

language (Hock & Pandharipande, 1978; Deshpande, 1993, 2008; Pollock, 2006; Sinha, 2013; Ollett, 2016), and I go more into its prestige and power dynamics in my Background section. For the purposes of my thesis, I adopt the following definition to apply to prestige languages, from Sairio & Palander‑Collin (2012):

> Prestige in language essentially refers to the social evaluations that speakers attach to a language rather than to the characteristics of the language system as such. The prestige of a language or a variety is closely connected to the prestige of its speakers, so a variety gains prestige if its speakers have prestige, while the variety of low-prestige people has low prestige.
> (Sairio & Palander‑Collin, 2012, p. 626)

This definition allows both the inclusion of people in the definition of prestige, which is derived from social influence and interactions, as well as the languages themselves which are regarded as prestigious. Such a definition includes both western prestige languages like English, which were dominant in their spread and often tools for colonization, as well as prestige languages like the eastern language Sanskrit, which did not spread in such a dominant fashion. Due to its status as a prestige language, I posit that the patterns of prestige languages proposed by Kahane for western languages will extend to Sanskrit as an ancient eastern prestige language if these patterns truly serve as a typology for all prestige languages, and they should definitely apply to English as a modern example of a prestige language, and I explore this within my thesis.

3 Sanskrit

Sanskrit is a classical Indo-European language, along with other well-known languages like Ancient Greek and Latin. The oldest documented text in Sanskrit is the Ṛgveda (ऋग्वेद), dated to around 1500 BC in northwest India (Woodard, 2008), though the written form is likely the result of multiple centuries' worth of composition and compilation from oral traditions. The Ṛgveda is one of four collections of liturgical hymns sacred to the Hindu religion; they are

known generally as the Vedas, meaning ‘knowledge’. Sanskrit’s unique ties to Hinduism will be important in understanding its role in social prestige and power in ancient India.

The tradition surrounding Sanskrit begins with ancient Hindu sages engaged in deep meditation. Within this deep meditative state, they became aware of the universe in the form of a giant set of vibrations, experienced in the form of sound. These sages carefully documented the sounds they heard, which pulsated throughout every object of their experience, and from these vibrations they derived the approximately 2000 roots that make up Sanskrit, recreating the sounds heard in their deep meditative state: the “perpetual throb of the vibrating universe itself” (Khanna, 2017).

This root-based system meant that a given word can always be broken up into its constituent parts, such as *pādapa*, a Sanskrit word meaning *plant*, or *tree*. This variation in meaning comes from the root-based system, where we can break the word *pādapa* into its two constituent parts: *pāda* meaning *foot* and *pa* meaning *one who drinks*. Thus, anything that can be constituted as “one who drinks from its feet” can be described by the word *pādapa*. Another benefit of this finite, root-based system is that two speakers can converse and create words that have never been spoken before by combining certain roots together, and both speakers will immediately know what this new word means (Khanna, 2017).

The combination of the finite root-based system and the tradition regarding the “discovery,” not “creation,” of Sanskrit creates an atmosphere of mysticism around Sanskrit as an eternal language, a language as old as the universe itself, whose vibrations it emulates. This in turn creates incentive for speakers to preserve the language so that it never changes, in order that the roots remain accurate to their original vibrations discovered by the Hindu sages during their deep meditation.

This notion of Sanskrit as an 'eternal language' is inextricably linked with Hindu religion, prestige, and power. In Hinduism, there are four *varnas* or main social classes: the Brahmins, generally representing Vedic scholars, priests or teachers, the Kṣatriyas, generally administrators and warriors (nobles), the Vaiśyas, who were commoners such as merchants and farmers, and lastly, the Śūdras, who were servants and laborers (Britannica, 2024). The speakers of Sanskrit generally were members of the Indian social elite, comprised of mainly Brahmins and Kṣatriyas; the biggest factor was access to education in Sanskrit (Hock & Pandharipande, 1978), a privilege generally afforded only to an elite few from the higher social classes.

Sanskrit is divided into two subdomains, Vedic and Classical Sanskrit. Vedic Sanskrit represents all of the lexical forms that appear in the Vedas, and Classical Sanskrit refers to the colloquial Sanskrit of the same period of time; both of these subdomains comprise correct Sanskrit as codified by the ancient Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini, who distinguished between *chandas*, the Sanskrit of the Vedic texts, which were recited and chanted, and *bhāṣā*, the colloquial language (Deshpande, 1993). However, it is important to note that:

> While literally the term *bhāṣā* stands for ''language,'' in fact, it actually refers to the upper-class language, in relation to which other forms of Indo-Aryan and non-Aryan languages were viewed as being substandard, as those peoples themselves were placed lower in the social hierarchy.
> (Deshpande, 2008, p. 179)

The prestige of the colloquial languages themselves were based on the social class of their speakers, with the higher classes speaking a colloquial language of higher prestige and the lower classes speaking a colloquial language of lower prestige. In Pāṇini's codification of *bhāṣā*, he codified the more prestigious colloquial language of the higher social classes, not the less prestigious languages of the lower classes. Within this stark linguistic hierarchy, Sanskrit was placed at the top; however, while Sanskrit held the highest prestige, there were still several

varieties of Sanskrit, and the Northwest region of South Asia's dialect of Sanskrit was more archaic and distinct than the Central and Eastern dialects, creating a sociolinguistic environment where "people go to the north to learn language; or, if someone comes from there, they like to hear [= learn] from him" (Hock & Pandharipande, 1978). Because Pāṇini and his *bhāṣā* came from the Northwest (Hock & Pandharipande, 1978), his *bhāṣā* represented the prestigious variety of colloquial Sanskrit, enabling him to successfully codify his variety of Sanskrit *bhāṣā* together with the *chandas* language of the Vedas into a unified prestigious version of Sanskrit. This codification would also have fit in with the desire to preserve perfect Sanskrit speech during ritual, especially for Brahmin priests, but also an overall desire of the social elite to sociolinguistically maintain Sanskrit's prestige by distinguishing it from less prestigious dialects and preserving a codified version of Sanskrit as the language of the educated (Hock & Pandharipande 1978). In this way, the higher social classes were able to maintain the caste system and hierarchy of power to their advantage; the prestige of Sanskrit was reserved only for, and therefore synonymous with, the education of the social elite.

