

Role of English in Globalization and Multiculturalism with Special Reference to Indian Context

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Abstract – Without language human being cannot live a peaceful life in today's world. Language plays a great role in the mental, emotional and social development of a person. Among all creations, man alone is endowed with the power of speech. Human language is dynamic, infinite in variety and organic in nature which promotes and sustains social interaction and contributes to the progress of civilization. And this progress of civilization has given birth to globalization. In a multilingual country like, India it is very important to give equal importance to all languages. But with the passing of time the effect globalization has been found in English language especially. The fact is that in India, though English is not our native language but it is the most widely spoken language in the globe. This language has also affected the field of multiculturalism. Thus to find out the role of English in today's global as well as multicultural India, the researcher has designed the study with the following objectives:

Objectives of the study:

- (i) To study the importance of globalization in today's world
- (ii) To study out the impact of globalization on higher education
- (iii) To study the relationship between globalization and multiculturalism;

Methodology of the study:

To work on the aforesaid objectives, the researcher has adopted the documentary analysis method.

Major findings of the study:

In the present study, the researcher has adopted the documentary analysis method and interpreted the data in the light of his/her own experience. After analyzing and interpreting the data, the researcher has found out the following findings:

- (i) Globalization is of great importance in today's world. To lead life in a global world, we need to develop a competitive mind and that could be done by taking part in globalization process;
- (ii) Globalization and English are the two sides of the same coins. No one can enjoy globalization without a basic knowledge of English. On the other hand due to globalization the importance of English has been raised not only in India but in the world.
- (iii) Globalization and multiculturalism are also inter-related. Due to globalization, multiculturalism has got its fullest benefits. That means globalization has opened the path easy to the tourists to get well acquainted with the various cultures and to enrich their own culture. In doing so the knowledge of English is a must.

To sum up it can be said that globalization and multiculturalism are inter-related. And their relationship is strengthened by using the very language English. This is because though English is not our native language but it is a national and international link language. So to get the benefit of globalization, it is essential to enrich the field of English teaching in the country.

Key Words: Globalization, multiculturalism, multilingual, transmission of culture, progress

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MAIN PAPER:

Language plays a great role in the mental, emotional and social development of a person. According to P.Gurreey "All languages are for communication". Among all creations, man alone is endowed with the power of speech. It seems to have an innate capacity of human being of speaking and the ability to use the vocal cords, tongue, lips and teeth to make specific sound clusters, words and word groups and sentences. Human language is dynamic, infinite in variety and organic in nature which promotes and sustains social interaction and contributes to the progress of civilization. And this progress of civilization has given birth to globalization. In the world of continuous change and development, language plays a crucial role in preservation, advancement and transmission of culture. In a multilingual country like, India it is very important to give equal importance to all languages. Language, in the words of Henry Sweet is that, it is the expression of ideas by means of speech sound combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts. Hence, language is all around us and it allows us to share complicated thoughts, negotiate agreements and make communal plans. Living in a globalized world we need a common language for communication and that communicative language in today's world is none but English. It is the most widely spoken language in the world. English has become the massive means of communication. It is the most international of languages. Hence, English occupies the place of world language. If we look at the origin of English language we find that the history of English has been divided into three main periods- (i) Old English (450-1100 A.D); (ii) Middle English (1100-1500A.D) and (iii) Modern English (1500 to till date). Old English was more complex than today's one. During the Middle period, the influence of French upon the lexicon continued. Loss of some inflections and the reduction of others accelerated and many changes took place within the phonological and grammatical systems of the language. The modern period is also characterized by three phases as early modern, late modern and today English. In India, English came with the advent of the British. During the British period, initially though the Britishers were not interested to educate Indians but gradually they felt the need of educating the Indians. And in doing so, English was placed in high position. Though after independence, there was a controversy with the retention of English in India, but at last, English received its place of importance not in the field of education only, but in every sphere of human life. Since then, English is regarded as one of the most important languages in India. In India, English is considered as a second language of study up to the secondary level. English is studied here

due to its importance as a national language, as an international language, as a window to the modern world, as a library language, as a communicative language, as a language of science and technology etc. So no one can deny the fact that English plays a pivotal role in our life. We cannot step a step ahead without knowing English. Hence, to compete in a global society, knowledge of English is a must. Thus, to know the role of English in twenty-first century, the researcher has designed the study with the following objectives:

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- (i) To study the importance of globalization in today's world;
- (ii) To study out the impact of globalization on higher education;
- (iii) To study the relationship between globalization and multiculturalism.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

To work on the aforesaid objectives, the researcher has adopted the documentary analysis method.

