



## Dominance of English in the Global market and the First Generation Learners (FGL)

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### Abstract

*The significance of English cannot be denied in the present scenario. It has emerged as the most widely used language of the world. Almost all the scientific studies in most of the universities of the world are carried out in English medium. It not only helps us to be updated with the recent developments around the world but also plays an important role in the enhancement of our personality. Fluency in English language is a must for getting jobs in multinational companies. EIL (English as International Language) is dramatically challenging the ELT profession and further research can help practitioners better appreciate the contribution of EIL to language teaching and intercultural communication all over the world.<sup>1</sup> With the emergence of new age economies like the software development and call centers the significance of the language has increased further. In order to sustain oneself and find a livelihood a good knowledge of English is compulsory. The dominance of English therefore becomes significant to the first generation learners. This influence of English can be seen in all the engineering and professional colleges who have made the learning of English mandatory for all the students. This paper is an attempt to illustrate the dominance of English language for the first generation learners.*

**Keyword:** First generation and the dominance of English.

### Introduction

English has emerged as the international language of business and communication, particularly in certain fields such as travel, hospitality, engineering, construction, healthcare, finance, shipping etc. It is the most widely used language of the world. Many of the world's largest stock exchanges are based in English speaking countries. English has become the key language for banking, investment and foreign exchange. Almost all the universities of the world are conducting scientific studies through English medium. Due to the widespread demand of the language many English medium schools have been set up which impart education only in English. The most important criteria for selection in a reputed institution or organization is the knowledge of English. It is necessary for economic and social advancement in India. No medical, science or technical journals are published in any of the other Indian languages. The medical companies write the names of the medicines in English. The Indian lawyers too draft a petition in English. Thus, English enjoys prime importance in India even though it is not read or spoken by the majority of Indians. All in all, we could argue that English plays the same role in multinational corporations as the mother tongue does in domestically operating companies or other monolingual work environments: it is used to get the job done<sup>2</sup>.

**Historical Overview: Journey of English to India:** Language is the most organized and manifested form of thought, speech, communication and intelligence. In other words it is the most mysterious creations of nature. Let us have a look at the journey

of English language in India. India, primarily known as Sone Ki Chidia (in Hindi) was a prosperous country in its culture, heritage, economic and social condition. Then, in 1498 Vasco D Gama invaded Calicut and restored a link between Europe and the East. India was considered as a land of "spices and marvels" to the Europeans. The newly explored route turned out to be a boon to the English who wanted to trade in India and gradually occupied the land and established the East India Company. This, led to the fusion of two different cultures, languages etc. Indians got attracted to the west because they were far ahead in various fields. With the rule of Britishers the language also ruled.

**Necessity of English language:** Till recently, English was just a foreign language but now it has become the international language. In order to get prestigious job knowledge of English is a must. We ourselves have adopted English language and it is slowly spreading in urban or remote areas through television, mobile phones or word of mouth. We do not realize that we are amalgamating English words into Hindi sentences or Hindi words into English sentences. English has emerged as lingua franca and now there is no escape from it. Our social transformation is already in process, and the credit undoubtedly goes to English language. The spread of technology has further made the use of the language inevitable. Thus, it would be wiser to adopt the language and march forward to lead a successful life.

**Globalization in the Context of English Language with the Reference to Indian Culture:** Globalization in India is due to the impact of the western contacts. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century India

was influenced by the European ideologies and belief, namely, the principles of equality and freedom, and the knowledge based on reason. The Indian society was disorganized, people were divided amongst themselves, false pride and superstition was prevalent in the society. A modern outlook was therefore required to transform the traditional values of religion, faith, etc., to secularism, and equal rights. This change was further induced by information and technological revolution, which paved way for indirect domination. Globalization in the context of English Language with the reference to Indian Culture: Globalisation is an influencing force everywhere in the world. It makes us more aware that, along with the prescriptive slogan 'think globally, act locally', there must, as so aptly put by Hogan, be the additional critical observation that we also 'think locally, act globally'<sup>3</sup>.

Indian culture is the soil in which we are born, the material which has shaped the very foundation of our body life and mind. It seems at the moment that we stand facing turmoil at the cross roads of the history where we shall be asked either to fight against westernization or else to get up rise to the greater task of discovering reconciliation that shall transform us into a magical symphony beckoning us to a golden future for the mother earth. Looking at the need of an hour we cannot deny the fact that our social transformations can take place through English language and it is indeed very important for social and economical advancement of the first generation learners. They should be educated so that they can read write and speak English language not only for their own growth but for the growth and the development of the nation. We can no more live in ignorance, we have to come forward and take concrete steps so that first generation learners can get an exposure in these challenging times of globalization.

We can not divide our nation into English and non English groups. To make nation one, to spread nationalism we should come forward and do something for the first generation learners so that they can also become part of the main stream. We need to transform and equip our first generation learners with necessary contemporary skills to make them secure and to be able to face successfully the challenges of time. English has come as a little candle that can show us some light in the darkness of the night.

**Problems and Solutions: How First Generation Learners (FGL) can improve their English, Motivation to go to School:** Although FGL belong to good and financially sound families but just because of lack of exposure to English language, their development is constrained. India has a remarkably low poverty line and unfortunately English language has been limited to English medium schools catering to upper class or middle class only. Therefore, the need is to reduce the fee structure of the English medium schools so that even the children from poor families can get English medium education, or to give some kind of scholarship to the students from poor families. The students should be motivated to take

school seriously and to attend the classes regularly because school is the temple of learning where transformation begins.

