Analysis of globalization and "Englishization" in Pakistan

Ashraf, Muhammad Azeem

Graduate Student at Institute for International and Comparative Education, Faculty of Education,
Beijing Normal University, China (Azeem20037@gmail.com)

Tsegay, Samson Maekele ✉

Graduate Student at Institute for International and Comparative Education, Faculty of Education,
Beijing Normal University, China (Samex221@gmail.com)

Abstract

Through framework of theories analyzing globalization, and secondary data, this paper asks, how globalization through "Englishization" affects Pakistani societies. Language is an important tool for globalization where the world is communicating in few dominant languages. English has become the language of globalization in many countries especially developing countries like Pakistan. Pakistan is a developing country with low rate of literacy. Despite the fact that about half of Pakistani population cannot read, write or speak English, English has been the official language of Pakistan. The desire to actively participate in national and international levels and the perception of the Pakistani people about English as a language of civilized people have also pushed Pakistan to focus on English as the medium of instruction in schools. However, as there is quality discrepancy within Pakistani schools, this policy is benefiting more to the powerful people who send their children to high-quality local and international schools, widening the gap between the powerful and less powerful societies. The paper provides an overview of changing patterns of globalization in connection with English language, and explores the moving patterns of society and education towards a dominant language in Pakistan.

Keywords: English language; globalization; Pakistan; schools; society; medium of instruction

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1. Introduction

Globalization as a contested terrain has been defined in different ways from different perspectives such as politicians, economists and eminent scholars. Most of the definitions concur with the idea of Giddens (1990), "*Globalization is 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*" (p. 64). In accordance, nation-states including Pakistan are pressured by internal and external forces to shape and reshape their socio-economic, cultural and political structures to share the benefits, and combat the bad effects of globalization (Stromquist, 2002). However, it is argued that when such structures are done without proper study and consideration of the local people, their effects become disastrous.

The world is already connected. Globalization is sweeping the world affecting socio-economic, political and cultural relations (Burbules & Torres, 2000). Similarly, globalization affects the domination of societies through different means including language. According to Naji Meidani and Pishghadam (2013, p. 85), "The spread of the English language is said to have strong ties with globalization". This indicates that English and globalization are connected to each other. Through globalization, English has penetrated into all societies and become a dominant language in the world. On the other hand, as a global language, English is considered as part and parcel of international development and as having an instrumental value and a linguistic capital that could be beneficial to employment and career development of individuals (Pan & Block, 2011). It is considered the language of global communications, modern sciences and socio-economic development (Brown & Lauder, 2006; Naji Meidani & Pishghadam, 2013; Jalali & Tamimi Sa'd, 2014).

More than that, English is considered as a language of the developed world and individuals (Khalique, 2007). These situations have pushed many individuals to learn English within and outside of schools, and national-states to change their medium of instruction to English. However, it is believed that many countries have succeeded in education and economic development while educating their nationals using their own local languages. According to the survey done by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) regarding educational achievement in 65 countries, the three countries which achieved the highest score in reading are China (Hong Kong and Shanghai regions), South Korea and Finland (OECD, 2010). All these three countries use their local languages instead of dominant foreign language (like English) as a medium of instruction in their educational institutions. Simultaneously, these countries are among the economically successful countries within the world. In addition, some countries like China are minimizing the level of English in their curriculum including their national examinations whereas others like Pakistan are moving towards "Englishization" both in schools and outside of schools recognizing the language as an official language of their countries. Through critical theory and secondary data, this paper focuses on globalization and "Englishization" in Pakistan and the effects they bring to the Pakistani people. The study will contribute to nation-states to critically examine their language policy in accordance with the socio-economic conditions of the countries and the people.

2. Theoretical perspectives

Globalization is a complex and interconnected phenomenon with positive and negative impacts, embracing socio-economic, cultural and political situations and identities (Coleman, 2006). Globalization is affecting human life in general and education in particular in all forms from policy formulation to teaching practices. One important issue that has been a point of discussion is the issue of English as a language of instruction and sometimes as an official language in many countries where there are no many English speakers. The following discusses the intersection of globalization and "Englishization".

