

Globalization and English Language Teaching: Implication and Challenges

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Abstract

The article entitled "Globalization and English Language Teaching: Implication and Challenges" explores about the significance of globalization, its possibilities and challenges. As it is a systematic review article some of the national and internal articles have been purposefully selected for the critical analysis and reflection of the meanings concerning the research title. The derived data are thoroughly studied and analysed through the process of coding and decoding. Finally the results and findings are summarized in the conclusion section. The researcher has presented some recommendations based on the results and findings.

Keywords: globalization, ELT, native language

Introduction

The movement of globalization has significantly influenced the world in the last few decades. It has touched several aspects such as business, communication, information, social media, education, health, literature and so forth. It has been used as the medium of communication and source of the transformation of knowledge and information. The development of digital technology has supported for the speedy growth of global culture and civilization.

This research proposal will focus on the position of the English language at global level and it will further explore its challenges and opportunities in the field of education. English language has been used as the language of commerce, medicine, health, business, industry and specially used as the means of teaching English. First of all it is used as native language by the native speakers; secondly, in the countries like, Mexico, Canada, Norway and Finland it has been used as second language and finally in the developing countries like Nepal it has been used as foreign language. So, this article does reflective study of the articles which deal about the multiple scope of ELT in various contexts.

The global spread of this language has resulted in the emergence of different varieties of English. This language has been working as the means of unification and at the same time this has brought challenges for the practitioners. This article deals about the clashes brought by the diverse use of English language in various contexts. So I would like to delimit my study under its implications and challenges. For this I have used systematic review of the articles regarding Globalization and English language especially for teaching activities.

Background of the Study

Currently a number of global processes are taking place in the world scenario. There are several fundamental effects of English language in European, Asian, African and South Asian world (Her, 2007). Learning English language as second and foreign language is considered as desirable and important aspect in the global society. It provides exposure to different cultures from different perspectives. When this language is combined to understand one's culture, it leads to a greater sensitivity to others and the greater awareness of others cultures upon us (Her, 2007).

But on the other hand English language can also be taken as the language of imperialism and lingua franca at the same time. In one hand it has been working as a bridge to connect the world and on the other hand it has been fragmenting the world through varieties of English language (Phillipson, 2004). The use of the language in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa differs. In some countries it is used as first languages, in some countries it is used as the second language and in some countries like Nepal it is used as the foreign language. We can see differences in the level of phonetics, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics and in the level of discourse. The difference can create confusions and misunderstandings. English language used in the bilingual communities, trilingual communities and multilingual communities varies (Soler, 2007).

In the multicultural societies like, Nepal the spreading use of English language has adversely affected on the existence of several local languages such as Bhojpuri, Maithili, Newari, Nepali, Tamang and others. People of all these language communities are being slowly and gradually detached from the pure use of their mother languages. They have been gaining diaspora identities or getting influenced by the remix culture (Sherpa, 2019). This shows that the dominance of English language over local languages has diminished the value of local language and culture. Several original cultural norms and values are being fading out.

The reflections from the above mentioned articles clearly talk about both challenges and opportunities of the English as global language. The various sectors such as business, commerce, health, medicine, etc. are being connected by the use of English language as global language. It has got direct influence in world politics, economics, and world culture. The vast world can be perceived as a small village. It has also promoted the social media and the modern technology at optimum level. Similarly, the learners of the English language are benefitted by the knowledge of the diverse cultural aspects.

But on the other hand it has created several challenges. First of all it has also been defined as the killer language (Soler, 2007). According to (Soler, 2007) it has killed the originality of several local languages in the countries where English language has been used as the second and foreign language. Such language communities have also been influenced by the knowledge transferred through English language. English language has been used as Black English vernacular in Africa, foreign language in Nepal and in some developing countries and it has been used as second language in the countries such as Canada, Finland, Norway, Mexico and so forth. Similarly there lies variation in American English, Indian English, British English and Black English vernacular (Kaplan, 1966).