**Quality Teachers:** A teacher is a person who is suppose to be 'a leading learner' working among his/her learners. He/she stands just ahead of his/her learners in his/her knowledge and experience steering the entire group as per needed in the right direction.<sup>4</sup> Teaching is a very noble profession and teachers are considered the builders of the nation. The students learn from their teachers and adopt their style and manners. Therefore English training programs and workshops should be conducted for all teachers whether they are teaching English or not because basic knowledge of English is a must. Only then can they create proper environment for English in schools and colleges. It is the responsibility of each and every institution small or big to provide basic knowledge of English for communication enhancement. Foundation courses in English for teachers would help them to prepare for a better tomorrow.

Family planning and two drops of polio etc were the campaigns started by the government and the remarkable changes brought about by them in the society. Polio is eradicated to a great extent and families have limited themselves to one or two children. We understand that there is no magic spell to bring about a change in the society. People slowly and gradually accept what is prevalent and transformation certainly takes place sooner or later.

**Perseverance:** The problem with FGL is that they find Hindi easier as it is spoken at home, it is their mother tongue and they feel comfortable rather they don't have to put any extra efforts, as it comes naturally. With English it is like first learning the language and then understanding the subjects taught in that medium. Because of this they drop the idea of pursuing English language not realizing that this would be a life time skill which they are going to attain. At this point the role of teachers and parents is very important.

Now here comes the role of parents and teachers. A regular counseling of parents should be done so that they can act as pushers in motivational form. Teachers should put in their best to make their classes interesting. Games can be played in classes related to the subject to keep students encouraged and inspired. This will help them to acquire the skill unknowingly. Debate surrounds the question of whether success is the result of one's motivation or one's motivation is the result of success. Nevertheless, these results are suggestive. Students who study only for the sake of passing a test are highly unlikely to be successful. Strong instrumental motivations are better. In this study, however, it appears that students with an integrative motivation are most likely to be successful<sup>5</sup>.

**Doing Creative Things:** Students should be motivated to read as much as possible in English. Even reading comic or cartoon books would also help. Children must be told to watch all children programs and movies in English. Teachers should watch BBC news etc. and discuss with the students. Teachers

should spend 5-10 minutes in every class to discuss with students about the programs of children's interest. A vocabulary book should be maintained by one and all. They must learn a few words every day. Trick is to revise them next day, a week later, a month later and six months later so that it is memorized properly.

**Over Crowded Classes:** The number of learners in the classroom should be limited. A class that could barely accommodate thirty or forty seats contains candidates twice its strength<sup>6</sup>. There should not be more than 20 learners in a class. Our crowded classes lead to frustration of teachers teaching foreign language. A few students can learn in a better way and the teacher can also give individual attention to them. More activities can be carried out with less number of students and they can comprehend lessons in a better way. Group discussions, group presentations can be carried out in the classroom to help the student's enhance their language. This will not only help in improving their fluency but also in building their confidence.

**Resources:** As a rapid developing country, India is going towards mass developments such as industries of I.T., B.P.O's, Apparels and Tourism etc. India is maintaining a strong foreign policy to achieve its goals. English is an international language used vastly all over the world to communicate. We have to learn English for various reasons and for that we have to depend on resources from English speaking countries. We have to utilize resources like books, newspapers, radios, television sets, movies etc. Internet education should be given to students and once they become familiar with it they further can enhance their language. Reading of English news papers should be made compulsory in class rooms. Students should develop a habit of going through it. They should look for hard words in the dictionary, note them out, make sentences etc. they should also be told to summarize the journals they like in their own words. An English movie once in a month can be kept as a moral booster activity. Generally subtitles are given underneath the screens so that they can see what they are saying and also enjoy the movie at the same time. Besides, they should be encouraged to visit libraries regularly, spend more time in reading and searching meanings of difficult words, understand language properly and to remember that the more they read the better they speak. Besides, finding some pen friend from internet, chatting, social networking etc. can also help them in improving their language.

**Surroundings Help:** The best and the most important way of learning English is to take the help of one's surroundings. One can learn to speak English only when one constantly uses that language in his speech. One must therefore try as much as possible to speak to his friends in English. The teachers too instead of emphasizing grammar must teach simple sentences used in everyday conversation. English grammar is very complicated and has a lot of exceptions. The FGL find it confusing with no fixed rules and thus lose interest. On the other hand if they learn simple sentences, memorize it and use it in their speech, they enjoy and feel motivated and confident. Once

they start enjoying the language they use it often and thus enhance their personality.

Here we would like to quote an example, we have observed in the city Jaipur that the auto Rikshawallas of the city and the salesman of the local markets of Bapu Bazar, Johari bazaar, Hawa Mahal, MI Road etc. were good at English. Neither they were well educated, nor had anybody taught them. It was only due to the tourist coming to Jaipur from all over the world that they were able to communicate so well. The influence of surrounding can thus be seen. Therefore if a person submerges himself with English speaking people or speaks English continuously he can easily master the language.

**Clubs:** Interactive sessions are necessary and for that English clubs can be formed which would give all the members a platform to speak without any hesitation because everybody would be at par. The clubs can organize various group activities which would help the students to speak without any hesitation. Activities such as role plays, debate etc can be conducted at regular intervals to promote the use of English.

## Conclusion

**Sum-up:** You don't have to know English for the decent social life but at educational and professional front you need to have proper training and guidance. It helps in communication with others irrespective of the nationality. To be high-tech, to survive and that to successfully, knowledge of English is a must. We would therefore appeal to each and everyone to contribute their experience and most importantly their time to educate the first generation learners with this global and wonderful language. English has been utilised as the most commonly shared language in India by its engineers to work cooperatively with their international engineering counterparts. In the meantime, English is playing a double-sided role: as a valuable asset for those who have it and a barrier for those who have not<sup>7</sup>.

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