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ULUSLARARASI BİR DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCENİN KÖKENLERİNİN İZİNİ SÜRMEK TRACING THE ROOTS OF ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

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Öz

İngilizce 20.yyda ki gelişmelerle beraber uluslararası bir konum elde etmiştir. ABD'nin siyasi ve ekonomik gücü, küreselleşen dünya koşulları ve gelişen teknoloji İngilizcenin uluslararası konumunun temel nedenleri olarak sıralanabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma İngilizcenin bu konumu elde etmesinde etkili olan faktörleri ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. İngilizcenin ana dil olarak konuşulduğu ABD, Kanada, Avustralya ve Birleşik Krallık ve İngilizcenin ikinci dil olarak konuşulduğu Hindistan, Nijerya, Bangladeş ve Kenya'yı kapsayan coğrafya, İngilizcenin ne kadar geniş bir alanda karşılığı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak konuşulduğu bölgeyi ele aldığımızda ise, dünya nüfusunun yarısı belli bir dereceye kadar İngilizce ile ilgilidir. İngilizcenin bu derece yaygın olmasında daha önce bahsedilen nedenlerden teknolojik gelişmeler ve küreselleşen dünyanın koşulları temel nedenler olarak öncelenebilir. David Crystal(2003a: 78) İngilizcenin uluslararası konumunu "doğru zamanda doğru yerde olması" ile bağdaştırır. Ancak, İngilizcenin bu derece yaygın şekilde kullanımı bazı dilleri yok olma tehlikesi ile baş başa bırakmıştır. Bu çalışma İngilizcenin bu göz ardı edilen yanını da ele almaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngilizce, Uluslararası, Siyaset ve Ekonomi, Kolonyalizm.

Abstract

English language has gained an international statue through the developments in the 20th century. The political and economic power of USA, globalising conditions of the world and developing technology may be ranked as primary reasons for this international statue of English language. In this regard, this study intends to search for the factors leading English language to gain this statue. Thinking about the broad region ranging from USA, Canada, Australia and the UK, where English is spoken as mother tongue, to India, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Kenya, where English is spoken as asecond language, one can realise the diversity of English language. If the regions, where English is spoken as aforeign language, are considered, the half of the world population deals with the English language to a certain extent. Although this spread may be investigated through aforementioned reasons, the technological developments and globalising world conditions may be prioritised as principal reasons for this situation. David Crystal summarises the international statue of English language with the following words: English was in the right place at the right time to gain this statue. However, this widespread utilisation of English language threatens some languages and cause them to face extinction. In this manner, this study draws attention to this ignored effect of English language.

Keywords:English language, International, Politics and Economy, Colonialism.

Introduction

The world witnessed the development of several languages as lingua franca enabling people from different nations to communicate. The languages of Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic and Latin are the examples for this case, and they were used by a large number of people in different periods (Crystal, 2003a: 11; McKay: 5). All these languages did not find users all over the world, yet they were used in certain limited regions when recalling the conditions of hundreds of years ago. However, English is spoken in a wider area by more people in line with the provisions of this century, facilitating it to spread quickly through media, technology and science (Crystal, 2003: 90; Kachru, 1992: 31). In this manner, the related literature inspires us about the differences between English as a Lingua Franca (hereafter ELF) and English as an International Language (hereafter EIL). ELF mostly refers to the English used by non-native speakers (hereafter NNS) to provide communication among themselves while EIL serves both native speakers (henceforth NS) and NNSs as a broader term (Llurda, 2004: 315; McKay, 2002: 14). I will deal with English as an International Language in the context of this study rather than ELF because of the natural conditions of this century and the English language. Smith (1976) identifies the features of an international language as; learners do not deal with the culture of spoken language, it is not owned by any nation as it is international and this language is learned to express ideas and provide communication (McKay, 2002: 12). Crystal (2003a: 3) also assures that any international language is not admitted by any certain nation, but it is considered as belonging to all its speakers. He then adds that becoming an international language requires deserving particular roles in other countries in which it is not spoken as the mother tongue. English provides all the features with the second half of the 20th century, and this brings the question of "Why English?"

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1. Historical Development of EIL

Before discussing the reasons for English as an International Language, dealing with its historical growing would help us to understand the possible reasons better. Ronowicz&Yallop (2007: 10) indicate the first traces of EIL to the 1300s when English achieved to become a national language following the dominance of French for two centuries. This first stage was followed by the spread of English on the British Isles between 16th and 17th centuries. English thus became the language of Welsh, Scottish and some of the Irish people (Kachru, 1992: 29). Later on, the colonial movement in North America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada furthered the spread of English. Although these countries then became independent, they adopted English as their national language which would contribute much to the dispersion of English. This spread did not remain with mentioned regions, but reached Asia, Africa, the Philippines and Latin America till the 1950s. Therefore, the English language is now being spoken in a region on which the sun never sets (Pennycook, 1994: 8). By the end of World War II, USA was standing as the sole economic, military and political power in the world. Crystal (2003a: 78-120) furthers this by delineating that English was in the right place at the right time. Because Industrial Revolution flourished in England and this was supported by the colonial movements in 18th and 19th centuries. When coming into the 20th century, this leadership transferred to another English speaking country; USA. In this regard, English has been the language of the powerful countries regarding the economy, politics and military for the last 300 years.

