

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

English is a widely spoken language in the world. In our modern world demand for English is increasing from day to day. The English language is used nearly in all fields like science, education, IT, business, medicine and so on. In the following article, we will analyze the importance and the role of the English language in the fields listed above. Furthermore, we will learn the factors that led the English language to the level of global languages.

Keywords:

Language, Education, Science and Technology, field.

“A feature of English that makes it different compared with all other languages is its global spread”

David Crystal

INTRODUCTION

As the world is developing in the levels of interconnecting and because of the globalization around the world, the significance of an appropriate communication has been gradually increasing. It is a fact that there is a need for a common language for the growing trade of components all over the world.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is also common knowledge that these days, people from different countries mostly speak in one widely recognized language, which is English. English is the most widely spoken language in all spheres of international relationships like trade, diplomacy, mass media, international telecommunication, education, pharmacy, film industry, tourism, economy and scientific publication. The English language has become a commercial language that connects the West and the East, the North and the South.

As the English language occupies a major role, several researchers have coined a term by considering the various aspects of English. For example, Ahulu (1977) names it as “General English” or Mc Arthur (1987) coins it, “World standard English” whilst David Crystal (1997) invents a phrase which sounds “English as a global language”. Moreover, Widdowson (1997), Modiano. (1999) and Jenkins (2000) called it “English as an international language” and Bruff – Giffler (2002) invented a new word “World English”. Among the listed phrases, “English as a global language” and “English as an international language’ are commonly used, in spite of the fact that there is a variation in vocabulary, they both give the same meaning and emphasizes the truth that English is a widely used language in nearly all major fields all over the world. Although English was initially considered to be the language of the British, it has become a second language in many former colonies of the UK such as the USA, Australia, Canada, India,

South Africa because of the historical efforts of the British empire. Today the English language is recognized as an official language in total of 67 different countries, as well as 27 sovereign entities. The English language has become the principal language influenced by the economy of the UK. Today about 360 million people speak English language as their native language, so what is the reason that English is such a widespread language? According to the English academic David Crystal, the main factor that makes a language international is the power of speakers, it is not about grammar, structure spelling or vocabulary that makes English an appealing language to be global since the aspects like pronunciation make trouble for learners, it is all about the power which means different things at different times. As David Crystal confirms English first became international because of the political and military power the UK possessed, later it was the power of science, technology and industrial revolution which took the language around the world as two of three people who invented things, which made up the society, did it in English. Following power was economic because the USA and the UK had the money markets of the world in the 19th century then in 20th century we faced the cultural power since English was the language of majority of inventions that made the modern society what it was. By coming out the statements of the academic, we can conclude that English has been turning up in a right place at a right time for more than 400 years which produced the enormous global states that it currently has.

DISCUSSION

As we stated earlier, English is the language of trade, education, mass media, science, technology and etc. Now we will be looking at the function of English in some of the listed spheres.

English in Science and Technology

Taking the fact that English is regarded as the lingua franca of international business, economy, education and culture, unquestionably is it dominant in scientific and technological spheres. English for science and technology or ESP is the sub – category of English for specific purposes in which it shares basic characteristics with the larger field of ESP.

According to professor V. Chandra Sekkar Rad at Joginpally BR Engineering College, effective language teaching and learning can only be achieved when teachers are aware of their learners' needs, capabilities, potentials and preferences in meeting these needs. He claims that the teachers of English in technology ought to require a special set of competences as English and technology are inextricably linked.

English in education

It is common knowledge that English plays a significant role in the field of education in native English countries as well as in nonnative ones. Learning English is in noticeable demand as most of the books of higher education are written in English language. Researchers, teachers and students have been widely using English as it is the main media used in various fields of education. Moreover, it is the only language where the information is stored in both electronic and printed form. Because of the changes in educational changes, all a student needs to do to make a use of resources is to access the internet.

Furthermore, the learners can learn independently and develop self – learning skills. These days, most student prefer studying abroad in order to get better opportunities for employment, knowing English will give them an advantage over those who do not. So the English learners are motivated to learn the language in order to master abilities in fields of science, IT, engineering, medicine, law, business, tourism, teaching and so on.

English language in Press and Media

In the field of Mass Media English is used as the basic language because famous newspapers are printed in English as well as TV programs and news broadcasts. There are several channels on TV like National Geographic, Discovery, Animal Planet which help the language learners to widen their English skills. By watching TV in English not only do we develop our vocabulary and pronunciation well, but also gradually improve our passive vocabulary. Even children can easily pick up English by watching English channels and reading books, comics in English.

English in Travel and Tourism

Travel usually refers to local and international language. English usually refers to the international level and tourism agencies, departments and companies. In order to travel abroad, the traveler needs to know the language of that country in order to communicate with the people and as we cannot know all the languages, we need a common language, here English serves the purpose. The international tourist agencies try to hire employees who can communicate with foreign tourists in English.

CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To conclude, in this paper we have discussed the importance of English as an international language, the reason that it became a global language and what role it plays in some spheres of economy, politics and other spheres of social life, although there were some fields which were not mentioned, it seems to us that English plays a dominant role in them too. One interesting point is that some of countries with the biggest economy like Russia, China, Japan, France are focusing on the English language after realizing its value at global level.

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