While Sanskrit was present in the form of various dialects, it was not the only language spoken in ancient South Asia. There were also languages called Prākrits, which served as vernaculars, spoken by people with a lesser connection to class, although these languages too had their own hierarchies of prestige. Broadly speaking, Prākrits were any Middle Indo-Aryan language that deviated from Sanskrit in any manner (Ollett, 2016), be it a dialect diverging from a couple prescriptive grammatical norms in the accepted variety(ies) of spoken Sanskrit, or a sister language which was mutually unintelligible with Sanskrit. Prākrits served as common languages, lower than Sanskrit in prestige but a necessary part of everyday life in society, likely overlapping in great part with the 'colloquial' languages mentioned above. A publication by the

author Madhav Deshpande relates the following about Patañjali, who was an influential Sanskrit grammarian who lived three centuries after Pāṇini, and the *Kāmaśāstra*, an Indian literary genre concerning love:

> Patañjali…states that there is a difference between the *śiṣṭabhāṣā* (the language of the learned, the subject of his commentary) and the *lokabhāṣā* (the language of the common people)...The Kāmaśāstra states that a cultured man-about-town should be versed both in Sanskrit and in the vernacular (the *deśabhāṣā*).
> (Deshpande, 2008)

These references allude to some sort of diglossia being present in ancient South Asia, at least for some subset of the population, with a hierarchy between the prestige language (*śiṣṭabhāṣā* or Sanskrit) and the language(s) of the common people (*lokabhāṣā* or *deśabhāṣā*). Deshpande stated that the distinction between the common *lokabhāṣā* and the prestigious *śiṣṭabhāṣā* was "between the notions of *loka* 'world [of speakers]' and *śiṣṭa* 'elite, standard speakers,'" where the *śiṣṭas* were "the repositories of traditional Vedic texts, and the … speakers of the contemporary standard Sanskrit" (Deshpande, 1993, p. 65).

The prestige language was reserved for the educated and social elite, and even then, its most pure form was likely reserved solely for important rituals and ceremonies, not used as a part of everyday life. Deshpande relates that Patañjali referred to certain sages called *Yarvāṇastarvāṇa* who spoke proper Sanskrit during ritual but spoke in vernacular in everyday life, indicating "the actual restricted domain of the use of proper Sanskrit. However, it also suggests that 'improper' or vernacular forms of Sanskrit, more or less close to the known Prākrit languages, were quite common" (Deshpande, 2008, pp. 179-80). While Sanskrit was reserved for social elite, it seems that even then, the most pure form was reserved solely for ritual, and thus was probably reserved to religious figures, namely Brahmins. Likely the majority of social elites did not speak what would have been though as the most proper and pure Sanskrit, but even the few who could speak it reserved this purest form of Sanskrit solely for religious ritual, meaning

that the social elites likely spoke a more prestigious variety of vernacular. Deshpande further states that "even these exceptional people did not speak Sanskrit at all times and in all environments. They felt the need to speak proper Sanskrit only in the context of ritual. … Outside of ritual, they were free to speak the vernaculars" (Deshpande, 2008, p. 180). This circles back to Sanskrit's intimate ties with Hinduism; the "purest" or "true" eternal form of the language was reserved for ritual, lending more to Sanskrit's mysticism, prestige, and power.

As a result of Hinduism's continued prevalence in South Asia throughout history, I'm choosing to analyze Sanskrit within the context of South Asia. There were Hindu empires present in Southeast Asia, but these were often later replaced by Buddhist and Islamic empires later on. These situations have resulted in the existence of a lot of linguistic borrowing from Sanskrit in these locations, with Sanskrit maintaining some type of prestige in certain contexts, but it is not as overt as the prestige that South Asia retains for Sanskrit. This kind of prestige seems to require the continued influence of Hindu culture, where Sanskrit is a crucial aspect of the religious tradition. Because of the fall of the Hindu empires in Southeast Asia, it is also more challenging to find sources to analyze the prestige of Sanskrit through a typology like Kahane's, since the evidence that would have been present in those empires likely was either destroyed or repurposed for the later religious empires that replaced them. Therefore, I recognize that my analysis of Sanskrit cannot encompass all of the places of the past which held Sanskrit in high prestige. Alongside Sanskrit, I examine English as well, given that Kahane names this language as a modern example of a prestige language following the regular patterns of prestige languages, just on a larger, more global scale.

Unlike Sanskrit's gatekeeping of the prestige language among the social elite, in the case of English in European colonization, it was forcibly propagated throughout all colonized

territories. In this case, the prestige language was spread to as many people as possible, with the intent to squash the native language(s) of the colonized communities. These two communities of the classical South Asian social elite and British colonizers employed two very different methods in the maintenance of their prestige languages, one with an outcome that somewhat preserved linguistic diversity (while maintaining harmful social structures), and the other by attempting to completely squash it. This ties into one of the main differences between Sanskrit and English as prestige languages; English was a language of colonization, a dominant language that was spread without regard to class. Halbfass states of the Europeans that they were "driven by the zeal of proselytization and discovery, and by the urge to understand and master foreign cultures" (1988); in order to discover the ways of others, the Europeans would have needed a way to communicate, and what better way than with their own language. In order to understand and replace foreign cultures with their own, they would need to be able to communicate with all social levels of a community, so gatekeeping English would be of no help for achieving that goal. No such parallel happened with Sanskrit; the prestige language was spread through the upper class community, used not as a tool for colonization, but as a tool for creating and preserving social prestige within an elite class; allowing lower social classes easy access to Sanskrit would have been contrary to their motives.