As a global language, English has become a requirement for employment, social status, financial security, in various parts of the world. It has been the language of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism in various parts of the world (Guo & Beckett, 2007). While talking about Nepalese context English has been used as foreign language, it is used as compulsory English up to grade 12. The use of English is wider in higher level education in Nepal. Similarly, it has also been used as the language of media, technology, medicine, health, business and communication. Because of this, the accuracy of the local languages is decreasing day by day. This article reflects on implications and challenges created by English language in the global context.

Rational of the Study

This article aims to explore about the dominance of English language as international or global language. English language being a global language has influenced several aspects such as economics, medicine, science, commerce and politics at international scenario. In one hand it has brought several positive changes in the human society and on the other hand it has invited some challenges. To explore its possibilities and challenges is the main concern of this study.

Research Questions

1. How is the position of English language at international community?
2. What are some of the major challenges and opportunities of the English language?

Delimitation of the Study

The article studies about the scope of the English language at global scenario at global level whereas the main focus of the article is to explore its scope and position in the developing countries like Nepal where English language has been used either as second language or foreign language.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research article. As a researcher I have selected articles related to English as global language and carried out the reflective study of the articles regarding its implications and challenges it has created in to different language communities. First of all the article will concern its study in the context where English language has been used as first language. Secondly, I will study some of the articles which explore the position of English where it has been used as second language. Finally, I will be studying the position of English language where English has been used as foreign language.

This is a qualitative research article based on thematic analysis. I have gone through more than ten different articles dealing with the topic of my research (Newman & Gough, 2020). I have done systematic review of the articles published in various contexts such as global context, Asian context, National context and local context. The themes generated from the articles have been analysed and interpreted with necessary evidences. Discussion section has been categorized in to various themes. The results and findings have been derived from the themes have been listed in the conclusion section of the article.

The generated data have been critically analysed and crystallized in order to maintain the quality of the article. I have categorized the themes into various headings and presented some reflective views and finally synthesized the message from different articles selected for the article (Bearman et al., 2012).

Discussion

Implications of English Language

English language has got multiple implications. Among all academic instruction for teaching phonetics, vocabulary, lexical items, syntax, and semantics up to the level of discourse is the primary implication of this language (Soler, 2007). Similarly English language has also been used in the field of international business, commerce and industry. Schools and collages from various countries of the world have been using English language as the medium of knowledge transformation. It has also occupied the fields such as medicine, literature, science, research and so forth (Phillipson, 2004).

This shows that the trend of the use of the English language has covered nearly all the disciplines of the study. It has been getting very popular practice. In the ancient days English language has been the means of transferring Roman and Greek civilization (Abrams, 1997). It has been the key means of spreading knowledge, culture and civilization of the time. Similarly, during colonialism, the European people spread their culture, knowledge, and religious ideologies with the help of English language. It has been the language of the colonization (Phillipson, 2004). This shows that it has been the tool for colonization and imperialism to the westerners up on non-western societies. Thus it has been the language of domination and oppression.

At the era of modernism, it has been the language of science, technology and of the social media

(Her, 2007). European has used the language so as to occupy the modern disciplines. On the other hand the same language has also been used as the post-colonial, anti-colonial, feminist, Marxist and post-modernist tool to subvert the western hegemony. It has been a supporting tool for reformation and reconstruction of the new knowledge from minority and marginalized groups (Nieto, 2001). The analysis of the use of English at global level shows that it is a dynamic language having multiple implications. It has also been used as the nexus for connecting the people from various part of the world under the umbrella of globalization.

Challenges of English Language

First of all there is no uniformity in the use of the English language. The use of English language as first language, second language, foreign language, vernacular language, pidgin and creole language has created several gaps and discriminations among the English language users (Soler, 2007). This sort of variation has created linguistic and cultural diversity among several English language communities. It has also created the feelings of superiority and inferiority among the language communities.

