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A Discourse Study of Globalisation in English Language during Corona Pandemic

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Introduction

Globalization has become an important issue in all areas related to human culture, particularly, the English language. English is the main language of communication among people in the world nowadays; and globalization has created new directions in this field. The present study attempts to show the contribution of globalization in the spread of English language all over the world during the corona pandemic.

The study begins with giving an overview of the globalization phenomenon in respect to its origin and application in different types of speech communities. The study then moves on to considering communication in the globalization era. Another section tackles English language as a universal language. Also, there is a section discussing how globalisation operates. Throughout the practical part, the paper discusses the most frequently used English words which are found in the OED during the corona pandemic. Auspiciously, some of these words are newly coined and become very familiar in a very short time because they are related to the pandemic.

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Aim of the Study

The study aims at finding the effect of corona pandemic on English language as a means of globalised world. It makes clear how people around the world start using words denoting the disease or other items relating to the world pandemic .

Limit of the Study

The study is mainly conducted on the OED(Oxford English Dictionary) as a source of new frequent words used to refer to corona disease. This can be seen through the huge increase of the use of the words coronavirus and covid-19 which is the disease caused by the new coronavirus that emerged in China in December 2019. Such words were recently coined but they sooner dominate the global discourse.

Globalisation: An Overview

The study of globalisation as a process assumes that its main impulse is to unite the human world making all its various parts seem alike; whether this unity happens in the economic, cultural, or political fields. In this respect, such a precise aspect of globalisation is essential in its explanation, as Lechner and Boli(2003:2)argue that "If certain activities or institutions become more global, they must displace existing, locally variable activities and institutions. If there are more global linkages, global institutions, and global values, presumably this means that more people will have more in common".

Globalisation has been defined by Giddens as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa"(1990:64). Globalisation is viewed as an economic phenomenon, but theoreticians in different scientific fields keep underlying more and more often that it is a complex cultural process, which triggers a fundamental restructuring of the human life in the virtual spaces in the post-modern world (Granovetter, 1992: 3-11).

Since diversity is a feature of our human psychological make-up, how can human beings advance in a world bringing people together from various cultural environments and traditions? Thus, the very psychology that allows humans to communicate and participate in small groups, makes it possible for that human to communicate into bigger social groups of the modern world by bringing together groups of tribes into chiefdoms in which a single ruler appeared. In this way, it seems that human tribal psychology can develop into groups of a bigger size. Nowadays, in some countries like England, America, Brazil, Japan, India, or China, several hundreds of millions or over a billion people can join together encompassing a single identity such as British or Japanese, American, Indian or Chinese. By the

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time, they will have a leaning for directing their cultural partiality towards other members of their bigger enlarged groups.

Communication in the Globalisation Era

Globalisation is considered a continuing and growing process in the modern human world. Different attempts were made to stop this process through provoking traditional religious attitudes, or keeping humans ignorant and uneducated. The emergence of mass media or social media communication, world trade, and corona pandemic make a start to globalisation. Today, the technological expansion has made out all types of information reachable for all the people in the world. In fact, human languages represent the main obstacles against globalisation. However, English has come to be the international language both in the real and virtual world.

In general, language is considered another aspect of culture that should be regarded as converging. The eagerness of most of the people around the world to learn English language is commonly cited as a confirmation of this opinion. English is regarded as the universal language of business among human nations. Therefore, a lot of people prefer to learn English as their second language so as to communicate with other people from different countries. Also, English is the most commonly used language on the internet and social media. On the contrary, Michael Argyle argues that language is one of the most important differences between many cultures, and one of the greatest barriers (1981:175).

English as a Universal Language

English is the language of globalisation which works as a means of communication in the scientific fields and in the sphere of diplomacy. If we consider the internet as the criterion for thinking of the future of English, it has been told by Breton(2007:750) that with regard to "the total capacity in internet communication, English has been outnumbered by other languages 57% to 43%". Also, Crystal (2003:191) maintains, there is a danger that "the English language will split into various dialects, not fully intelligible to each other. The future of English is thus uncertain".

According to Crystal (2003), 85% of the world's international organizations use English as their official language in transnational communication. About 85% of the world's important film productions and markets use English as well, and 90% of the published academic articles in several academic fields, such as linguistics, are written in English. This growth in the use of English as a language of international communication can be related to educational, economic, cultural, and recently to corona pandemic as a sort of globalisation.

