

# **Impact of Globalisation on the English Language and English Language Teaching**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Globalisation has had varied effects on different aspects of the world, be it social, political or economical. Its impact is very strongly felt on the English language and regional languages and cultures in India. English has emerged as a lingua franca of the global network and has substantially marginalized regional languages. English is a global language today and proficiency in speaking the language is being considered as a pre requisite tool for success in the world market. The present paper seeks to analyse the importance of the English language in the contemporary market scenario and the ways in which globalization has affected the English language, teaching English to non-native speakers, and regional languages.

**Key words:** Globalisation, Language, Foreign language learners, lingua franca

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

It is usually accepted that the term ‘globalisation’ was coined and had been in circulation since the 1980s and that it is basically a post- modern phenomenon. But in reality it is a long historical process that has simply been accelerated towards the later part of the twentieth century. Today globalization has had and will continue to have effects on many aspects of society, including language [1]. One major consequence of globalization is the increased spread and interconnectedness of languages, in particular the English language. It is known that the English language is becoming increasingly widespread across the globe. Furthermore, it has been estimated that only one fourth of all English users worldwide are native speakers, and most non -native speakers using English do so in the absence of native speakers[2].

## **II. DISCUSSION**

Our world is home to 7,105 living languages; among them 1,481 are in trouble and 906 are dying. If nothing is done half these languages spoken today will disappear by the end of this century. Seemingly, with the extinction of unwritten and undocumented languages, humanity would lose not only a cultural wealth but also important ancestral knowledge embedded, in particular, in indigenous languages. Among all these languages “English” is the only language which is spoken by more people as a second language than a first language and as observed by Crystal [3] non native speakers of English outnumber native speakers by a ratio of 3 to 1. He states that “a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (p. 3). He indicates that English is not the most significant global language because it is the mother tongue in most countries, but rather it is because of the special roles English plays within countries. The socioeconomic power embedded in English language gives it a high social status and encourages people to adopt it as the language in global context.

The last few decades have seen a growth in the role of the English language around the globe as the lingua franca for economic, scientific and political exchange. According to Crystal, 85% of the world’s international organizations use English as their official language in transnational communication. About 85% of the world’s important film productions and markets use English, and 90% of the published academic articles are written in English. One of the chief features of globalization is the technological advancement. And it is best exemplified in the emergence of internet. The spread of English as an international language and the emergence of the internet as a fast communication channel that has no boundaries, are mutually enforcing trends in an age of globalization. Since its inception, the internet has revolutionized the ways of human communication as well as the learning and teaching of the English language. It is the rise of computer-mediated communication and the internet, more than anything else, which has reshaped the use of computers for language learning at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the advent of the internet, the computer—both in society and in the classroom—has been transformed from a tool for information processing and display to a tool for information processing and communication. For the first time, learners of a language can now communicate inexpensively and quickly with other learners and speakers of the target language all over the world. The internet has also an ever growing impact on the lexical, phonetic, syntactic standards of

language, and the great importance that most teachers place on the use of 'correct' language. For example, this global technology has led to the evolution of an abbreviated English language that emerged in chat groups and in what is referred to as the virtual world.

Examples for this feature include, 2day (today), cu(seeyou), b4(before), RUOK?(Are you OK?), c%l(cool), to mention but a few. Capital letters are also given syllabic values, as in thN (then), nEd (need) in internet communications. In one creation such as ru2cnme18r?(Are you two seeing me later?), less than half the characters used in the traditional sentence formation are used. It seems that sentence length will tend to be short, and that certain types of complex structures (relative clauses, for instance) will be avoided in internet communication. In everyday conversation, terms from the computer technology are given a new application among people who want their talk to have a "cool" tone (great, terrific). Such examples include: It's my turn to download now (I've heard all your gossip, now hear mine) She's multitasking (She is doing two things at once) E you later (farewell—see you later). The internet seems to have important implications for linguistics or language learning.

Traditionally, the approaches used to study languages have been prescriptive and descriptive. Prescriptivism represents the view that one variety of language has an inherently higher value than others, and that this variety of language ought to be imposed on the whole of the speech community. It usually prefers a version of the standard written language, which most closely reflects the literary style of great classics in a language. Those who speak or write in a standardized variety are termed to be using the language 'correctly'; those who do not are termed to be using it 'incorrectly'. An example for correct usage of grammar in English is 'Never begin a sentence with 'an'. The prescriptive approach ignores the realities of everyday usages of language, where most people do begin sentences with 'an'. The descriptive approach, by contrast, does not condemn usages that do not follow the standardized rules of language set by linguistics. Rather, it describes the variations in usage found within a language, and explains the reasons for variations in usages. For example, the American usage favors the spelling 'encyclopedia', whereas, traditional British usage favours the spelling 'encyclopaedia'. Due to the dominant influence of the USA on the UK during the twentieth century, the American spelling was increasingly accepted and found in British publications.

The short messages have become so very common in everyday usage that we hardly ever think of these as something incorrect. For instance, good nite (good night), so wot (so what), @home(at home), etc. are commonly-used daily expressions

One of the effects of globalization is in English Language Teaching. It cannot be denied that teaching learning process has also been affected by globalization. The use of computer or laptop, TV, tape recorder, LCD, e-mail, blog, indicates that the globalization has changed the media of teaching. Before globalization, most teachers used simple teaching media such as pictures, blackboard or whiteboard, real things, or others. However, now, most of the teachers widely use computer or laptop, LCD, e-mail or etc in supporting the teaching learning process.

Moreover, earlier the emphasis of teaching English was on teaching English literature. While this approach may not have really helped learning English for day-to-day purposes, there was no doubt that it helped broaden the perspective of the students. But now the emphasis has changed. The focus is primarily on communicational purposes. English is viewed as a language of opportunities that can fetch a job in the present market.

This dominance of the English language helps to spread it. People will learn it in order to function more on a global scale. Along with the spread of the dominant language, the language's culture is also spreading. English is running rampant across the globe. People want to speak English, because it is the language of advertising, blockbuster movies, and pop music, as well as a vital tool for success. However, with globalization allowing English to spread and dominate on a global scale, it also leads to the extinction of other languages and cultures.

Unfortunately, globalization has contributed to the endangerment and extinction of many languages. Many parents push their children to learn English over their own minority language because they believe it will give their children an advantage in the global world. These parents mistakenly believe that children can only learn one language, and choose the dominant language over their own. Thus, children no longer speak their native tongue, and the language takes its first step into endangerment and extinction.

A second way globalization aids the endangerment and extinction of languages is through migration of people and their native languages. Globalization makes it easier for people to move outside. For example, Indians mostly migrate to the US, Australia or Canada. These people would always prefer their children learn English first, no matter whether they learn their mother tongue or not.

There is no denial that a language is extremely vital to a culture's existence. Language contributes to the formation of culture, such as through vocabulary, greetings, humor, etc. Language is in a sense the substance of culture. Without a language, people would lose their cultural identity. This trend has very much started in India. A country where the people were so proud of its rich cultural heritage once have started losing their cultural identities.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Globalisation has tremendously affected the English language, its teaching and other languages in its stride to become the global language. With the fastchanging economic scenario in the twenty first century, English is primarily becoming the language of the 'global village', thereby marginalizing all other languages. Globalisation has also significantly affected teaching of the English language, bringing about changes in the pedagogy and the tools of the teaching process.

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