2.1 Neoliberalism and "Englishization"

Neoliberalism, which is mainly defined with the context of economic globalization, is the dominant means of globalization (Stromquist, 2002). One of the trends of neoliberal globalization is faith in the market and a move towards privatization of services including education (Burbules & Torres, 2000). Moreover, in developing countries like Pakistan, the level of students' acquisition in the English language has become the main competition factor for schools. Schools for students from high social class usually teach their students with native English speakers and demand a lot of money as a result. Neoliberalism and socio-economic situation of societies are very well connected to each other. Neoliberalism is easily adopted by the high socio-economic group of societies because they perceive that they can buy anything with the power of money. They perceive that money is the problem and the solution in this world. Accordingly, this money factor is changing the philosophy of education to be guided by economic principles and cost-benefit analysis diverting learning from its main objectives which is to produce skilled and responsible citizens for social transformation (Misiaszek, Jones & Torres, 2011). As Zembylas (2012) argued that what education means become different from what education is being used for. Most educational institutions become market where better education is available for those who have better resources. Considering the resources and other constraints of the public educational institution, this situation is creating a wide gap between the powerful and less powerful societies (Kellner, 2002).

In the neoliberal world, education is seen as a commodity which could be found in the market. Even these education markets are now different with different names and brands. The main ones are local and international (even though they are located locally). Besides curriculum, the main distinction factor that makes the local schools international is language; usually language of the developed world. This transformational trend of state for different purposes affects the regulation theory and implications on education because agents of neoliberalism are powerful elements in transforming societies (Apple, 1999). The issues of private schools and global language are changing the perception of people on their own language. Many families want to send their kids to elite or international school, but they lack socio-economic or political power. They cannot afford it. Then, they feel that their kids have little chance to compete in the global world which needs global language in view of the fact that they understand language can be a tool for empowerment or disempowerment (Kempf, 2006). Parents feel that their kids could not compete in the system where knowledge is based on language and certificate, usually foreign dominant language and high-quality local or private international school certificate.

Nation-states need adequate development of political institutions to face globalization (Burbules & Torres, 2000). This indicates that neoliberalism becomes stronger in societies with weak political or social organization. For example, poor performance by public institutions gives opportunity for the expansion of private institutions. Both in developed and developing countries, private schools are widely spread to respond the demand for education that the public sector could not fulfill mainly for those who can afford it (Klees, 2008). In many developing countries, public schools are considered as limited financial resources and poor quality of learning, while private or local elite schools are considered as well organized with better quality of education; and most importantly, schools that could provide better English classes. This shows the value of English among people and changing trends towards neoliberal model.

Globalization has a great impact in education including learning of languages. Economic development has become crucial and dependent on access to modern technology where English is considered the language of global communications and modern sciences (Brown & Lauder, 2006; Naji Meidani & Pishghadam, 2013). This idea is well explained by Jalali and Tamimi Sa'd (2014) stating, "*English has gained overwhelmingly in popularity due to its unrivalled permeation in every scientific and non-scientific aspect of human life*" (p. 16). The importance of science in people's daily life is unquestionable. All the scientific equipments and products including medical products which are important to life need one of the global dominant languages for their proper usage. Moreover, in today's world, many people are migrating from their home countries to economically developed countries such as the USA and other Western countries (Suarez-Orozco, 2001). This makes English more important for better future and job opportunities especially for those who want to migrate to developed

countries and these who want to work in international organizations. Thus, English is seen as important and dominant language in the world.

2.2 "Englishization" in multilingual modern society

Societies make connection through communications, and language here is used as a better way of communication between people and better understandings of each other's culture. The rise of English as a dominant global language is affecting many other languages. English as a second or third language has dominated many countries in their education system and/or public services. It is widely agreed that education is an important means of transforming societies. As transformation needs equitable access to education and educational resources, governments need to provide equitable access to education. Then, it is only through delivery of equitable services that transformation could encompass the entire society. However, if better opportunities are given to few groups of society, the other group could lag behind which affects their participation in the socio-economic and political life of the country.

Delivery of equitable services to all citizens is not common in many countries especially developing countries. Elite-class children have comparative advantage in societies. Although there could be additional influencing factors, education in such a way creates a big gap of inequality in societies because it greatly determines the socio-economic conditions and future life of citizens. The socio-economic condition of citizens driven by unequal distribution of wealth further widens the gap within societies (Altbach, 2010). The poor becomes poorer whereas the rich gets richer. These inequalities can be seen as oppressor/oppressed relationship among people (Freire, 2010; Memmi, 1991) in which the elite-class who can speak English oppresses the low class who could not get access to quality education. The low class is always in a continuous struggle to learn English and find its position in the society. This trend of "Englishization" influences the local languages in the society. As schools and many other private tutoring services focus in teaching English, dependency on English increases (Schugurensky, 2007). As a result, many new words are brought from English to different local languages which cause the local languages to lose their purity and separateness from other languages.