As English language has moved towards predominance, the prominence of the other chief languages has changed. Although they are spoken by more

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people today than ever before, such languages have been downgraded compared with English. Hjarvard(2015:76) mentions that:

French, Spanish, Arabic, German, Russian, etc., more or less have the status of regional languages, national languages that can be used beyond their national frontiers. But, they are losing their currency as the language of international communication, formal and informal: both in political and commercial contexts and in intercultural exchanges, as bridges between people who cross cultural frontiers or who like to enrich their lives with media products from abroad.

The various languages which have been influenced by the demand English language possesses, tend to borrow words, pronunciation, word order, and etc., from English language. For the same reason, a growing number of languages face a danger of death and extinction. Černý (2010:54) mentions that "we can distinguish either pro-survival or anti-survival/ revitalization conceptions. Most generally, the pro-survival supporters argue that language death should be viewed as terrible loss, similar to the death of animal species, and language renewal is thus beneficial. By contrast, anti-survival supporters stress the fact that languages have always died off".

Any national language shows a homogenising effect for the creation of the shared culture and incorporated communication. At a fundamental level; therefore, sharing the same language reduces the level of potential distortion in translating action into language and language into action (Allen, 1977:139). As a matter of fact, cultural and lingual pluralism has nothing to do with racial thinking. It does not assert that one culture or language is better than another. It is the other way round; multiculturalists praise tolerance and liberality. They respect “the other”(Crystal, 2000: 27–67).

In the end of the 20th century, there was a change in attitude concerning the language used in mass media and the internet. The recent viewpoint makes a clear reference to the role of mass media, especially radio and television, in the expansion of language. Nowadays, there is a greater general significance on cultural divergence which should be reflected through the radio and television. Of course, this should include linguistic variations which are represented through dialects and the various accents of other societies.

The linguistic results of the mass media are not fixed to spreading English language and culture. So, the greater use of English language in the radio or TV. does not only represent a foreign influence, but reinforces and changes social and cultural variations and power relations within the society. The mass media themselves can help to create new uses of language. The media represent a social groundwork for communication among the people. As a consequence, the features of such media will have their effect on language. So, the analysis of any society’s various use of language must also take into consideration the linguistic variations that come out of certain media. Hjarvard(2015:86) also mentions that "the World Wide Web, “www”, is

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another realm in which English predominates. A tally of the languages used on the web in 2000 found that 68.4 per cent of all websites were in English. English, the most frequent language, was followed by Japanese, German and Chinese".

It is plausible that most websites are nowadays in English. There is little uncertainty about English language to continue being the global language on the World Wide Web. As a result, other languages will continue to be used narrowly among the people within the same linguistic culture, while English language will be used by most of the people whenever they cross linguistic bounds. Also, English language is very effective in marketing and advertising at the present time. For instance, we find English language used in the headlines of films and computer and play station games, or in the advertisements for popular magazines. So, the titles of films or computer games should be considered an influential aspect in the consumers' agreement to buy .

How Does Globalisation Operate?

Globalisation and the supremacy of English language at the expense of other human languages is not a new topic. It is a kind of a process in which some languages die out, and other universal languages survive. Hjarvard(2015:77) writes that:

The political struggle for recognition of local and regional languages is part of a greater striving for cultural identity and recognition, and against the hegemony of the majority culture(s) of the nation-state. Viewed in this perspective, national linguistic cultures may be said to be under attack from without and within, which is very much in keeping with globalisation theorists' characterization of the process as being at once globalizing and localizing.

This globalisation process operates in various ways:

1.The communications revolution is an important motive of globalisation. It has important effects in that, by leading people into more direct connection with each other, which can happen either physically or by the social media. This connection allows a greater spread of ideas all over the world. This type of communication increases during the corona pandemic because the social media became the only means of contact among the people.

2. The global institutions like the World Bank and the United Nations have an important role in the process of globalisation. For example, the effort of the United Nations for the preservation of the human rights has meant that this question cannot be ignored by national governments.

3.The world economic and commercial systems are also essential aspects of globalisation. Approximately, all the national economies are incorporated

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into the world market. Also, the financial markets represent an embodiment of a globalised market which provides financial operations around the world to be completed through new forms of communication.

4.Globalisation also affects culture. Avery clear example is the expansion of Hollywood movies which are seen throughout the world.

