

GLOBALISATION AND THE SPREAD OF ENGLISH

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Annotation: 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, affects

Globalization originated with trade and marketing and crossed the national boundaries to connect people. Globalization has brought everything together but the English language made Globalization more possible and effective one. Due to globalization, English language emerged as a global force.

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. 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.

Globalization can be defined as the “intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990: 64). Considering this increasing relationship between localities, and between local happenings and global

forces, there are two main reasons why studies of language are important to understandings of globalization.

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 un written 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 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. 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 20th 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 ‘correct’ language. 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. 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

CONCLUDING REMARKS

English as a global language has been used by people in the world as a first language, a second language and a foreign language. The domination of English over local languages may cause the speakers of English in the outer and expanding circles to experience mixed feelings of happiness and disappointment. This, in turn, makes those people treat English in such a way that makes it submit to their will. They speak English in the way they want it. In addition to English, they will also try to use their own local language(s) in regional forum and regional contacts. Thus, the status of English in regional communication might be challenged by the local languages, and, in the future, the role of English in the regions may decrease.

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