Now, let's see what globalization is. Globalization is a process of intensification of world-wide socio-economic relations. It has converted the planet into a single unit or a global village. Though in the process of globalization, economic aspect is given more priority, but it has a multidimensional impact on the system of education. Globalization has underlined the need for reforms of education system. With the wider use of information and communication technology, globalization intends to provide productivity dimension to education. Globalization has paved the way to higher education. In today's world higher education is now the dream of education lovers. And that dream comes true due to the effect of globalization. To strengthen the field of globalization, English plays a pivotal role.

With regard to the **first objective**, it is found that importance of globalization in today's world is of note-worthy. It is a recent phenomenon in the world's socio-economic system. As the concept of globalization has a multidimensional issue, so the field of education is not out of its effect. In Indian context, providing a quality education for every single child has become a national goal since independence. In a highly populated country like India, maintenance of quality is not a matter of joke. So globalization helps in achieving the goal. Thus, initially though the term 'globalization' was only related to trade market but gradually its affect

has been shown every sphere of human life that is socio-economic as well as educational field. Below we have mentioned the importance of globalization:

1. In minimizing the difference between home market and foreign market;
2. In expansion of business as well as the field of education throughout the world;
3. To solve of any problem in the globe;
4. To make free flow of technology;
5. To increase industrialization;
6. To provide quality assurance;
7. To raise the standard of living;
8. To bring overall increase in human welfare and prosperity;
9. To encourage high levels of labour migration both within and between countries;
10. To encourage a change in the centre of gravity in the world economy;
11. To make the world economy more connected and interdependent;
12. To help in sharing the experiences;
13. To use outsourcing and off shoring of production;
14. To spread products, technology, information and jobs across national borders and cultures;
15. To exchange the ideas, values and artistic expression among the various cultures;
16. To represent a trend towards the development of a single world culture;

With regard to the **second objective** it is found that globalization has brought a drastic change in higher education. Education while considered as service industry becomes a part of globalization process under the umbrella of General Agreement on Trade in Services. In a highly populated country like India, to meet the educational needs of the learners, globalization has paved the way to success. India has a large educational system and infrastructure and diverse human capabilities. Due to globalization, now-a-days, these diverse human capabilities can achieve its goal as no more barriers are there in the field of education. There is equal opportunity for each and every learners to get education anywhere in the globe. Globalization has also brought a competitive market in the field of education where competition is

the key to success. Thus, one of the most visible manifestations of globalization is the emerging 'borderless' higher education. Twenty first century is an era where it is seen that there is a huge increase in the world-wide demand in higher education. Along with this, there are opportunities created by information and communication technologies and the Internet, shape an environment in which new, for-profit providers can successfully expand the supply of educational services. In such a situation, universities from North America, Europe and Australia take the initiatives to reach out their educational services to this international education market. Some new providers from outside the higher education sector have also been invited to enter the scene due to the international demand for higher education. And this increased demand for higher education is the effect of globalization. The concept of borderless education comprises various forms and developments. Establishment of for-profit private universities, corporate universities, and media companies delivering educational programmes professional associations etc are the result of globalization. By using Internet as a delivery channel, some 'cyber-universities' have been developed with a very limited physical presence. In twenty-first century no one is free. Sometimes it is seen that a person is interested to get higher education but due to his business he/she cannot do so. In such a situation this type of 'cyber-universities' are very much helpful which is the result of globalization.

In teaching-learning process, methodologies and teaching-learning materials are of great value, but it may not be easily available in one's own country. Due to globalization this problem has been solved to a great extent. People always hanker after success and high level of income. High income means high level of job and it could only be possible if we get equal opportunity everywhere in the globe with regard to job facility. Globalization has paved the way to availability of large number of agencies providing higher education. In this process it is found that there is reduction in knowledge gap in different countries. People can solve any problem related to education; they can share their knowledge and experience to others living anywhere in the globe. Education is a multidimensional sector where to enrich the field, multidimensional thinking as well as tools is required and that could have become possible only due to globalization. Easy access to higher education makes the field of earning also easy. That means globalization has not only affected the field of higher education but the effect is also found in the economic field also.