There is also the matter of how religion played into the power structure. In both languages, there was a significant religious component to the power structure, and this along with language prestige played into the creation and maintenance of the social hierarchies. In the case of English, this included missionaries proselytizing indigenous communities and spreading their language as part of that process; in classical South Asia, Sanskrit was included in the religious role of Brahmins, one of the highest social classes in Hindu society. Just like with the

two languages' status as prestige languages, each had different motives in their use of religion with language for power; for Sanskrit, the religion and language were intertwined together, and the mystic knowledge of the Brahmins and their perceived ability to speak bad things into existence to those who didn't obey them kept them high in the power structure. With English, the language was not the original language of Christianity, so no such similar action was possible. Instead, religion was tied with the notion of "civilizing" indigenous populations whom the European colonizers viewed as barbaric and primitive, and one of the strategies used was translating the bible into the local language. Given the two languages's differences in their rises to power and prestige, it is interesting to analyze each through the lenses of Kahanian typologies.

4 Methods

For my methodology, I analyze Sanskrit and English through Henry Kahane's *A typology of the prestige language* (1986), as well as Henry and Renée Kahane's *Decline and Survival of Western Prestige Languages* (1979). In this section, I give an overview of the patterns that Kahane (1986) proposes constitute a typology of prestige languages, with clarification from Kahane and Kahane (1979) on the decline of prestige languages, as well as using the latter source for information on the survival of prestige languages. I perform an analysis of these two papers on English and Sanskrit in order to test how well the patterns stated in these papers hold up against both a prime candidate for Kahane's typology and a prestige language that was not spread to all levels of society in the same way that many of the western prestige languages were.

As mentioned previously, Kahane's (1986) proposed typology is based on western prestige languages that were often dominant languages which spread to other language communities; the prestige languages were often less closely related to the native language(s) of the target community. Sanskrit is not similar in this regard, as the language was not spread to

dissimilar language communities in the same way that a language of colonialism such as English did; therefore, Sanskrit presents an interesting opportunity to test how well Kahane's typology generalizes to another kind of prestige language.

Kahane's typology is split into four parts:

> Even a cursory observation of [western prestige language histories] reveals a recurrent linking of two patterns: that of social contact and that of linguistic impact. A certain political/social constellation favors the appeal and the spread of the language behind it, and this constellation determines the course of events: (a) the social structure of the target culture which is going to absorb that language; (b) the ways in which that language is acquired and integrated; (c) the domains of modernism which it represents; and (d) the causes of its retreat.
> (Kahane, 1986, p. 495)

Thus, Kahane posits that these four points constitute the four parts of the sociopolitical constellation that favor the appeal and spread of the prestige language (with the exception of (d) perhaps), so later on I explore these four aspects as they may or may not pertain to Sanskrit and English.

Part (a) deals with the social structure of the target culture which will absorb the prestige language. In his paper, Kahane notes that depending on the time and culture, "the sector of society in which a familiarity with the prestige language takes root varies" (Kahane, 1986, p. 495), giving examples like the intellectual Romans knowing Greek, the civil servants of Byzantium needing to handle Latin, and the revival of Latin in the Carolingian Empire by the administrations of the Church and State. Kahane states that "in literate societies, one of the primary motivations for acquiring the prestige language is its identification with education, which transfers to it the values of a class symbol" (Kahane, 1986, p. 495). Often, the prestige language spread throughout the educated elite, while the non-aristocratic majority of the population remained monolingual, with examples like Danish nobility sending their sons to France to learn French.

However, it must be noted that many of these western prestige languages have been the tools of colonization and conquest in some fashion: the Romans conquered vast amounts of land and required their territories to speak Latin. French was a language of colonization. The Greeks were always in competition and war between city-states, and perhaps Italian is least similar in this regard, but also the closest linguistic relative to Vulgar Latin. Also, in each of Kahane's examples, the prestige of the language stems from the perceptions other linguistic communities hold for an foreign language. This is in contrast to Sanskrit in South Asia, a language whose prestige remained in the same area where it was spoken.

Part (b) of Kahane's typology focuses on the ways the prestige language is acquired and integrated into the target culture. Kahane expands on this:

> The ways of acquiring the prestige language vary, of course, with the modes of language teaching…the learning of the language was just the first step toward its nativization. The complex process of integration follows traditional channels.
> (Kahane, 1986, p. 496)

In this quote, Kahane mentions traditional channels; I believe what he means here is that there are shared ways that prestige languages are integrated into societies, regardless of the varied ways of acquisition. However, he could equally be implying that the prestige languages are integrated into their respective societies based on the traditional channels of integration for the native society. In either case, the traditional channels he references in terms of integration and nativization include the following: (i) literary texts, (ii) translation, (iii) cultural and bilingual symbiosis, and in special cases, (iv) a reinterpretation of the prestige language's foreign concepts and notions. He gives examples of these through the notion of the 'Greek behind Latin,' as Latin is understood to have undergone a process of Hellenization due to influence from Ancient Greek language and culture. In terms of literary texts, he mentions that "the literary text … introduced syntactic and lexical Grecisms" into Latin, and "modern philologists… [analyzing] the role of

Latin poetry as a medium for transferring Hellenisms, especially syntactic ones" (Kahane, 1986, p. 496). It is not clear whether or not the texts are in the prestige language itself or in the native language, since in this example the literary texts are in Latin, yet Greek is considered the prestige language. Whatever the case, Kahane posits that the literary element plays a role in the integration of the prestige language.