The effects of "Englishization" and dynamics of modern multilingual society are driving to a new concept of citizenship education. This new concept of citizenship education is democratic which connects the hidden and explicit forms of social and political powers, and describes the problems between citizens and state, and among citizens themselves (Torres, 1998). Such democratic standard of citizenship gives equal access to its citizens for education and other rights in the society. Citizens are representatives for their societies and nations; they represent their culture and traditions including their languages. Globalization has changed the thinking style of people with a trend towards Western culture or "Westernization". For example, students graduated from elite schools or universities are considered as more open-minded and with broad sense of thinking about life compared to these graduate from the ordinary schools. These from the ordinary schools are considered as conservative with traditional thoughts. Globalization and "Englishization" have great role in creating these division of thoughts about citizenship. They also contribute in changing the systematical forms of identities and ideologies of education, as Capella (2000) argued. Globalization enabled English to be the dominant language and many socio-economic and political trends have been changed with English.

3. Methodology

3.1 Methods

Comparing different societies under different systems can create a knowledge gap. Despite the fact that comparative education could be a better way to analyze the policies, methodologies and systems of different countries or different societies within a country, globalization of comparative education has changed the pattern for analyzing these policies because different theories could be used to gain knowledge in different situations (Dale, 2005). Autoethnography and secondary data were used to reflect on the process of globalization and

"Englishization" in Pakistan. Autoethnography is used to explore the researchers' personal experiences and the autobiographical experiences to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings (Maréchal, 2010). Since both of the researchers are from developing countries where English is used as medium of instruction and official language, the researchers' observations, discussions (with Pakistanis) and personal life covers an extremely wide range of ideas, experiences and attitudes. One of the researchers is a Pakistani, born and raised in Pakistan.

Interweaving personal experiences, secondary data and critical theory, this paper describes globalization with regard to "Englishization" in Pakistan. To analyze this, the paper focuses on the conditions and effects of "Englishization" using different examples from Pakistan. Critical discourse analysis was used to reflect the effects of "Englishization" in the Pakistani society in relation to any oppression and/or inequality within the different social groups of Pakistan. Critical discourse analysis studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by content and discourse in the socio-economic and political contexts (Van Dijk, 2008). This paper critically theorizes the oppression of the ordinary Pakistani people by the elite-class, and their struggle for socio-economic and political freedom by reviewing current research and empirical studies.

3.2 Purpose of the study

This paper focuses on how globalization through "Englishization" affects Pakistani societies. The paper makes an input in filling the lack of research and critical analysis with regard to "Englishization" in Pakistan. It contributes in shaping the policy in practice regarding the process of "Englishization" in Pakistan. Moreover, the paper contributes to the literature regarding the effect of "Englishization", and could be considered as instructive to other nation-states with similar conditions as Pakistan. Finally, the paper can be used as a starting point for further studies on the discourse of English as a dominant foreign language in Pakistan and other countries of the world.

4. Globalization and "Englishization" in Pakistan

Although the Pakistani people have different socio-economic and educational conditions and some of these issues are administered by the provincial governments, this paper focuses on the common issues of Pakistan and the Pakistani people in relation to globalization and "Englishization". Accordingly, two major trends can be identified. The Pakistani people are struggling to lean English as language of the developed and this is mainly nurtured by the elite-class of Pakistan for their socio-economic and political benefits.

4.1 Speak language of the developed

English was first introduced to Pakistan as a colonial language by the British. Pakistan had been under the British colonization until its independence from British India in 1947. This greatly influenced the education system in particular and Pakistani societies in general. The source of traditional knowledge system in Pakistan and India was based in three institutions, and education was carried out through these institutions: pathshalas, madrassahs and gurukulas (Dharampal, 2000). These three institutions were related to religion and their teaching philosophy was mainly based on religious studies. However, after the arrival of the British, the traditional knowledge system was changed. British standards of learning became the norm that structured and maintained the policies and practices of colonial education system. This enabled Pakistan to adopt its education system starting from basic to higher education systems from Britain, which made English core and dominant language.

After independence, the level of English in Pakistan did not minimize due to the influence of the Pakistani bureaucrats and the country's involvement in international arenas. Following its independence, Pakistan was ruled by group of bureaucrats educated in the West mainly Britain. In addition, Pakistan started to build strong economic relations with the West soon after its independence and this has influenced the country's social and economic order (Yoganandan, 2010). Pakistan is one of the founding members of World Trade Organization

(WTO) and General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT). All these initiatives then enabled Pakistan to opt for open economic policy. Although this is consistent with the idea of Stromquist (2002) that developing countries should restructure their economies according to the world market, it is argued that countries need to consider both the positive and negative effects of every decision they make. This is because globalization is a two-sided sword. When globalization is not well addressed and problems are not vigorously resisted, disparities increase and oppression prevail.