Similarly, the technologically advanced countries have captured the world. Knowledge of English language is mandatory to get the reach of science, medicine, technology, and economy. It has also been the means of securing job opportunities and economic security (Pun, 2013). This shows that English language has created a kind of hegemony. This sort of mechanism has been very costly to the nations who are very poor in using English language or they use English as foreign language.

The use of English language has thrown shade to several mother languages in the societies where English is used as second or foreign languages. They have been losing the originality of their pronunciation, vocabulary, diction, syntax, and semantics. Along with their language they have also been losing their original culture and civilization (Brain, 2005). In context of Nepal the students who prefer English have been losing their interests regarding the use of their mother languages. The people who are competent in English think that they are superior in comparison to those who do have less knowledge of the English language. Even the job holders having good knowledge of English language are getting better respect and better salaries (Pun, 2013). This has also increased the drop out ratio of the students at higher level.

English education is very expensive in Nepal. Only economically sound people are enjoying the opportunity of learning English. Majority of the learners are deprived from the opportunity. Due to this it has brought class gaps and it has turned out to be a discriminatory type of education (Cole et al., 2002). This shows that the English education has been working as a tool to preserve and promote capitalism rather than uplifting democracy. Thus, it has raised the question over the existence of local culture and local language.

Connectivity of the English Language as Global Language

To learn English is to grasp its vocabulary, diction, syntax, morphology and discourse. This is the westerners' language which has occupied the arena of economics, medicine, technology and politics. It has been working as a tool for imperialism through various ways (Pennycook, 2017). The use of English language as second language has several purposes such as administrative activities, business purpose, higher level education, language of technology and lingua franca (Pakir, 1999). Furthermore it has also been used as the language of social media and working as the source of knowledge and information. Learners are enjoying the opportunity of this language for the purpose of conduction research, achieving foreign degrees, and job opportunities in the international market.

This language has worked as a bridge among various bilingual and multilingual communities where English language has been used as second or foreign language (Pakir, 1999). The language has been very popular in social media as well. People from multilingual communities are actively involved in

learning English as their second and foreign language. People are learning IELTS, TOEFL, PTE, GRE and many others in order to go to the foreign countries for various purposes. Similarly, the people indulged in international business and commerce have also been taking interest in English language.

Use of English in Nepalese Context

English language is neither used as second language nor international language in Nepal. Till today it has been used as foreign language. It is taught as compulsory subject from grade one to bachelor level in government institutions whereas it is taught from grade nursery to higher level in private institutions (Pandey, 2020). Nepalese students who seek opportunities in the foreign countries learn English language so that they can easily adjust themselves in the foreign countries. Similarly, students of private sector learn English for the sake of their future career as well as for their prestige. It has also been a matter of prestige and self-respect to the elite class people. The students who are perusing their career as doctors, engineers, and scientists are also learning their subjects in English language.

Nepalese learners who are perusing their career in higher level are learning English medium classes. The students from B.Ed. and Humanities faculties are majoring in English learn English language to peruse their career as English teacher. The students studying the courses of CTEVT and other technical subjects also taught in English as their medium of instruction. Similarly, Nepalese students learn English to enhance their professional and communicative skills so that it supports in their professional activities. As this is the language of international communication, Nepalese learn the language for their connectivity in to the international network.

Conclusion

This is a reflective article and it has done systematic review of the articles related to English education and globalization. The paper has taken some sample articles related to the topics and it has done systematic survey of the issue of English in global scenario. It imparts us knowledge about the scope of English into various language communities. It has mainly focussed on implications and challenges of English education, its effects, influencing areas and so forth.

Personally, I would like to suggest the non-native speakers of English for not to glorify English language by ignoring the challenges of their native languages and cultures. We must preserve and promote our languages at the time while we are adopting English in our practical learning activities. However learning the global language in this global era isn't bad in itself. We need to take balanced steps while promoting our global and local contexts at the same time.

This article highlights the significance of English language as an international language and at the same time it focuses on the preservation and promotion of the locally established languages. We have significance of local languages at local contexts and significance of English language in the international language community.

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