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### Abstract

*Before elaborating the role and significance of English as a language of global communication, it will be pertinent to understand and define some aspects of the conceptual grid around the term 'globalization'. Globalization, as it emerged as a powerful force across the world around the later decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has its antecedents in older trade and commerce between countries before and during colonial-imperial history. Today it is a complex process involving world-wide diffusion of cultural products, the streamlining of international manufacturing of products, the standardization of global financial markets and the prevalence of new media technology which transmits its content everywhere in the world. Often described as 'the shrinking of the planet', the reality is the opposite: globalization is the result of the massive expansion of the processes and enterprises that were once national or regional in scale and scope.*

**Key words:** Communication, English, Globalization, Language, Skill, World.

### Introduction

The process of globalization was initiated as an economic measure primarily concentrating on trade practices. However, it soon became a phenomenon affecting social, political, economic and cultural concerns in nations and beyond them. Its domination arguably emerging from the West in general and North America in particular, has come to characterize modern social life, blurring boundaries of nationhood and has made the question of human identity more acute. Indeed, globalization with its powerful and dramatic expansion has involved breaking, negotiating and regenerating barriers and boundaries. What has resulted in the questioning of numerous notions, stereotypes and certainties that were once thought invincible? National identities add local control, political and economic hegemonies stand to get deflated, so that reaction and response to new realities has become inevitable. The drastic shift in psychological experience has meant individuals and groups to introspect change the older points of views and expectations. Globalization, like several new and striking transformations in multi-disciplines, has forced the human mind to access and re-access the ideologies and theoretical concepts influencing one's thought process. This involves too, to force the changing concepts of identity and belonging, history and its fallout to force a new mediation between the past and the present. However, globalization in practically all spheres of life, the access to material and ideas just a click of the computer away has, formed rampant consumerism, at once imprisoning and liberating the human mind and sensibility.

Undoubtedly, within these shifts social taboos, politics, media and literature have been going through a charming process.


There are today several varieties of globalization—technological, economic, political, social, cultural, intellectual, ideological and so forth. Enough to state that the overwhelming force of globalization marks the coming of institutions like The World Bank, United Nations, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, International Court of Justice, not to mention multinational corporations like Ford, Coca-Cola, and Microsoft whose business today reaches every corner of the world. But James Clifford, an American anthropologist makes a counter-claim that millions in poorer parts of the world are completely unaware of globalization and its impact. However it goes without saying that one of the most compelling shift is the climate change which is a global phenomenon, whether one is aware of it or not.

The impact of globalization and its affiliated features on cultural life also centers on the way literature, reading, writing and education have undergone change and continue to do so. Along with, the question whether globalization has challenged and derailed modernity as a radical break is equally insignificant. The transformation brought about by internet towards knowledge, reading and writing through World Wide Web is unquestionable. One of the direct methods of evaluating cultural changes across the world brought about by globalization is to study the shifting global patterns of language use. The globalization of languages can be viewed as

process by which some languages are increasingly/dominantly used in international communication one of the hypothesis or model posts a clear correlation between the growing global significance of a few languages—particularly English, Chinese, Spanish and French—and the decline of many others. Among the most forceful hypothesis is the way the power of Anglo-American culture and its global harmony, military and industry promises to make English the Global lingua franca of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

However, it must be accepted that long long before globalization as a term and process came into vogue; English was already a global language, some centuries back. In sum, the rising influence of English language has a long history, reaching back to the genesis of British colonization in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. At that time only approximately 7 million people used English as their mother tongue. By 1990's the number had swollen to over 350 million native speakers, with 400 million more using English as a second language. It is no exaggeration to state that almost half of the world's growing population of foreign students (including millions from India and Asia) are enrolled at institutions in Anglo-American countries—USA, Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand countries in the Far East etc. Together with this, the interaction of native dialects and languages with English (unquestionably the fallout of colonial history) adds to the continuity of English as a powerful supportive language in many societies after the withdrawal of colonialism. English has emerged as a necessary requirement in international terms so that literary and non-literary expression of English has become more or less a 'regional' usage, often surprisingly combining with Mother Tongue. Following vast changes and wide-ranging metaphors of experience and identity from colonial-imperial impact, miscegenation, cross-culturalism, deracination, uprooting, exile and the resultant complex fate of the individual, English has remained to permanently stay and perform a significant role and markedly diverse societies across the world. According to the well-known critic, late C.D. Narasimhaih, English is not a pure language but a fascinating combination of tongues welded into fresh, hybrid unity in the contemporary world.

As such English even in linguistically diverse country like India has vast potentialities, accommodate different diffusions and cultural requirements. No doubt English has been as versatile on some other major languages of the

world but one has to admit that it has historically been subject to large variety of usages and has therefore, became an efficient vehicle for conveying modern cultural complexity. It is right to state that English today is no longer a part of colonial amnesia or hangover, but necessary requirement to engage with the world, international affairs and professions. Indeed, English language has emerged as part of global/cosmopolitan culture, and as an agent of homogenization of knowledge. The World as a single space, espoused by globalization of national spaces also helps English to contribute in a large way to the modern world system. Even Mahatma Gandhi the strongest Nationalist and as an anti-British crusader had advocated not to Shun English language as it is our window to the knowledge of the world. 

No exaggeration to admit that English today has infiltrated into nearly, all professional and academic spheres—economic, political, social, cultural, technological, scientific, medical and domestic. The educational sector, with the fast growing computerization, IT sector, internet services (of which nearly 70% are operating through English medium across the world), and as such, English as a language of communication bridges, gaps and differences in countries across continents and cultures. In the literary field English which was once written and spoken in the 'British' isles has broken free of the Anglomania; today it displays endless varieties and accents of 'Englishes' in ex-colonial nations not to mention English as the major language of the lone Superpower America. One of the candidates that has emerged through the above is 'World Literature in English' acquiring a new identity and the Caribbean, South America, Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, among others. Hence English as a language of global communication is something indispensable and irreversible. Further in India, regional language texts, thousands of them, have been translated into English for global and national consumption and English texts into vernacular languages to act as a conduct for regional readership vice-versa.

Another undeniable aspect, finally, related to the spread of English language is the tremendous spread of diaspora across the world, especially to the advanced Western countries. As such, diasporas, including Indian, extensively communicate in English language to fulfill their needs and maintaining adopted identities in the new spaces and locations of migration. It has become necessary and irreplaceable for NRI<sup>s</sup> and

migrants—students, engineers, scientists, doctors, technicians and others to obtain at least a working knowledge of English to sustain themselves in professions; English is no longer merely a language of opportunity and some particular class but essential for pursuing one's professional, competitive goals in the highly sophisticated global scenario. An instance of millions of Indian students opting and preparing for IELTS to qualify for English speaking and communication for the obvious necessity to find space and success in the chosen branches of study and disciplines.

#### Conclusion

However, English has to be carefully utilized as a language according to one's skill and requirement, depending upon what one elects to do in a particular field; hence the intellectual and practical aspects of English language, leaving aside the literary and critical have to be channelized keeping in view one's requirement and competence in a particular field. Finally, it may be proper to admit that while English occupies a crucial portion to attain excellence and

specialization in the global dispensation today, it should not, and connect cannot replace one's Mother Tongue which remains the primary language of one's emotions, instincts and daily exchange, though also admitting that English words, expressions and object names have greatly infiltrated even the normal, daily discourse of human lives.

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