In terms of translation, it is unclear which direction the translation is going; Kahane states the following:

> Translation keeps the source language a reality behind the target language; thus Dietrich (1973:20, n. 76) believes that the stylistic mark of the Vulgar Latin Bible translation, produced during the first three post-Christian centuries, was a high degree of Hellenization.
> (Kahane, 1986, p. 496)

Is this supposed to suggest that the prestige language is translated into the native language, or vice versa, or both? The above quote is all that Kahane mentions on the manner of translation, leaving his meaning here confusing. In the case of the above quote, it would seem that he is referring to translation from the prestige language into the native language, but he does not elaborate on the matter.

In terms of (iii) cultural and bilingual symbiosis, he states that "cultural and bilingual symbiosis provides the optimal conditions for linguistic transmission," and that from the mid-6th to mid-8th centuries, the Vulgar Latin of the city of Ravenna, which was the seat of the Byzantine Exarchate in Italy, "reflects in its many Byzantinisms the impact of the symbiosis" (Kahane, 1986, p. 496).

In terms of part (iv), the reinterpretation of the prestige language's foreign concepts and notions, Kahane notes that the transfer of some prestige languages results in the reinterpretation of some of the prestige language's cultural concepts that do not align with the culture of the local language speakers (Kahane, 1986, p. 496). Such a case was regarded as special and not necessary

for the purposes of the general typology, though he gives us the example of the transfer of Greek theological concepts to a Roman audience involving a reinterpretation of those concepts and notions, due to transplanting them into a new environment (Kahane, 1986, pp. 496-7).

Part (c) focuses on the prestige language's representation of the domains of modernism; Kahane states that "the history of ideas, technology, and manners evolves from the ever-changing domains correlated with each of the successive prestige languages" (Kahane, 1986, p. 497). As an example, "the ideal Roman … had to know Latin to participate in the world's government, and Greek to participate in the world's cultural life" (Toynbee, 1973, as cited in Kahane, 1986).

The last section, part (d), centers on the causes of the prestige language's decline from prominence. This last section is where prestige languages have more individualized reasons for their decline, but Kahane maintains that they still fall into certain patterns. These patterns involve the following: (i) change in class structure, (ii) change in ecclesiastic policy, (iii) demographic changes, (iv) education, (v) vernacular becoming a koiné, (vi) change in symbolic function of the language, and (vii) native language loyalty. Kahane maintains that language and culture are intertwined, and that the "internationally dominant position of a culture leads to a powerful expansion of the language…[and] the very expansion of the language contributes to the prestige of the culture behind it," and that, from a sociolinguistic frame, "prestige comes in with status and elitism; it goes out under the pressures of popular developments and movements which we may call nativist rebellions" (Kahane, 1986, p. 498).

In *Decline and Survival of Western Prestige Languages* (Kahane & Kahane, 1979), the authors devise a typology of the decline of western prestige languages, as well as their hidden survival. In the precursor to the paper's introduction, they state the following patterns that arise among the six western prestigious languages (Greek in Rome, Latin in Byzantium,

Anglo-Norman/AngloFrench, Medieval Latin, Alamode in Germany, and Puristic in modern Greece) that they use as case histories:

> The diglossic system of higher and lower levels, which reflects a class society, is strangled by the low level, which expands under popular pressures. The elite language declines but it does not disappear altogether; rather it compromises with the vernacular, and from their fusion the standard language is born. In short, the languages of the educated are explained as vernaculars refined by the survival of former prestige languages.
> (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 183)

The basis of this typology is the existence of a diglossic system, with a High (H) and Low (L) variety. The H variety, which is the prestige variety, will sometimes be a similar or dissimilar language related to L, other times completely foreign to L, but sociolinguistically H is always close to being foreign, due to its function as a social barrier between H and L speakers. The H language is often spoken for a more finite time, as compared to L, with its beginning and end stemming from distinct sociopolitical configurations. This typology focuses on the patterns leading to the decline of the H variety, as well as its "resurgence, transformed as the vehicle of new functions" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 183).

In terms of the overall patterns in the decline of the H variety, Kahane & Kahane claim that there are sociological and linguistic causes for the language's decline. In terms sociological causes, the significant factors are class, religion, communications, demography, and education. For the linguistics causes, the significant factors are language acquisition, the spread of the vernacular, linguistic symbolism, and language loyalty. These factors are more or less echoed in Kahane 1986, but they are explained in more detail in this paper.

In terms of changes in class structure, the prestige language can be "seriously weakened by a new class structure which gives increased power to groups previously at the margins of, or below the range of, elite society" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 190).

For changes in religion, the authors say that "ecclesiastical realism often dictates linguistic policy" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 191), such as Latin replacing the previously stable tradition of Greek in the liturgy of the Catholic Church in the middle of the 4th century, then later itself being replaced as a religious language by the vernacular during the Reformation.

In terms of communications, "political changes may produce changes in the use of language, particularly if they are correlated with the breakdown of former systems of communication" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 191). An example given includes that of the several Germanic settlements within territories of the Roman Empire, leading to "a severance between East and West-and, through that severance, to a sharp decline in the use of Greek" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 191).

On the topic of demographic changes, two examples given were the large indigenous population of Byzantium along with few Latin-trained officials, creating a challenging (though not impossible) environment for the survival of Latin, and high rates of intermarriage in Norman-conquered England, creating higher rates of bilingualism which undermined the elite status of Anglo-Norman.

Education, combined with language acquisition, is always a big factor, since the prestige language or variety is usually learned as a second language, requiring formal training and/or education. If the training is too rigorous for the payoff, or if the access to education becomes cut off, the chances of survival for the prestige language are greatly reduced; with the Germanic invasions of the Roman Empire, the educational tradition of the wealthy having their children taught the prestigious language of Ancient Greek was no longer possible.

In terms of the spread of the vernacular, the authors state that:

> The vernacular, which tends to become a koine, i.e. the linguistic medium of an ever-widening community, undermines the prestige language-which, up to that point, as

> both the official and the written language, has been functioning (in the absence of a standard) as the one unifying linguistic force in a linguistic culture of regional varieties. (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 192)

For example, in England, the demise of Anglo-French came about in part due to the spread of English in the 14th century.