5. Because of the rapid spread of the coronavirus, the government authorities in most endemic countries have been forced to Quarantine , and this has hindered everyone to do their daily activities such as going to schools, working or walking, etc. So, everyone resorts to social networking programs to spend most of their time, regardless of their talents inside the home. This case of lockdown has helped in using words mostly relating to the pandemic which results in making such words increase throughout the world in a very short period of time.

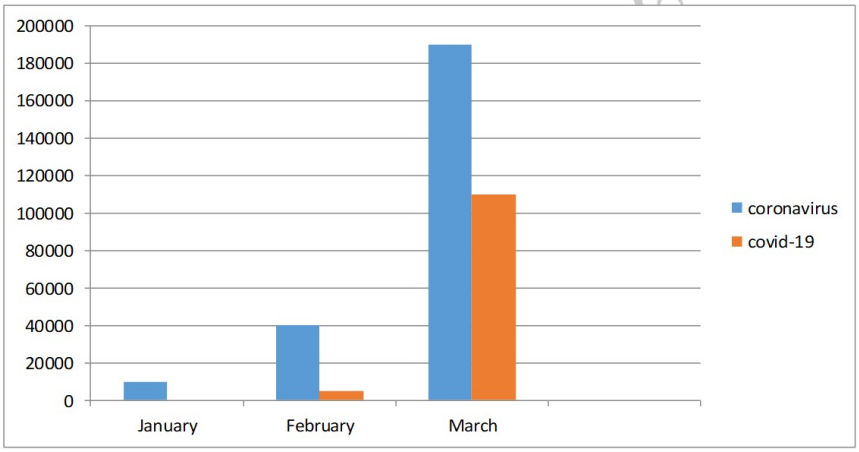
The Practical Part

This study attempts to check some of the words which are increasingly used during the context of the current corona pandemic, for instance, coronavirus, self-isolation, covid-19, social distancing, etc. The OED continuously check the linguistic developments of English language. This study will use some data mentioned in the monitor corpus of English. In fact, such monitor corpus includes more than 8 billions words which are to be updated every month.

Administration of the Study

This study is designed to get information about the increasing use of some English language words. The corona pandemic helps a lot in the frequency of the use of some words during the first months of 2020.Words like covid-19 and coronavirus, etc., directly refer to the corona pandemic and the new manner of living along the human world. It is a striking change to know that the immense frequent increase of the use of coronavirus and covid-19 happens in a very short period of time. As a fact, before 2020, the person can't hear about the coronavirus or covid-19 outside the medical discourse, especially the item covid-19(coronavirus date 2019) which was coined in the beginning of 2020. Now, both terms are very dominant outside the medical discourse. As a result, it became difficult to find or hear a discourse among people, in mass media, social media, or any other place without having coronavirus or covid-19 within that discourse. The figure below can show the increasing use of these terms during the first three months of 2020:

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The Frequent Use of CORONAVIRUS and COVID-19 in the first three months of 2020.

Data Analysis

To collect the data, a survey is conducted during the study period. The changing discourse can show the shifting awareness and concerns of the people using English language as a means of communication. With the emergence of corona pandemic, people start using different collocates of coronavirus. Some of these collocates are considered medical expressions and they come to be frequently used by the laymen throughout the world. All of these words are used as a result of corona pandemic and the new manner of human self-isolation. They represent a new stage in human life which has a relation with the global feature of the corona pandemic. These coronavirus collocates occur in various patterns and for different uses by the people around the world. The following chart can show the various collocate words of coronavirus used during the first three months of 2020:

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Chart 1. Top 20 collocates of Coronavirus (after the Oxford Corpus)

	January	February	March
1	Outbreak	Outbreak	Outbreak
2	Novel	Novel	Pandemic
3	Deadly	Spread	Spread
4	Wuhan	Case	Case
5	Spread	China	Novel
6	China	Epidemic	Positive
7	2019-nCov	Impact	Crisis
8	Strain	COVID-19	Test
9	Case	Fear	COVID-19
10	Infection	Deadly	Impact
11	Infect	Confirm	New
12	Confirm	New	Confirm
13	Epidemic	Test	Fight
14	Originate	Wuhan	Fear
15	Symptom	Infection	Response
16	New	Positive	Disease
17	Fear	Infect	Patient
18	Toll	Concern	Cause
19	Spreading	Patient	Death
20	Declare	Disease	Concern

The impact of corona pandemic on the emergence of the words related to coronavirus can relate to the global use of these English words. This can be shown by looking at the words collocate to coronavirus used in the first three months of 2020. Such words are used more frequently , in these months, than other words in the corpus as a whole(look at the chart above).

