



Globalisation

Globalisation has had profound impact and it is one of the widely discussed issues in the field of sociolinguistics. You will see in this lecture what is meant by globalisation, its causes, and consequences. Emphasis will be particularly placed on the sociolinguistic outcomes, especially the emergence of English as a global language and how it is influencing other languages in the world.

1. Definition of Globalisation

Since globalization is linked to many different fields and disciplines, it may be interpreted in a variety of ways. However, they all concur that globalization entails processes that cut beyond national borders and that countries are growing increasingly intertwined in all spheres, including social, political, cultural, and economic. However, when we look at globalization from this perspective, we are reminded of comparable processes that have existed since antiquity with the Greek, Phoenician, Babylonian, Roman, and Muslim civilizations that ruled over vast regions for extended periods of time due to their shared traits. Because international connections have a lengthy history dating back to the early stages of human history, globalization, whatever it may be, is not new. The literature on globalization just became popular in the 1990s. The fast growth of transportation and communication has accelerated and eased the interchange of products and information, making interconnection across nations unique.

Globalization, then, is the process by which commerce and cultural interchange have greatly grown, making the globe more linked. As a result,

- Growing worldwide commerce,
- Multinational corporations;
- Increased reliance on the world economy;

- International recognition of businesses like McDonald's, Starbucks, and others;
- Quick information dissemination;
- International interconnectedness, etc.

For example, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has had an impact on the entire world, whether favorably or badly. Furthermore, information spreads like fire in ashes; details about the battle are communicated to the whole world at the same time as they occur, thanks to modern information and communication technology. As a result of the fighting, prices for items such as gas, petroleum, and gold fluctuate. One notable example is the spread of Covid 19, often known as Corona virus, and its several forms since late 2019. It has impacted every aspect of the planet and every field without exception; it has even altered how we live, learn, work, connect with others, and more. The economy, trade, business, culture, politics, tourism, and other areas have all been impacted. Because of this, there has been a significant amount of globalization in this era, and no other civilization has ever attained this level of interdependence and connectivity. Since this is a sociolinguistic course, it goes without saying that we will discuss the sociolinguistic effects of globalization, with a primary emphasis on the rise of English as the universal language and its effects on other languages.

2. English as a Global Language

English is sometimes referred to be a global language in the literature since it is the dominant world language utilized in practically every country. It is no longer the property of its native speakers, since English as a second language speakers outweigh native users. It is now widely utilized in international situations, including business, trade, politics, and relations. Furthermore, it is extensively utilized as the Internet's common language and dominates the domains of technology and worldwide communication in general. It is also the language of tourism, urbanization, scientific research, education, literature, new entertainment genres such as video games, travel, and media, among others. As a result, it serves as a language doorway to economic success as its users have access to desirable employment and business options. It's interesting to note that its worldwide reach stems not only from its geographic dispersion but also from its dominance in a variety of domains, settings, forms, functions, discourses, and media (spoken and written).

Thus, the expansion of English into new regions, areas, and functions aided its evolution and variety by being adapted to fit new contexts of usage. This resulted in new terminology, different methods of speaking and writing, and new grammatical forms. English has been influenced by different languages and cultures, resulting in adaptations to satisfy communication demands. As a result, numerous diverse variations of English arose (mostly regional dialects and registers), some of which are unintelligible. In this way, the evolution of English sparked discussions among linguists on whether the phrase "global language" refers to these emerging variants, sometimes referred to as "World Englishes," or to a standard form of the language spoken globally.

3. World Englishes

Kashru (1985) originally used the term "World Englishes" to describe the many dialects of English spoken in various geographical areas. He divided the global expansion of English into three groups, which he named the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles.

- The Inner Circle : includes The United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and other nations where English is the primary language.
- The Outer Circle: comprises the former British colonies, such as India, Ghana, Singapore, Nigeria, Namibia, and others, where English is established as an official language and regarded as a second language.
- The Expanding Circle: comprises nations like China, Japan, Algeria, Egypt, and others where English is prioritized for foreign language instruction despite having no official status.

4. Factors of the Global Spread of English

One may question why English has expanded over the world more than other languages like Chinese, Spanish, French, or Arabic. One of the causes is historical legacies; as a result of British colonial expansion, English has spread from its birthplace to several nations worldwide. English was preserved after these colonies gained their independence because it is a lingua franca, a language used for intercommunication between groups whose mother tongues are different (particularly in African nations where English is used to enable communication among hundreds of languages).

The growth of the US as a dominant power in the twentieth century coincided with the expansion of the language in many economic, technological, and cultural spheres. David Crystal argues that the quantity of individuals speaking a language has no impact on its globalization. It has far more to do with who the speakers are. According to him, a language gains worldwide status based on its people's political and military might. He demonstrates that the international language's supremacy is not exclusively due to military power. Establishing a language requires a strong military, but maintaining and expanding it requires economic strength.

It is important for university English students to comprehend why they are learning English from a sociolinguistic standpoint. English has managed to transcend not just geographical boundaries, but also to establish itself in a variety of domains such as the economics, international relations, commerce, education, entertainment, tourism, and the Internet. Globalization has led to English being the dominant language in several fields, displacing competing languages in both international and local situations. As a result, many believe it is a "killer" language and a new sort of cultural/linguistic imperialism. English, being a worldwide language, has both helped to and caused globalization. Since becoming the global lingua franca, it has promoted interconnection across all areas. People do not need to learn many languages for economic and business interactions, tourism, research, and communication. Instead, they should have a basic grasp of English.