Undoubtedly globalization has a great impact on higher education, but the role of English in this field cannot be denied. Many writers across the globe agree that English is the 'queen of languages'. To put Sri C. Rajagopalachari, "English language is the greatest gift of Goddess Saraswati to India". It is

well recognized that English-speaking persons can be traced in all the continents of the world and is the reason for compulsory education of many countries across the globe. Expansion of higher education in today's world is due to globalization. Now-a-days higher education has been grown up and extended to a great extent and also become more and more international. Globalization helps fulfill the dream of achieving higher education in anywhere in the globe. And the only means of achieving this dream is the very language English. University education has not only become more global but also more competitive. To compete in this global world, we need a global language and that is none but English.

India's higher education system stands third in size in the world after the US and China with nearly 26 million students in over 45,000 institutions in the country. The field of higher education is in the path of rapid progress particularly in the post-independence period to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. The current emphasis in Indian higher education has been mostly on science and technology. And here lies the importance of English. Without the knowledge of English no one can even enter in the world of science and technology. This is because; English is the most dominating language in the field of science and technology.

Distance learning and open education also is an essential feature of the Indian higher education system. Indira Gandhi National Open University run by the Indian government is attributed to be the largest university in the world by number of students with over 3.5 million students from across the globe. The study material of distance learning is found in English. So to grasp the matter one must have the knowledge of English.

Higher education is the field where an individual prepares himself to compete with the globe and the language of globe is English as it is an international language. Thus, being an international language, English plays a pivotal role in higher education. To achieve the benefit of globalization, we need a common language and that language is English. English is not only a national language but also an international language. So not only in the field of higher education but in case of globalization also English plays a great role.

Globalization has given birth to a quality market in higher education. So, quality assurance in higher education is a matter of concern. To maintain the quality of higher education, supporting elements should be taken into consideration. One of the strongest determinants of quality is the language. And whenever we are talking about language we cannot think about any language except English as it is not only the national link language but the language of the globe.

In case of higher education, all the study materials are written in English. Moreover, English is a library language and library is the store house of knowledge. Especially in case of higher education, library is one of the most important sources of gathering knowledge. That means to access the library one must know English. Thus, English is regarded a language of higher education. So without knowing English no one can be safe in higher education.

Globalization and English language are said to work as pull factors for one another. In the progress of globalization, the very language is of great importance. Globalization of trade and commerce, increasing diversities of work force with different set up values have increased the importance of English language in today's world. Due to globalization, English has become the most prized possession of communication. English acts as a repository of wisdom and wit in the global village. It is a propeller for advancement of career and a machine to mint money. English as a language also acts a telescope to view the vision of future. In today's global world, communication in English is an inseparable part of life.

With regard to the **third objective** it is found that globalization and multiculturalism are interrelated. As a result of globalization, many indigenous groups are being more widely exploited through the tourism industry. In this way it is found that there occurs a cultural exchange among the tourists. In this exchange of culture, one communicative language is required. And that communicative language is none but English. That means multiculturalism becomes easy with the help of English. India is land of multiculturalism. So to bring one culture closer to another, globalization opens the path where English becomes the communicative language. Due to globalization, cultural changes can take place where English plays the role of a link language. Globalization enhances multiculturalism and vice-versa. To enrich the field of multiculturalism, globalization is of great importance. Globalization leaves no stone untouched. So it is not an exception that globalization affected multiculturalism. In our Indian context, multiculturalism is important because it dilutes the contradictions among the various cultures. It softens the indifferences of tolerances and embraces with the genuine humanity and acceptance. To live in a globalised world one must be multicultural in his thinking. Understanding of different culture is very important. So with the help of globalization, we can get the chance to taste the benefit of multiculturalism. That means globalization and multiculturalism are inseparable. The very language English is the connecting language between globalization and multiculturalism.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

In the present study, the researcher has adopted the documentary analysis method and interpreted the data in the light of his/her own experience. After analyzing and interpreting the data, the researcher has found out the following findings:

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