



## CULTURAL BACKGROUND TO THE EMERGENCE OF ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

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**Annotation:** English is regarded as one of the most spoken languages over the world. Its influence has reached further distances. The article focuses on the factors of English becoming a language of international business and communication. It further gives information about the varieties of English

**Keywords:** global lingua franca, variety, pronunciation

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, which has had an official status as a first or second language in more than seventy countries. There exist several factors that influence the maintenance of English as a global language. If we look back on world history, it becomes obvious that the British Empire was the most powerful country which expanded its lands by colonizing the great states like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, several countries in Africa and without doubt the new land America.

The process of colonization brought not only its economical and political systems, but also gave rise to the merge of local language, culture and traditions with those of British. If Britain was the stimuli of English in the past, the present motivation and a large-scale need for use of English derives from the political and economical power of the United States. The big influence the US has on international trade causes English to become the most demanded and used language. The next factor of English extension throughout the globe can be explained by American popular culture.

English has become a global language with over 380 million people speaking it as their first language and over 200 million people taking it as their second language. Another billion of people are in the process to learn it. English has been majorly associated with the western nations such as US, Canada, or the UK. However, with the world's globalization majorly in the economic sector, English has been seen to play a great role in facilitating communication between people of different linguistic backgrounds. Again, globalization in the education sector where people move to other countries to study has also influenced the development of English. English has become the world's language of communication as it is used in various sectors; for example, commerce, technology, politics, and diplomacy. English is everywhere; we can see it



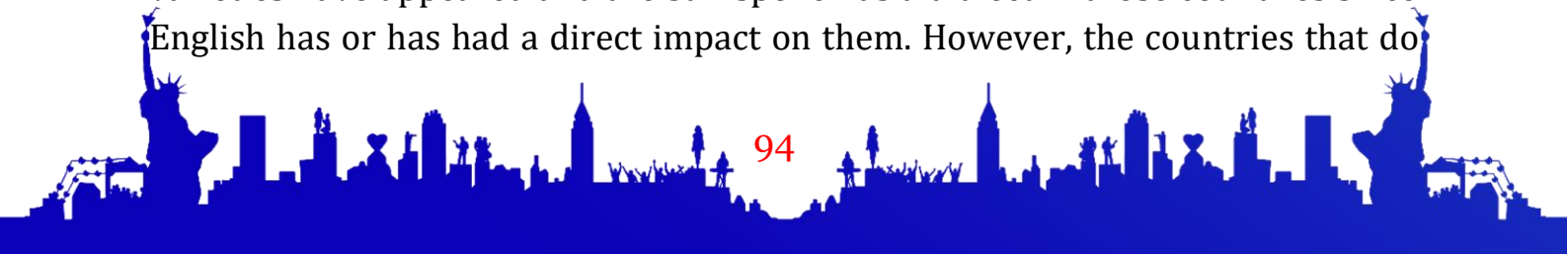


everywhere we move. However, the effects of this globalization have affected the society in various ways; loss of cultural identity is one of the major effects that are associated with the globalization of English. This paper is going to examine the globalization of English and how it affects the language acquisition and cultural identity of the people taking it as a second language like the third world countries in Africa and Asia.

First, as an instrument for the economic success of creator of new inequality class, English has been a powerful force behind the development of business institutions. As a result, a new class of inequalities was created that was majorly based on the language proficiency. Research indicates that the English language has influenced the development and advancement of the economic sector in a powerful way (Johnson, 2009). 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 ways; for example, it provides people with the basic skills that enable them to cope with the modern age of technology (Seppala, 2011). Proficiency in the English language enables one to understand the basic skills needed in the modern life; for example, proficiency in computer and driving. With the technological advancement, English still remain the dominant language of communication for many people. Therefore, attaining proficiency in English gives someone the perfect opportunity to understand the modern society. English is depicted as a form of cultural capital.

English comes into people's homes via songs of Eminem, Britney Spears and Michael Jackson; it creeps into people's way of life via Hollywood films like Titanic, Avatar and Matrix. Furthermore, the factor of the Internet is no less significant than the aforementioned. We should mention the fact that about seventy per cent of the information on the Internet is in English.

For many years, English has preserved its position as a global lingua franca and factors mentioned above have played a great role in the origination of diverse varieties of English. Some examples include British English, American English, Australian English, Canadian English, Indian English, Philippine English and many more others. They may vary in terms of grammar (Past Simple is used instead of Present Perfect in American English), vocabulary (they say dinkumin Australia when they mean "true"), phonology ([i] sound is longer in the pronunciation been in Canada [bi:n] compared to [bin] in British English). These varieties have appeared and are still spoken as a dialect in those countries since English has or has had a direct impact on them. However, the countries that do





not grant any official estimation to the language learn English as a foreign language.

According to the Open University, about 700 million people speak English as a foreign language [2, P.62]. Uzbekistan is among the states that regard and learn it as a foreign language. Although Uzbek people do not apply English as free and fluently as Indians do, we can observe them used when calling news notions related to food, computers, telecommunication and the Internet. However, the words are usually mispronounced as a result of the lack of direct contact with the English language. For instance, Paynet- the service that transfers money into people's phone accounts - is pronounced wrongly as many [painet], but the right way to say it is [peinet]. It is used so widely that speakers of EFL pronounce it as generally accepted by the public. The Call me message is read as [kel mi]. Nevertheless, the right pronunciation of the word combination is [ko:l mi]. This is prompted by the people's assumption that in English a letter is pronounced as [ei] in all the words since everybody remembers Basic English words they learnt at school, apple, cat. As a consequence, people attempt to pronounce the a sound in the way they were taught during their younger ages. When people are called by an unknown number, they read the word in the way Uzbek words are pronounced [unknown]. This is usually very noticeable in the speech of the elderly as more and more youth are aware of such words and readings to a certain degree. Furthermore, Russian version of pronunciation of the abbreviation USB [yuzbi] is kept in Uzbek, which actually must be read as other abbreviations in English. We can observe the influence of Uzbek pronunciation on the food name KFC. People say it [kepsi] instead of separate reading. It is the result of consonant change: [f] is pronounced as [p] in most cases (falokat - palakat). Other examples include: imo [imo], BMW [bi emve], UMS [yumees]. The proper way to say those words in Standard English is [aimo], [bi em double ju] and [juemes]. Although the term Uzlish is not yet coined and included into internationally popular dictionaries, many scholars engaged in English learning and teaching tend to use it to mean the variant of Uzbek based on English. However, the English words are currently restricted to the names of only brands and technological advancement terms.

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