

Relevance of English As A Potential Global Language

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Abstract:

Globe consists of one hundred ninety five countries, and the language which is becoming or achieving the status of the global language should be recognized by each and every country then only it will be the genuine global status. How a language bears the weight of becoming a global language, is that particular language spoken by everyone who belongs to this world? It wouldn't be wrong if we call English as the dominating language in the twenty first century because wherever we go everything is in English, even the traffic road directions are written in English. Neither everyone on this earth speaks in English nor every country recognizes English as an official language. Then, which force is pushing English towards the status of the global language? And who decides the relevance of any particular language at a global level? For how long will a particular language be recognized as a potential global language?

Keywords: Language, English, and global

One particular language can be different for the people living on this earth. The spread of English can be different for both different categories, English is the mother tongue to some people but for some it might be the language which is getting success over their native language. But these problems will arise whichever language would emerge as a potential global language, these are the feelings which give rise to fears and conflicts which are always in the news.

According to David Crystal, a language can achieve the status of a global language, it has to be taken by a few countries which use that particular language as their mother tongue. Or it can be done in two ways. First, a language should be made an official language of the country, it can be used in the domains like government offices and law courts. Second, that particular language can be taught in the schools as one foreign language which is mandatory to study.

The spread of the language cannot be the only factor for any language achieving the status of the global language. Historical tradition, cultural expediency, technological contact can also be the factors in choosing the one language for the aim of global potential language. Plus, particular language has a lot to do with the people who are using it rather than the number of people. David Crystal puts it well with an example:

“Latin became an international language throughout the Roman Empire, but this was not because the Romans were more numerous than the peoples they subjugated. They were simply more powerful.”
(Crystal, 24)

Language aiming to be a global language has a lot to do with the cultural powers too, with no strong power-base, the progress of the language becomes difficult as a international communication medium. No language can work in isolation. That particular language has to get embedded in the five

sense organs of its users. One major factor on the emergence of English as a global language can also be the historical factor, the ruthless implementation of the colonial policies by renaissance kings and the queens by armies all over the world. The history of the countries for whom global language is the mother tongue can be a good attempt in tracing the emerging factor of that particular language.

For last few centuries, English has been at the centre of explosion, be it literature, culture or enlightenment, any language at this position would have made itself the potential global language. Since last few decades English has given rise to trade and commerce, has become the language of teaching in the most of the countries but still, it is not the most spoken language in the world. Over fifty three countries have accepted English as their official language.

With the beginning of the nineteenth and twentieth century, mass media played the crucial role in giving an edge to the language. The economic and technological developments began to operate on international level, supplemented by the new communication technologies such as telephone, telegraph, emergence of multinational organizations, development of competitive industry and international advertising and marketing, all these developments demanded a common language. The power of the press reached its highest levels, had the ability to cross national boundaries. Technology, in the form of movies and records, emerged as new mass entertainment industry which impacted the whole world. And English speaking countries having their expertise in technology associated areas granted an edge to English, and began to give it a push on becoming an official language.

What could be the need of a global language? India, being a multilingual country also needs one common language which can bring all cultures together. Today in the twenty first century, even small corporate offices with small business ideas witness crowd from different cultures, and the universities too are witnessing people from all over the country. Such diversified groups of students and entrepreneurs need a common language which can unite all the cultures as one. One language could help them to make their work more effective and efficient. So, a global language can be called a need in twenty first century.

Citation

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