English is one of Pakistan's official languages. English is commonly used in government documents, military communications, street signs, business contracts and courts (Pakistan Heroes, 2012). All government official websites are also in English. Among the educated social groups of Pakistan, the usage of English is more prevalent and is seen as the language of upward mobility (Rahman, 2002, 2005). It could be argued that the government of Pakistan facilitated the spread and dominance of English language in the Pakistani society and education system. As Olmos and Torres (2009) emphasized that a government has a leading role in education system and practices as education in developing countries is mainly sponsored, mandated, organized and certified by the state. Therefore, it is up to the government to look for the social benefits and circumstances of the education system. Most importantly, it is the government's mandate to closely investigate the socio-economic and political effects of the education system in accordance with the level of its people. If not, the education system could benefit more to students from the elite-class families and badly affect for societies with low socio-economic and political power as it is happening in Pakistan.

According to Barnett (1993), the combination of knowledge, education and society as a triangle of forces are important to development of modern society. Nevertheless, in Pakistan, societies are recognized as modern or civilized if they wear Western clothes; they go to expensive schools and most importantly if they can speak English language. Globalization has great influence on a nation's culture and language. The power of global changes has touched almost every aspect of the Pakistani society's life, including the languages to be learned and to be used (Chang, 2006). It is noted that the spread of English in Pakistan is intensified with economic globalization where the world as a market is moving towards a dominant language of communication. However, the effect has gone beyond the market place and influenced the society's life. This is in agreement with the statement that globalization as a phenomenon and creed influences and affects society (Tonna, 2007). This was manifested in Pakistan through the influence of Western civilization in the society. Pakistani societies are transforming from traditional (national) to modern (global) ways of life style. They are also transforming from focusing on their language to English language. This is especially prevalent in the elite-class starting from Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, the man who was Westernized in his life style and used to speak Urdu like a "coachman" (BBC, 2007). As BBC noted:

> *The same goes for leaders - politicians and army generals alike - who succeeded Mr Jinnah. A good majority of them couldn't speak the country's national language fluently. From Jinnah to the current leader, President Pervez Musharraf, the preferred language of Pakistani rulers has been English. The masses, by general inclination keen to follow the ruling class, have honestly tried to keep pace.*

This has also become common phenomena in many areas including the film industry. The level of English language in some Pakistani films is very high to the extent that the ordinary Pakistani society could have difficulty to understand the films.

It can be concluded that the process of globalization has come with great psychological and methodological colonization. Many believe that in order to be developed you do not have only to do what the developed world did (basically work hard), but also to speak their language. This is one of the many issues of globalization mainly coming from these who consider themselves as advanced and elite-class.

4.2 It is not only about the outside world

Since independence, Pakistani education system has been divided into two classes, one for "elite-class" and the second for the ordinary Pakistani people (Malik, 2011).Urdu is the national and official language of Pakistan, besides to English. In many provinces of Pakistan, English was the medium of instruction in elite-class schools where children of high socio-economic class learn whereas Urdu was used in other normal schools. With the influence of English all over the world as a dominant global language, all provincial governments gave priority to English in their education system, and later English was announced as official language of Pakistan. However, Pakistani education system and societies are facing many challenges because of these decisions especially making English as a medium of instruction in schools.

Pakistani bureaucrats are mostly Western trained and belong to the elite-class (Mahboob, 2002). English started to dominate Pakistani society over its regional and national languages and perceived as the sign of literate people. Pakistan's constitution and laws are written in English, and English has become the medium of instruction in schools, colleges and universities. English is the medium of instruction in most elite society's schools as well as other private educational institutions. Students also learn English as a second language from first year of primary school in all public and private schools in Pakistan. Pakistan's openness to globalization boosted the learning of English language at schools. Many English based internationals schools emerged whereas the local ones changed their medium of instruction to English. It can be argued that these developments are nurtured by the Pakistani government and its British- influenced bureaucrats. This has increased the gap between English and non-English learning societies and benefited the elite-class because of their socio-economic status.