In terms of the symbolic function of a language, this symbolism sometimes acts against the prestige language, as attitudes shift; for instance, Greek, once thought of as the prestige language of intellectualism (Kahane 1986), began to recede in the 4th century due to its representation of paganism in Western Christian ideology, and gave way to Latin as the language of the Papal Chancery due to Latin's symbols representation of the authority of the Roman State.

In terms of symbolic functions, Kahane & Kahane note that a dominant symbolic function of a language is as a form of national representation, often also called language loyalty, and "where the dichotomy of prestige language and vernacular exists, national pride is symbolized by the latter if the former is not deeply rooted in a prestigious tradition" (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 192).

According to Kahane & Kahane, the decline of the prestige language signifies the end of the diglossic situation, but the disappears only as an autonomous linguistic system:

> The social class which has been its carrier perpetuates itself as a class under new conditions, and does so linguistically by adapting to a pseudo-monolingualism: it embraces the new standard, but incorporates into it features of the former prestige language.
> (Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 193)

The key patterns in the survival of the prestige language lie in its incorporation into the standard language, the use of its lexicon, indirect survival throughout calques, lexemic trickle-down into the L variety, reflection of the prestige language's structure and style in the standard, and receding and feeding chronology. Basically, the claim is that the once autonomous H variety

survives primarily through the incorporation of the lexicon into the standard variety, combining aspects of H with L in the creation of the standard, and through adaptations (calques) and adoptions of words (trickle-down) and other aspects (structure and style) from the H variety to the L variety and the emerging standard. In terms of the chronology regarding receding and feeding, Kahane & Kahane note that the timing may be significant to the ability of declining prestige language to survive. For example, during the decline of Anglo-French as a prestige language in England, "the introduction of French lexemes followed the progressive adoption of English by the upper classes" (Baugh 1957, as cited in Kahane & Kahane, 1979, p. 196). Perhaps, with different timing, English would not have had the same amount of French influence in its standard form.

5 Results

In this section, I address the patterns in the two typologies as they may or may not pertain to Sanskrit and English.

5.1 Analysis of Sanskrit

Beginning with Kahane 1986, I examine how Sanskrit compares to the patterns that Kahane and Kahane posit form a typology for western prestige languages. In doing so, I am aware that I am using typologies intended to describe western, not eastern, prestige languages. However, I think it is important to examine these typologies from another angle, in case they do end up describing an eastern prestige language like Sanskrit satisfactorily, or perhaps with slight alterations to the overall typologies. In addition, there is a greater focus on western prestige

languages, and it is important to reinforce the fact that there are in fact, other prestige languages of the past to consider.

As summarized previously, part (a) of Kahane's *Typology of the prestige language* deals with the social structure of the target culture which will absorb the prestige language. In the case of Sanskrit, this would involve the Hindu caste system of *varnas*, previously mentioned in the Background section. Kahane mentioned that one of the motivations for acquiring a prestige language within literate societies is in its value as a class symbol, tied with education. While literary and liturgical texts were present in Ancient India, education was restricted to the three highest *varnas*, leaving out the fourth class of Śūdras, as well as the Dalits (formerly known as "untouchables," they constitute a "fifth" *varna*, considered to be outcasts who fall outside of the traditional four-sectioned caste system), and the education was often focused on memorization and oral traditions (Deshpande, 1993; Ollett, 2016; Khanna, 2017). Since the majority of people likely didn't have access to a literary education, we can't necessarily categorize Ancient India as a literate society. However, knowledge of Sanskrit was most certainly tied to access to education, and those with access to education came from higher social classes, whose language in turn, true to Sairio & Palander‑Collin's definition, had higher levels of social prestige. Indeed, it was only the language of a select few called *śiṣṭas* who were "the repositories of traditional Vedic texts, and the … speakers of the contemporary standard Sanskrit" and a "small community of selfless and learned Brāhmaṇas of Āryāvarta 'who have attained the highest wisdom in some branch of learning'" that decided the prestigious forms of Sanskrit words, by the fact that "Sanskrit grammarians were able to assert that only those usages which are approved by the *śiṣṭas* generate [religious] merit, or social prestige as we might say today" (Deshpande, 1993, p. 65).

It is clear from these quotes that Sanskrit was inextricably linked with the Hindu religion, and Sanskrit's prestige was tied to the speech of an elite religious and learned minority, educated in the Vedic texts and the 'correct' version of the Sanskrit language. In this way, Sanskrit was also tied to education; the Vedic texts were transmitted orally for centuries with very little variation before they were even written down (Pollock, 2006; Woodard, 2008; Ollett, 2016), meaning that some rigorous type of education was in place to allow students of the texts to commit them to memory accurately. Thus, a student of the Vedas would need access to a learned teacher, and such an opportunity was likely only to arrive for the highest *varnas* of Hindu society, reinforcing the prestige of Sanskrit with the social prestige of elite society.

Part (b) of the typology focuses on the acquisition and integration of the prestige language into the target culture, referring to four traditional channels for the process of integration, which are (i) literary texts, (ii) translation, (iii) cultural and bilingual symbiosis, and in special cases, (iv) reinterpretation foreign concepts and notions inherent to the culture of the prestige language. Whether these traditional channels refer to the presumably shared ways prestige languages are integrated into societies or if they refer to prestige languages being integrated into their respective target societies based on those target societies's individual traditional channels of language integration remains unclear.

