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LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN INTERNATIONALIZED WORLD: HOW GLOBAL ENGLISH AFFECTS NATIVE LANGUAGES

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Abstract: This article examines the multifaceted impact of global English on language learning and cultural identity, focusing on both opportunities and challenges. While English facilitates cross-cultural communication, economic advancement, and international mobility, it also poses risks to linguistic diversity, contributing to the marginalization or decline of minority and indigenous languages. The article explores how the adoption of English influences language learning priorities, educational policies, and linguistic hierarchies in multilingual societies. Strategies for fostering bilingualism or multilingualism while preserving linguistic heritage are discussed, highlighting the role of language policies, technology, and education in balancing global integration with cultural preservation. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of creating equitable linguistic ecosystems in a globalized world

Key words: language acquisition, global English, native languages, multilingualism, linguistic identity, language revival, language shift.

Introduction. The emergence of English as a global lingua franca has significantly transformed the landscape of language acquisition worldwide. Initially a language spoken mainly by native communities in the UK, the US, and other English-speaking countries, English has now become the leading language used in international business, science, technology, and diplomacy. This trend is often termed the rise of "Global English." Factors such as globalization, advancements in communication technology, and the growing number of English-language educational institutions globally have facilitated this spread.

While the role of English as a global language brings clear advantages—such as promoting international communication and economic integration—it has also raised alarms about the loss of linguistic diversity, particularly the diminishing use of native languages.

The process of language acquisition, where individuals learn and internalize a language, is heavily influenced by the sociolinguistic environment surrounding them. In a world where English increasingly prevails, both children and adults often find themselves balancing the need to become proficient in this global language while attempting to maintain their fluency in their native languages. This paper explores the effects of Global English on language acquisition, focusing on its impact on native languages, linguistic identity, and intergenerational language transmission, especially in multilingual contexts like Uzbekistan.

Literature Review: The connection between English and native languages has been extensively researched within sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and anthropology. Scholars such as Kachru (1985) and Crystal (2003) have documented the global spread of English, highlighting its role as a facilitator of global communication while also noting its potential to diminish the use of minority languages. Kachru's "Three Circles of English" theory—comprising Inner, Outer, and Expanding circles—illustrates the varying functions of English across different contexts, from native usage in inner-circle countries to second-language use in outer-circle regions and as a foreign language in expanding-circle nations.

Studies on language shift and endangerment have shown that introducing a dominant language like English in a multilingual setting often results in the decline of local languages (Fishman, 1991). Frequently, children from bilingual or multilingual families begin to favor English, leading to a gradual erosion of their heritage language skills. This trend is particularly evident in urban areas where English-language educational systems and mass media often overshadow the use of native languages.

Nonetheless, not all experts view the rise of English as entirely detrimental. Some contend that bilingualism—particularly in English—can enrich cognitive and cultural experiences, improving individuals' capacity to function in both local and global contexts (Cummins, 2000). Additionally, the spread of English has birthed new linguistic forms, including "Globish" and "World Englishes," which represent a blend of global and local language characteristics (Jenkins, 2003).

In Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan, the interaction between the national language, Uzbek, and Russian, alongside the growing influence of English, has been the focus of numerous studies. Researchers from Uzbekistan have identified both the challenges and opportunities that come with the global proliferation of English in a region traditionally influenced by Russian dominance, where Uzbek is the official language.

Tashpulatov M. (2017) investigates Uzbekistan's language policy following independence, particularly the revival of the Uzbek language after the Soviet Union's fall and the increasing prominence of English as a foreign language. He argues that while English provides access to global markets, it also presents challenges for preserving the linguistic and cultural identity of Uzbek speakers.

Research Methodology: Quantitative Data and Research Methodology

This research employs quantitative data to evaluate the effects of Global English on language acquisition and the preservation of native languages. The study consists of two main components:

1. Surveys and Questionnaires: A survey targeting 200 participants, including children, adolescents, and adults from diverse multilingual backgrounds in both urban and rural areas of Uzbekistan, was conducted. This survey gathered information about language proficiency, daily language use, attitudes toward English and native languages, and language learning experiences.

2. Interviews: In-depth interviews were held with 20 language educators, sociolinguists, and community leaders to glean insights into the social and cultural factors affecting language acquisition in Uzbekistan. These discussions centered on the role of English in education, media, and community dynamics, as well as strategies for maintaining Uzbek and other minority languages.

3. Linguistic Assessments: Language proficiency tests were administered to 100 participants to evaluate their fluency in both English and their native languages, including Uzbek. The assessments measured vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall fluency, allowing for quantitative evaluation of language skills.

Analysis and Results: The data collected from the surveys and linguistic assessments highlighted several significant trends:

1. English Proficiency vs. Native Language Competence: A notable correlation surfaced between high proficiency in English and reduced competence in native languages, especially among younger individuals. In urban environments, children aged 6-12 enrolled in English-medium schools displayed much lower fluency levels in their native language than their counterparts. In contrast, those in rural areas, who primarily speak their native language, maintained a more balanced proficiency in both languages.

2. Language Attitudes: Insights from interviews indicated a prevalent belief that English

represents a "language of opportunity" that provides access to global job markets, educational achievements, and social mobility. Conversely, native languages, especially Uzbek, were often regarded as less significant in a globalized context. Young people particularly leaned towards English and Russian for their worldwide utility, while older individuals expressed greater concern over the decline of their native languages.

3. Urban vs. Rural Differences: Participants from urban centers demonstrated higher English proficiency and a distinct reduction in native language usage compared to rural respondents. In rural settings, native languages remained a common means of communication within families and communities. Rural participants were also more inclined to worry about the erosion of their native languages and emphasized the necessity for preservation efforts.

4. Language Revitalization Initiatives: Various community-led initiatives aimed at revitalizing the Uzbek language were noted, including bilingual education programs, language immersion camps, and the use of media (such as radio and television) in Uzbek. Although these initiatives are vital, they often suffer from inadequate funding and face resistance from parents favoring English for its perceived economic advantages.

Conclusion. This study illustrates the intricate relationship between Global English and native languages, revealing that while English presents global opportunities, it simultaneously jeopardizes linguistic diversity, particularly among younger urban populations. To mitigate these issues, promoting bilingual education policies, encouraging the use of native languages in everyday life, and increasing awareness of their cultural significance are essential. Revitalization efforts should integrate native languages with English, support community initiatives, and leverage technology to engage younger audiences. Furthermore, collaboration among governments, educational institutions, and international organizations is crucial in developing policies that promote multilingualism and safeguard linguistic heritage.

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