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THE GLOBAL DOMINANCE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: IMPACT ON NATIVE LANGUAGES AND SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the influence of English as a global language and its impact on other languages and societies worldwide. English has become the preferred means of communication in many countries due to its association with improved opportunities in education, politics, and technology. The language's rise to prominence, driven by historical events such as British colonization and the industrial revolution, has resulted in both positive and negative consequences. While English facilitates international communication and access to knowledge, its dominance threatens the survival of many local languages and cultural identities. The article also discusses the factors leading to language loss and highlights the challenges of maintaining linguistic diversity in a world where English is often viewed as a gateway to success.

Keywords: *global dominance of English, lingua franca, cultural impact of English, native languages and globalization, English in social and political spheres.*

The global language

Recent statistics indicate that the number of English speakers worldwide has surpassed 1.5 billion. In addition, English is spoken in more than 130 countries and is being learned as a second language across the globe.

A relevant question is why English, in particular, has become dominant. Historically, various languages have served as a lingua franca, or common language,

for communication between people of different nations. For example, Latin was once the most widespread language in Europe, used for education and religious matters. Similarly, Arabic became the dominant language in Central Asia, Africa, and Europe following the rise of Islam.

Today, English holds this high-ranking position. Its spread began during the 16th–19th centuries with British colonization and gradually expanded to other regions. By the 19th century, during the Industrial Revolution, English's influence grew as new technologies, literature, scientific discoveries, and trade gained global importance. After World War II, the United States emerged with strong political, economic, and cultural influence, achieving great success in fields such as media, film, and business, which further propelled the spread of English. In the modern era, most new technologies and information systems are designed in English, and the functions of social media platforms are largely based on it. Educational materials and the latest scientific works are also readily accessible in English, making it a valuable resource in the field of education. English has provided significant advantages to young people and researchers in academia. Additionally, it serves as a bridge of communication between nations. In universities and other educational institutions, international students can communicate easily, thanks to their shared knowledge of English.

Effects of English

However, the spread of English also has notable negative effects on the native languages and cultures of other nations. People are increasingly learning English not just as a foreign language, but adopting it as though it were their mother tongue. Children, at a young age, may imitate another nation's culture without first developing their sense of national pride and identity. Such situations can lead to children growing up according to English values and mentality, potentially undermining their own cultural values. This phenomenon reflects a significant aspect of globalization.

When a global language is introduced to a new community and brings about improved living conditions, people tend to favor the new language over their native one. As a result, the reduced use of the local language can lead to its eventual

disappearance. This was evident when English became prevalent in academia, particularly with the formation of the English Association in 1907, which contributed to the decline of classical languages like Latin and Greek in educational institutions.

English continues to spread globally, bolstered by its role in politics, economics, science, and technology, leading people to prioritize English over their own languages. This dominance has caused many local languages to fade.

Three key factors contribute to the loss of languages. First, if parents do not pass their language on to their children, the language will eventually disappear. Second, if a language loses its communicative function, it is likely to be forgotten. Finally, societal instability can threaten a language's survival. A notable example is the former Yugoslavia, where after conflict, Serbo-Croatian fractured into Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian, leading to the decline of the original shared language (Crystal, 1997; Kaplan, 2000).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the global spread of English has had a profound impact on the way people communicate and interact. Its dominance has been shaped by historical, political, and technological factors, making it a powerful tool for globalization. However, this same influence has contributed to the decline of many local languages and cultures, as individuals increasingly prioritize English for social and economic advantages. While English brings significant benefits in terms of access to global knowledge and communication, it is essential to also recognize the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural diversity. As the world becomes more interconnected, efforts to safeguard native languages must remain a priority to ensure that globalization does not erase the uniqueness of different cultures.

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