Depending on the timeframe of our understanding of Ancient India, Sanskrit was not widely spread in written form until the Common Era; before this point, Prākrits and other South Asian languages were the common languages used for royal inscriptional eulogies and general literary works (Pollock, 2006). In a sense, one could argue that in this way, the expansion of Sanskrit's written realm around the turn of the Common Era constitutes the "literary text" of Sanskrit, even though the Vedas, regarded as sacred, eternal, and unauthored, were written down

at least a millennia beforehand, and they likely were passed down orally for several centuries before being written down. The shift from Prākrits and other South Asian languages to Sanskrit definitely represents a culture-specific traditional channel in the sense that the roles that other languages previously played, such as for literature or inscriptional eulogies, were subsequently taken over by Sanskrit. However, unlike in Kahane's 'Greek behind Latin' example, the literary text here is written in the prestige language. Whether or not this difference is significant in the patterns of the typology is unclear, but if we maintain that literary texts in general serve to integrate the prestige language, we resolve this problem.

In terms of translation, Kahane is vague about which direction the translation is going, though his single example implies that it might refer to translation from the prestige language into the native language. In the case of Sanskrit in ancient South Asia, the knowledge of Vedic texts and proper Sanskrit were highly gatekept to an elite few, so this hardly seems to be the case. Due to Sanskrit's nature as an esoteric language, it likely is also not the case that works in other languages were translated into Sanskrit. Overall it is more likely that translation was not a big factor in Sanskrit's integration as a prestige language; in fact, this would probably reduce the mysticism surrounding the power of Brahmins and their use of Sanskrit in rituals.

In terms of cultural and bilingual symbiosis, there wasn't necessarily a need for cultural symbiosis, since the culture which housed Sanskrit also housed many vernaculars and Prākrits of lesser prestige, all within the same tradition of Hinduism. In terms of bilinguality, there was some amount of diglossia present, at minimum for those learned in Sanskrit, who spoke proper Sanskrit in ritual and more prestigious varieties of the vernacular or Prākrits outside of ritual. I wouldn't necessarily qualify these cases as cultural and bilingual symbiosis though, since the context for these terms seems to imply a difference between the cultural backgrounds of the

prestige language and the native language; in the case of Sanskrit in South Asia, the prestige language was part of the same cultural background as the less prestigious vernaculars and Prākrits.

In terms of the reinterpretation of the prestige language's foreign concepts and notions, Kahane notes that the transfer of some prestige languages results in the reinterpretation of some of the prestige language's cultural concepts that do not align with the culture of the local language speakers (Kahane 1986, p.496). Such a case was regarded as special and not necessary for the purposes of the general typology, and initially it seemed that it was indeed unnecessary, especially in the content of South Asia, where the Sanskrit was the sacred language of Hinduism, the established religion of the region, and Prākrits and other South Asian languages were related to Sanskrit. However, if we shift the regional focus from South Asia to Southeast Asia, Hinduism spread throughout that region before the arrivals of Buddhist and Islamic religions (Coedès, 1975), so perhaps it is possible that such a case occurred in the case of the spread of Sanskrit and Hinduism to Southeast Asia, where several languages still possess large amounts of lexical borrowing from Sanskrit and Pāli, a Middle Indo-Aryan language closely related to Sanskrit. However, as that region is not the focus of the Sanskrit analysis in this paper, I will not explore this idea further here, though Sanskrit's overall nature as a prestige language may also fulfill the requirements of this special case for prestige languages.

Part (c) focuses on the prestige language's representation of the domains of modernism; Kahane states that "the history of ideas, technology, and manners evolves from the ever-changing domains correlated with each of the successive prestige languages" (Kahane, 1986, p. 497). In terms of Sanskrit in ancient South Asia, this once again seems like a difficult section of the typology to map to Sanskrit's environment, and indeed it seems to serve more as a representation

of the domains of conservatism and enforcing the status quo of the Hindu caste system. However, this serves as another place where if we shift the regional focus of Sanskrit to its influences in Southeast Asia, perhaps in some ways it served as a representation of modernism there, as author George Coedès states that:

> The adoption of Hinduism brought in its train the Indian way of life, and the adoption of the Indian way of life brought in its train the practice of Hinduism. The Indians brought the native chiefs not only a complete administration but an administrative technique capable of being adapted to new conditions in foreign countries.
> (Coedès, 1975, p. 25)

With the practice of Hinduism came Sanskrit, the language of the sacred Hindu texts, along with "all this technical and didactic literature in Sanskrit [which] must greatly have facilitated the penetration of Indian culture abroad" (Coedès, 1975, p. 26). Coedès also states that in some parts of what he called Farther India, "the penetration of Indian culture was perhaps in part the work of natives impressed by a superior civilization" (Coedès, 1975, p. 26). Within the framework of these three quotes, it is possible that in Southeast Asia, Sanskrit served as a form of representation of the domains of "modernism," as it pertains to a new way of ruling and a new religious tradition, although this would be replaced by Buddhist and Islamic empires later on. However, in the case of classical Sanskrit in Ancient India, the prestige of Sanskrit likely did not serve as a representation of modernism so much as a reminder of the accepted eternality of the language, and the importance of preserving its purest form in order to reinforce the notion of its eternal, unchanging nature. In this case, Kahane's part (c) of his typology does not allow for the inclusion of Sanskrit's prestigious nature in ancient India.

The last section, part (d), centers on the causes of the prestige language's decline from prominence, which is explained in more detail in Kahane & Kahane's *Decline and Survival of Western Prestige Languages* (1979). The patterns of the decline of prestige languages are the most varied, with significant factors including changes in class structure, religion,

communications, demography, education, language acquisition, spread of the vernacular, linguistic symbolism, and language loyalty.

The authors note that changes in class structure can weaken the prestige language when increased power is given to previously marginalized groups. In the case of Sanskrit, there hasn't really been a change in class structure, as the caste system derived from the Hindu *varnas* still affects all aspects of Indian society today.

On the topic of changes in religion, according to a U. S. Department of State report (2022), the overwhelming majority of the population, at nearly 80%, practice Hinduism as their religion, so a change in religion is not a factor for Sanskrit here.