The result of the current corona pandemic on English language becomes very clear when we check the corpus(collocate words to coronavirus) during the first three months of 2020. So, the corpus contains the most frequently used words in these months which are different from those in the corpus as a whole. The chart shows the top 20 collocates for the three months. Every one of these collocate words is related to the coronavirus pandemic. The words describe the medical items used for describing the virus and how the people should behave in such crisis. They also show the social impact of the pandemic on human life and the medical responses. They even reflect the psychological situation of the people concerning such disease. It is clear that most of these collocate words used in the current pandemic are not completely new. Rather, they are not dominant in use before this crisis.

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The chart below shows the top 20 words in the first three months of the year. By noticing the table, we find that some of the words refer to corona in January while other words relate to other world events such as Australia bushfire, the assassination of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani, and other events happened during that month. Also, the words tend to describe the coronavirus : coronavirus, SARS, virus, flu-like. In February, words relating to coronavirus are more in number than those in January while in March, all the 20 words refer to corona pandemic. They seem to be borrowed from the medical discourse. This happens for the first time to have all the words in the Oxford Corpus relate to one topic only i.e., Corona Pandemic. Of course, this shows the universality of the corona crisis all over the world. It is worth mentioning that such words referring to coronavirus are not new, but they are used in March month in a salient way. It can be observed how the English speakers respond to the changing social situation happen as a result of the corona pandemic, which will change English discourse in the nearest future.

Chart 2. Top Words in the Oxford Corpus

	January	February	March
1	Bushfire	Covid-19	Covid-19
2	Coronavirus	Coronavirus	Pandemic
3	Iranian	Quarantine	Distancing
4	SARS	Pandemic	Coronavirus
5	Iraqi	Virus	self-isolate
6	Sign-stealing	Outbreak	Lockdown
7	Koala	Caucus	self-isolation
8	Virus	Locust	sanitiser/sanitizer
9	Impeachment	Infect	Quarantine
10	Airstrike	epicentre/epicenter	Ventilitor
11	human-to-human	self-isolate	non-essential
12	Locust	nCov	self-quarantine
13	Airliner	Epidemic	Virus
14	Respiratory	SARS	Outbreak
15	Outbreak	Infected	Corona
16	Assassination	sign-stealing	PPE
17	flu-like	Acquittal	Postpone
18	fire-affected	Hereditary	Disinfect
19	Quarantine	stop-and-frisk	Isolation
20	Militia	Evacuate	self-isolating

Conclusion

This study has surveyed the main role English discourse has with relation to the phenomenon of globalisation. It shows the cultural prestige of English language as an international language and the role the communicators play in the global English. What is more, it has been mentioned, throughout this

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study, that one of the most influential factors in this globalisation age is that of the cultural role and the world incidents; namely, the universal corona pandemic in the world nowadays.

The term "globalisation" is used in this study to relate to a phenomenon involving some developments that take place throughout the world established on generally accepted attitudes, beliefs, political movements, and universal pandemic. It is used without being openly described because it is still in the role of constructing which needs more validation and further research. Therefore, globalisation process will extend to stride into the future of the whole world.

It is also important to keep a closer eye on language role as a factor in the globalisation process. In the future time, people will urgently need to address economic, environmental, and cultural matters which can have continuing effects for themselves and their world. It can be concluded that corona pandemic, under the impact of globalisation, contribute in different ways to the widespreading of English discourse, and to linguistic variation and creativity in others. The media spread English mostly at the expense of other languages. Also, globalisation during corona pandemic, can be regarded as a new age in the linguistic history.

In sum, the network community gives rise to a certain culture of real virtuality. The global society is a mediated society, where discourse through electronic networks establishes a new type of reality. English may thus be considered as the language of globalisation where geographical boundaries are losing their importance, being supplanted by electronic, virtual localities. Also, other languages are supplanted by global language like English.

The seemingly unstoppable and accelerating globalisation of English language throughout the world produced by the internet communicators in their discourse on coronavirus is possibly a good thing despite that fact that it results in the fall of cultural diversity. It raises human sense of intimacy through the sense of the same shared discourse. As a fact, removing any discourse barriers is certainly one of the important matters that human societies can achieve to increase familiarity among most discordant peoples through sharing the same health crisis.

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