



Vidhyayana - ISSN 2454-8596

An International Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed E-
Journal

www.j.vidhyayanaejournal.org

Indexed in: ROAD & Google Scholar

Globalization and Language

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An International Multidisciplinary Multilingual E-Conference on
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INVESTIGATION"

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Introduction

Globalization is basically a process of integration of different languages, world's economies, cultures etc. Today its clearly visible that everyone is connected in the world for their personal and business purposes. The effect of globalization can be seen in every field like language, education, technology, flow of investment and information. English language has a great impact of globalization and due to this a large number of people have started learning English as a second language. Arjun Appadurai defines "globalization as a multi-way process involving flows of ideas, ideologies, people, goods, images, messages, technologies and techniques." (1)

We can never deny this fact that knowing a language makes one a human because it is only language that assists one for being able to speak and to be understood by the others. Language is ubiquitous as it is present everywhere. Even Birds and animals have their own language. In the critical situations of life, it helps one to come up with the competitive spirit of growth and knowledge of the things which were earlier unknown. Language is a bridge which connects people globally to meet the changing trends of the mass. No language is inferior or superior: rather one can say that each language is unique.

The present era is mighty enough for the enormous development in the fields of language, literature, arts, information technology, mass media and several other streams that we can't overlook its rapid global pace. Globalization is one such factor that brings rapidity in this pace of growth and development. Steger in his book 'Globalization: a very Short Introduction (2003)' defines "Globalization "as a process,

"Characterized by the existence of global economic, political, cultural,

Linguistic and environmental interconnection that make the way of

The currently existing borders and boundaries irrelevant." (2)

Globalization is not a recent phenomenon but it has undoubtedly operated in faster ways since 1980s and its readily increasing in today's world. It has affected our language also, both

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positively and negatively. As a result our culture has been affected in many ways. Globalization has brought the world closer as everything is accessible in every corner of the world. Since every coin has its two sides- one is visible and the other go unnoticed, so same can be said regarding Globalization. It has influenced our culture, language, literature and economies directly and indirectly; some of which proves beneficial to the world while others cripple the growth of a nation.

Globalization has affected languages indirectly as its effect is not visible immediately but it can be viewed in long run. To talk about the popularity of English language, it is incidental and could change as per the changing global needs. Much of the world's economy is connected through English-speaking countries, in this way globalization has influenced regional languages especially mother tongues which can also be seen in the case of our mother tongue Punjabi. Our rich language is also struggling hard for the survival. English has overpowered all regional languages. Someone has said rightly,

“English is like a cell phone provider offering the best plan. But if the dollar continues to drop the most viable option could shift.” (3)

Globalization and Language are interconnected, in fact languages can also be described as the oxygen of the globalization because without Language globalization is not possible.

"If you don't understand, how can you learn"? (4) (UNESCO)

Language is not only the sign of socio-cultural change but also the last remnant to go. We should never underestimate the importance of knowing regional languages. English has become very powerful and there is no doubt that to cope up with the pace of the globalized world, one can't deny that the knowledge of English is must as it paves way for the better opportunities but on the other hand regional languages also prove very beneficial as it adds to our skills. Moreover, there are many jobs which are only offered to the person who is having the knowledge of more than one language.

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Language is considered as one of the most effective ways of determining a person's identity or it can also be said that it gives us a glimpse to the cultural background to which a person belongs. It also means that without language it will be difficult for man to survive. It can be seen that People now a days speak English fluently, however find difficulty in speaking their regional language or mother tongue. Many people hesitate to speak their mother tongue as English has become the criteria of judging one's ability. Ged (2013) explains second language acquisition may lead to the loss of some aspects or knowledge about the first language. (5)

The effects of globalization are both positive and negative. The era of globalization proves a boon for the media to flourish day by day and it has always helped our youth to get familiarize with their lost cultural values and languages. Dr. Ajaib Singh Brar, Vice Chancellor, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar also highlights the importance of media by saying that,

“Media, being an influential force can play an important role in shaping
Of society and its attributes like language and culture and it has to play
A constructive role in this regard for the development of an ideal society
Where art and life may freely flourish” (6)

Globalization of language has opened new doors of opportunities. As people struggle for self sufficiency and attain success, English remains a significant factor towards realizing these goals. English is said to promote the economic sector in various way; for example, it provides people with the basic skills that enable them to cope with the modern age of technology. (Seppala,2011).(7)

Emerging changes and development in technology has led to a place where people are more connected as they can share information, feelings, pictures quickly and in a very simple way. But it can not be denied that we have started behaving like puppets in the hands of technology. Technology has turned the whole world into 'Global Village'. The people in

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affluent countries are getting benefit from this globalization whereas in less developed countries, its negative effects are clearly visible. There is no doubt that knowing how to speak English has become very important tool to our globalized world but one should not forget their mother tongue. We should take the help from technology to promote our regional languages.

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