In terms of communications, political changes may have been a factor in the changes in the type of prestige for Sanskrit in the Southeastern Asian language context, especially with the arrival of Buddhist and Islamic empires, but in the context of South Asia, the prestige of Sanskrit has survived even now, after British colonization of India. With its perpetual existence as an esoteric language, big political changes did little to keep it from maintaining its esoteric nature.

In terms of demographic changes, to my knowledge there haven't been any stark shifts like the high rates of intermarriage that happened in England that weakened the prestige status of Anglo-Norman.

In terms of education, access to education in modern times is more accessible, but in terms of access to Sanskrit, an culture of exclusivity remains. My professor, Varun Khanna, went to study Sanskrit in India, and his teacher would not teach students of lower castes, but because he was an American, she taught him, as technically speaking, Americans fall outside of the caste system, and socially, Americans are placed at the top of the caste system. Education is mentioned as a particularly significant factor for a prestige language, as the language is often a secondary,

learned one, and in the case of Sanskrit, rigorous learning is involved in order to master it. The tradeoff between the work and payoff of mastery is always a concern for the prestige language's survival, and here Sanskrit's already exclusive nature can contribute to its decline.

In terms of the spread of the vernacular, the vernaculars and Prākrits of South Asia were already the exoteric, common languages spoken; while Sanskrit held highest prestige, it was not the everyday language, at least not the 'pure' form. However, there were likely high prestige varieties of less pure, spoken Sanskrit like that of Pāṇini which served as vernaculars for an elite minority. However, with the variety of Prākrits and vernaculars abound in South Asia, Sanskrit and vernaculars existed in a diglossic environment without causing the decline of Sanskrit, so this doesn't seem to be a factor for Sanskrit in South Asia either.

In terms of changes in view of the symbolic function, Sanskrit served as the language of Hinduism in the past, and remains tied to Hinduism now; with the majority of India's present population practicing Hinduism, the views towards Sanskrit don't seem to have changed. In terms of language loyalty, Sanskrit was never perceived as a national language in and of itself, however in India, it is one of the 22 recognized languages of the constitution of India, though many more are spoken in the area as well (Britannica, 2024). Given that many languages are spoken in India, and there were also various languages in ancient times, the prestige of Sanskrit has not been affected by language loyalty; in fact, there are certain areas where Sanskrit is the primary language spoken (Britannica, 2024).

It is difficult to quantify the changes in prestige of Sanskrit, since even today when someone says they are studying Sanskrit, their audience will likely display amazement and comment on how sophisticated and impressive it is. It is entirely possible that Sanskrit has still

not seen its decline, at least not in the way we have seen for the western prestige languages that the Kahanes mention in their typologies.

In Kahane & Kahane's typology of the survival of a prestige language, they maintain that the diglossic system of higher and lower levels is strangled by the low level, while the elite language fuses into the common language to become the standard language. Though Sanskrit was not the only language spoken by the elite, it was the most standardized language, given its artificial nature of not being able to change, and from its written records, historical linguists have been able to place it within the Indo-European language family. It is also related to Indo-Aryan languages, and languages like Hindi, a standardized language spoken in India today are descended from Sanskrit. In this way, their is some truth to the typology of survival. Additionally, as mentioned previously, many Southeastern Asian languages have lots of lexical borrowings from Sanskrit; though outside the scope of this paper, these might also constitute examples of the lexical 'survival' of Sanskrit in those areas, even after its mystic prestige declined.

After examining Sanskrit through the lens of these Kahanian typologies, I conclude that Kahane (1986) and Kahane & Kahane (1979) do not constitute suitable typologies for the patterns of prestige associated with Sanskrit. I think that a big part of this is due to the unique nature of Sanskrit in South Asia being perceived as prestigious within the same community that speaks various other vernaculars, For all of the western prestige language that were mentioned, their prestige came from the prestige held by speakers of a different cultural community. It would be interesting to test Kahane's typology of implied western languages on a western prestige language with the same type of sociolinguistic background. However, such a western language likely didn't exist, hence, these Kahanian typologies. However, English creates a good

counterexample to examine, as English has become a global prestige language, and for a great number of people, English is their first language, and held as prestigious both where they live and in foreign lands. In the next section, I examine Kahanian typologies, which were specifically tailored towards western prestige languages, in the context of English, the present-day, global prestige language from the West.

5.2 Analysis of English

Unlike my analysis of Sanskrit, which is focused on mainly on Sanskrit within a South Asian context, my analysis of English consists of a broader scope, given its global scope as a dominant western prestige language.

Part (a) deals with the social structure of the target culture which will absorb the prestige language, and one of the motivations for acquiring the prestige language in literate societies is in its value as a class symbol, tied with education. In terms of English, this has been all but apparent; even Kahane mentions it in the beginning of his paper:

> English is the great laboratory of today's sociolinguist. We are aware of the role of English in our time, 'the other tongue' on a global scale. A blooming industry, acronymed TESL and ESL and TESOL, has sprung up on the dry soil of English grammar. (Kahane, 1986, p. 495)

Throughout English's growth as a global prestige language, a good deal of its prestige has been in its value as a class symbol tied with education. English was taught to colonized indigenous populations through forced education to "civilize" them; often prohibiting speech in indigenous languages. From the beginning of it rise, English has been tied to education, and now it is so much so that there are several industries that are able to profit off of the teaching of English alone. In this way, English encapsulates the first section of Kahane's typology.