It is noted that low English capacity of students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) where English is the sole medium of instruction is an obstacle for students' participation in the teaching-learning process (Tsegay, 2015). This is also not different in the Pakistani HEIs. Such students are afraid that they might be confused in the middle looking for words or phrases to clearly communicate their argument. Therefore, they prefer a "safe-talk" due to fear of making mistakes and looking silly by their teachers or fellow students. Then, the class is dominated by children of the elite-class families who went to high-quality local or international schools that offer better English classes, and get additional training of English at home through private tutoring.

Children from elite families or high income families go to either high-quality public school or private school. Tikly (2001) discussed that policies towards access of different groups to educational opportunities have depended on the accumulation strategy and accompanying capitalist or socialist ideology adopted. In Pakistan's case, both ideology and strategy are in favor of English speaking people that changed the behavior of societies towards the dominant language and language of instruction. Parents prefer to send their children to English-medium schools and they pay more attention on English learning of their kids. The parents believe that mastery of English language can provide their kids with better opportunity and future life. In Pakistan, English has been perceived as the new standard of progress, modernity and prosperity. These who speak English are considered as the sign of liberation and progress; whereas these who advocate for national language and prefer to focus in Pakistani local culture and language are considered as backward and uncivilized (Khalique, 2007). It is believed that this perception is nurtured by the elite-class to strengthen their socio-economic and political positions.

Most of the Pakistani people cannot speak English. According to the UNESCO report in 2011, the adult literacy rate in Pakistan was only 55%. There are also big disparities in the levels of literacy between women and men in which women have lower level of literacy than men. Moreover, it is believed that only 49% of the Pakistani population can use English in some form -- reading, writing and/or speaking (Nokhook, 2015). This indicates that 45% of Pakistani population cannot read and write while 51% do not have capability of English language in any form. On the other hand, English is heavily used in Pakistan. As it is stated in the Pakistan Heroes website:

English is Pakistan's official language. All government documents, military communications, street signs, many shop signs, business contracts and other activities use English. The language of the courts is also English. English is taught to all school-level Pakistani students, and in most cases the medium of instruction is also in English. At college and university level, all instruction is in English. Pakistan boasts a large English language press and (more recently) media. All of Pakistan's major dailies are published in or have an edition in English. Code-switching (the concurrent use of more than one language, or language variety, in conversation) is common in Pakistan and almost all conversations in whatever language have a significant English component (Pakistan Heroes, 2012).

Therefore, it is realistic to ask as to why the Pakistani government is using English as an official language in many public services such as courts, traffic signs and others communications in a country where half of its population could not able to use the language in any form.

It can be argued that the process of "Englishization" in Pakistan cannot be explained only by neoliberal globalization. The elite-class would like to maintain the power of the state and the people through "Englishization" as they have better resources including educational and financial resources. Therefore, the government is focusing in "Englishization" not only because of the outside world and the economic globalization, but it is also about the local and national dominance. Moreover, the perception of the Pakistanis that English-speaking culture is a superior one shows the dominance of native English speaking countries (such as the US and UK) throughout the world in general and developing countries in particular (Jalali & Tamimi Sa'd, 2014). Therefore, it is about the perception of the bureaucrats, as well.

5. Conclusions and Implications

Globalization is one of the most powerful tools in countries economic growth and development. With the growth of economy, nation-states are losing their language and identity focusing on other dominant languages of the world. As an economic tool and global communication, English has dominated the Pakistani society both in the academia and public services. Moreover, English speaking societies in Pakistan are considered as better and more civilized citizens compared to these who cannot speak the language. Hence, the overall pattern of Pakistani society is changing from local languages towards "Englishization".

Despite the fact that English, as a global language, creates a lot of opportunities including working in international organizations, it is widening the gap between the elite-class and ordinary Pakistani societies. This is also being exploited by the Pakistan aristocrats who control the socio-economic and political power of the country to strengthen their capacity while dominating the other social groups of the country. Furthermore, advocates of the language are endorsing dominance of native English speaking countries and people over others like Pakistan.

The study implies that the process of "Englishization" in Pakistan has been a means of local competition and class formation rather than a means of global communication and economic development. The implication of the study for other countries could be that dominant global languages affect the overall socio-economic and political life of the people widening the gap between the powerful and less powerful societies. Therefore, it is up to the government and the people to consider the effects of any language policy within and outside of educational institutions.

Note: This paper is a result of the papers presented by Asharaf, Muhammad Azeem (Globalization and "Englishization" of Pakistan: Colonial, Neocolonial and Modernity Theories) and Tsegay, Samson Maekele (Globalization, Education and a Quest for Justice) at the Fifth Worldwide Forum for Comparative Education that was held from September 27th -28th, 2014 at Beijing Normal University, Beijing, P.R.China.

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