



THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article defines globalization in every sphere of life and provides brief information about the latest trends and techniques to be incorporated in molding the academic careers of modern students. It highlights how things are going on as far as teaching of English is concerned in the global context. The need of the hour is a radical change in the prescription of the syllabus and the methods of training to face global competition. There are a few suggestions regarding the remedies to be taken to foster and promote the quality of higher education. English is the window through which we can see and understand the world.

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“English is the language on which the sun does not set, whose users never sleep.

-Randolph Quicrk and H.G.Widdowson.

“Globalization as defined by OALD is the fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multinational companies and of improved communication”. In other words, at international level as far as communication in English is concerned, the whole world has become a small village due to the use of English language at international level. Much like oil or the microchip, English is used globally. Life will become paralyzed if petrol and computers are not available any more. Similarly we may find it difficult to function in any sphere of activity, if we do not understand or speak English. It is not without reason that English is called the global language. It is estimated that a quarter of the world's population knows English. This means that about 1.5 Billion people are reasonably competent in using English. It is not just the number of people who use English that

makes it an international language. Many other factors contribute to its status:

- The economic and political power of those who speak the language.
- The military power of the countries that use English.
- The social role it plays all over the world.

English is the language of the internet, international business and communication. It is the language of capitalism in the present day world.

Prof. N.Krishna Swamy and Lalitha Krishna Swamy point out: “Till the beginning of the nineteenth century, users of English from the colonies tried to speak the language as the people of Britain did. Gradually, some people started using more regionally suitable varieties of English, including structures which resembled their own mother tongues. The native speakers of English from England have reconciled to the fact that a language that has spread to so many parts of the world is found to change in some ways. A language becomes



global only because it has the ability to adapt and blend with other cultures and can give and take from them”.

The current global trend in teaching of communication skills is towards developing an all-round skill set. This involves a thorough grounding not just in all four language abilities reading, writing, listening and speaking but in the basics of soft skills as well. Multinational companies look for young people possessing the right blend of communication skills as well as good people skills. This is all due to the impact of globalization. Listed below a number of soft skills considered to be the most sought after by employers because of the impact of globalization on English language. There are:

- Social Skills
- Communication Skills
- Flexibility
- Creative Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Skills
- Confidence

Kenneth Chastain asserts that, “The study of the past may not unlock the unopened doors of the future, but being familiar with what has preceded provides a key to the understanding of the way things are and why they are that way. Teachers, especially, need to be attuned to the tenor of the times and be able to adjust to the curriculum revisions brought about by shifting political, economic, and social conditions. Teaching does not occur in a vacuum. Any subject occupies a position in the curriculum to meet a need of school population. Second-language teaching is no exception. As conditions change, course objectives also need to change”.

Keeping in mind the above mentioned points, our beloved Prime Minister leaves no stone unturned in order to improve the standards at UG and PG level not only of English but also other subjects in order to train the youth for global competition. Since a decade China is ahead of us in higher education. At global level there are more Chinese in America than the Indians. Moreover, all the potential students must be familiar with the

latest trends and techniques by keeping themselves abreast of latest developments at global level. In fact the Prime Minister made every effort to introduce a four- year- degree course at JNU, the scheme has been shelved because of political pressures. Now a days Indians should be diligent, disciplined and industrious in order to learn the latest soft skills and multiple intelligences. Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers point out: “Multiple Intelligences (MI) refers to a learner-based philosophy that characterizes human intelligence as having multiple dimensions that must be acknowledged and developed in education. Traditional IQ or intelligence tests are based on a test called the Stanford-Binet, founded on the idea that intelligence is a single, unchanged, inborn capacity. However, traditional IQ tests, while still given to most school children, are increasingly being challenged by the MI movement. MI is based on the work of Howard Gardner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (Gardner 1993). Gardner notes that traditional IQ tests measure only logic and language, yet the brain has other equally important types of intelligence.”

Therefore, the modern generation should work qualitatively by getting proper training in a novel and pragmatic manner. An educationist by name Gardner argues that all humans have these intelligences, but people differ in the strengths and combinations of intelligences. He believes that all of them can be enhanced through training and practice. (Ibid). Of course, the way English is spoken and written differs from country to country because of the impact on English of their regional languages. In this context the major types of English are British Standard English, American English, Indian English, African English and so on. The famous novelist R.K. Narayan who carved a niche for Indian Fiction in English a place in the world map observes: “In American restaurants they call for ‘Toasted English’, referring to English muffins which, though being made in America, now retain ‘English’ as a sort of concession to their origin. The same may be said of the Americans’ language too. They too went through a phase of throwing out the British but retaining their language and letting it flourish on American soil: the



resultant language is somewhat different from its British counterpart: it may be said to have gone through a process of toasting. One noticeable result of this toasting is that much of the formalism surrounding the use of English has been abandoned”.

He further asserts that Indians should develop Bharat Brand of English which would be acceptable at international level. Americans have evolved certain basic keywords which may be used anywhere, anyhow, words which have universal, multi-purpose use. Similarly, Indians should develop English in such a broad manner and its use should not be confined only to halls of learning, justice or administration. English must adopt the complexion of our life and assimilate its idiom. Bharat English will respect the rule of law and maintain the dignity of Grammar; but still have a Swedish stamp about it unmistakably. How it can be achieved is a question for practical men to tackle. On this issue a lot of research and debate has been going on and there are two types of approaches which represent different ways of thinking about an understanding of the world around us.

About the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research David Nunan points out: “Underlying the development of different research traditions and methods is a debate on the nature of knowledge and the status of assertions about the world, and the debate itself is ultimately a philosophical one. It is commonly assumed that the function of research is to add to our knowledge of the world and to demonstrate the ‘truth’ of the commonsense notions we have about the world.’

The authorities concerned should probe into the matter seriously and sincerely regarding the latest methods of imparting education to the modern generation keeping in mind the global competition and prepare them in such a way as to enhance their potentiality and prospects of employability.

I would like to offer a few remedial measures for fostering and promoting the latest skills and knowledge required for the present day generation.

- The infrastructure, and highly qualified teachers and qualitative excellence in education are a must for every institution.

- I understand from reliable sources that in professional colleges the standards are quite low and there are no adequate teachers to mould their (students) careers.
- Government should give grants wherever necessary at least to the best institutions accredited by UGC authorities.
- There should be proper supervision of the functioning of colleges and Universities.
- As our Prime Minister repeatedly says in our country and abroad, “There should be honesty in everything we do” and then we can find a solution for any kind of tough problem.

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