Part (b) of the typology relates the ways that the prestige language is acquired and integrated into the target culture, with integration through literary texts, translation, cultural and bilingual symbiosis, and in special cases, a reinterpretation of the prestige language's foreign concepts. In the case of English, British missionaries proselytized indigenous communities around the globe, translating the Bible into native languages in order to achieve their goals of converting and "civilizing" them. In the modern age, there are constant examples of literary works, books, movies, all sorts of media, originally in English, being translated into other languages, and vice versa, especially when it comes to subtitles in films. In terms of cultural and bilingual symbiosis, this has perhaps pervaded a lot of aspects of countries, especially those with high rates of tourism; often such areas will have higher rates of bilingualism and cultural symbiosis with English-speaking culture, in order to appeal to English-speaking tourists, even when English is not considered a national language of such countries. With the global scope of English, it is highly likely that there were many cases of reinterpreted concepts when British colonizers forced the education of English on indigenous populations.

Part (c) focuses on the prestige language's representation of the domains of modernism; once again, this describes English as a prestige language very concretely. In addition to holding prestige as a class symbol of education, English is held as a beacon of modernism, a reflection of one's identity as part of the modern world. English is thought of as a language of the successful, especially in the United States, where it is associated with the 'American Dream'.

English fits Kahane's typology nearly perfectly, and as a western prestige language, it should. This gives more weight Kahane's typology as a typology for western prestige languages. However, the last section remarks on general patterns of decline of prestige languages. This is where Kahane (1986) believes that the western prestige languages of the past give us insight on

what the future may hold for English. The patterns include changes in class structure, religion, communications, demography, education, language acquisition, the spread of the vernacular, linguistic symbolism, and language loyalty.

Given that English is still a prestige language in our own time, the rest of this analysis is more speculative, since we can't know for sure how English will decline from its prestigious status, and even if it will. However, it is hard to imagine that changes in class structure would bring about the decline of English, since many countries where English is spoken have less fixed class structures, and English is spoken throughout all levels of those societies. Just as Kahane mentioned that the patterns in English's rise to prestige are not new, just on a larger scale, it would likely take a global change in class structure to cause the decline of English's prestige on account of class structure.

Even less likely to bring about English's decline is religion. While the British, as well as other European missionaries, spread their religion by translating the Bible into indigenous languages, the religious introductions of English in these places isn't necessarily the reason that English holds prestige. English's prestige is strongly defined by its symbolism of modernity and power, not religion. Unlike Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, English has never held liturgical prestige in the same sacred sense as these other languages.

In terms of changes to communications, political changes have the potential to cause the decline of English, but once again this would likely need to involve global changes, or political changes in some of the currently most powerful English-speaking nations that cause the social value of English to diminish substantially.

In terms of demography, with the global scope that English already has as a prestige language, changes in demography will have little effect on English's spread.

In terms of education, this is likely one of the biggest factors in the success of English. If access to education in English changes, then it will be less accessible to learn the language. However, with the wide availability of industries related to teaching English, from teachers to apps, to movies and videos, it would take a change in the global access to all kinds of education to cause the decline of English.

In terms of language acquisition, English is not the easiest language to learn; however, with its current symbolism and power, this does not stop people from trying to learn it. However, if English does begin to decline as a prestige language, the challenge of language acquisition may become an accelerant of its decline.

In terms of the spread of the vernacular, English, if thought of as an H variety, has several L languages depending on the area in which is is spoken. In these places, the vernaculars, being the languages spoken before English rose to such high levels of prestige, were already widespread, meaning that English already overtook the prestige of the present languages in its rise to prestige. This same logic could be applied to other western prestige languages, like Greek in the Roman Empire or Italian as the lingua franca of the Mediterranean. But in the case of English, once again, the global nature makes it seems less probable that the spread of vernacular will cause the decline of English unless it happens on a global scale; once again, something else would need to have happened to decrease the prestige of English so much that globally, the spread of the respective vernaculars shut out English. As long as English stands as a symbol of modernism and holds power, that likely won't happen.

This leads us to linguistic symbolism and language loyalty. English will likely remain prevalent, if not prestigious for a long time, since it is a native language for a great number of global speakers. As a global language, it also allows people to communicate internationally, a

convenient tool to have, and a costly one to lose. Given the fact that monolingual English speakers will only have English, and bilingual English speakers would lose the ability to communicate with a broader audience, I don't think language loyalty will be the fall of English as a prestige language. However, linguistic symbolism may be the key. English is strongly associated with modernism and success; however, if a large enough population of the world concludes that either this modernism is harmful, bad, or immoral, or that English is not the purveyor of modernism and success as was so highly thought, this could set the stage for the decline of English, followed in turn by the other patterns of decline.

In terms of survival after decline, words from the English lexicon are consistently being incorporated into the lexicons of the world's languages, whether verbatim or with phonological or morphological alterations. Even with a decline of English as a global prestige language, it will likely still remain prestigious in some contexts, and its lexicon will be preserved in the lexicons of many languages around the world.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I examined Sanskrit and English through the Kahaian typologies of the patterns associated with western prestige languages. It is clear that these typologies were created specifically for the patterns seen in western prestige languages, which often included languages that were held as prestigious in foreign lands which had linguistics communities different from the prestige language. This turned out to be a key reason why Sanskrit's prestige within the South Asian context failed to work with Kahane's (1986) typology, as Sanskrit in this context was prestigious within the same context of similar languages, all within the same cultural and

religious background. Perhaps a closer analysis of Sanskrit within the context of Southeastern Asia might have shown more similarities to the western prestige languages.

While the Kahanian typologies do not work for Sanskrit in the South Asian context, I think this is still a significant fact to discuss, since western languages are focused on much more often than other languages. As Berl III noted, the literature regarding prestige is inconsistent and fragmented, and mainly focused on WEIRD societies, and this affects our ability to analyze topics outside of this framework. Significantly, it was relatively easy to find a typology on western prestige languages, but not one on eastern prestige languages, or one on the general patterns of all prestige languages. While it is significant that such a paper that maps so well onto western prestige languages exists, it begs the question: why does there not exist a respective typology or conversation for eastern prestige languages, and how can we connect Sanskrit, English, and all other prestige languages of the world throughout history, through their patterns in their rise and decline in prestige?

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