2. Reasons for EIL

This historical framework gives insights concerning the current international position of English. As it has been suggested before, Crystal (2003a: 78) summarises the adventure of the English language as an international language by it is becoming in the right place at the right time. When investigating the origin of this utterance, some motives encounter us: politics, economics, press, advertising, broadcasting, motion pictures, popular music, international travel and safety, education and communications (Crystal, 2003a: 10). Politics mostly refers to colonial movements began in the 16th century and became a catalyst power behind EIL. Because British Empire once had such great territories on which the sun never set. It involved North America, Australia, New Zealand, certain parts of Africa, Middle East and Southern Asia. This resulted in the increase of the numbers of English native speakers. When this empire fell, USA became the means of English language dispersion, and this still goes on. What is more, the politics of the world necessitated a common language to be used in countries from different regions and cultures. Because international organisations such as the United Nations (1945), UNESCO and UNICEF (1946), and The World Health Organisation (1948) required such a language. These organisations have many members from all over the world, and it is a must for them to use any mutual language (Crystal, 2003a: 12; McArthur, 1987: 42). Economics is another important motivation for the flourish of English. The origins of this date back to the Industrial Revolution began in England and then dispersed to other countries. Employing this economic revolution, British Empire became the leading economic power and manufacturer in 18th and 19th centuries. Textile and mining were the most fruitful areas of producing, and these goods were exported to all colonial and other countries. Besides, cheap labour was provided through the slaves gathered from African countries and this doubled English profit. Quirk (1988, cited in Brutt-Griffler, 2002: 110) states the importance of economic power on the way to becoming an international language through his econocultural doctrine. Econo-cultural features refer to the economic and cultural background of any country, and these two factors support each other. The English language provided this characteristic utilising Industrial Revolution and colonial movement. Moreover, Crystal (2003a: 91) contends that the press is also another crucial factor influencing the spread of English. The first telegraph office was founded in Aachen by Paul Julius Reuter, but then moved to London and furthered its serving area. Furthermore, the invention of printing press and new technologies to better pressing increased the role of English language in this sector. English has been the most used language in printing newspapers for 400 years and this still goes on. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, 57 percent of all newspapers are published in English-speaking countries (Crystal, 2003b: 110). The press developed mostly in North America due to the censorship in Europe and British Empire. For this reason, most of the important newspapers are USA origins such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal (Crystal, 2003a: 92). Both economic development and manufacturing sector and press gave birth to another reason for EIL: advertising. The mass production of the 19th century and 20th century sought for ways to sell goods. In this regard, the advertising sector flourished and the developing international market enabled American and British advertising companies to contribute EIL through English advertising entities. Broadcasting, motion pictures and popular music also backed the spread of the English language. Broadcasting began in the 1920s with radios and then TVs, and these were invented in English speaking countries. Even the first language transmitted through radio is English (Crystal, 2003a: 95). In this regard, many radio programmes were conducted in the USA in English and then exported to other countries. Motion pictures changed the entertainment habits of people by rendering

houses as convenient places to spend time. By the 1920s, developing technology enabled films with sound, and English became the dominant language of these films because the movie industry issued in Europe and then transferred to America. Even today, nearly 80 percent of all films are in English, and Hollywood dominates this sector with its English movies (Crystal, 2003a: 99; Moody, 2010: 541). What is more, recording technology gave rise to popular music industry initiated in the USA and then became popular in Europe. Prominent figures of popular music such as Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, the Rolling Stones and Beatles were from USA and UK. The popular music types such as Blues and Jazz also flourished in the USA and exported to other countries with their English origin. Additionally, while technological developments have backed the spread of English and the world went on to become a global village, people were travelling for education, touristic facilities, official meetings, sporting occasions and business meetings. This manner caused many people from different countries and languages to gather; thus, a language for communication was required. As Crystal (2003a: 87) stated before English language was in the right place at the right time, and English began to be used in hotels, aviation sector, academia and other official gatherings. In addition, people would travel for seeing new places and meeting new cultures. English was the most appropriate language to help them, and countries designated brochures and booklets in English for introducing their countries. One more field contributing the spread of English is education as many countries accept English as the medium of especially higher education (Crystal, 2003a: 112; McKay, 2002: 18). Many of the technological developments conducted in the 19th and 20th century were English origin and the knowledge was transmitted through mostly English. The widespread usage of the internet also paved the way for dispersion of knowledge. The language of the internet was English as it was invented in the USA. Today, many countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Netherlands, and Nigeria, etc. accept and use English in their higher education. Most of the journals are issued in the English language, and academic facilities are organised in English although many of the participants are not from English speaking countries. To sum up, the globalising nature of the world entailed an international language for enabling people from different countries to meet, trade, and communicate. English language has used this opportunity with its political, economic and scientific power.

3. English Speaking World

All above reasons increased the speakers of English day by day, and now non-native speakers of English outnumbered the native ones (Crystal, 2003a: 69; Jenkins, 2007: 16; Kachru, 1992: 357; Warschauer, Black & Chou, 2010: 491). In this manner, there are some models for delineating the spread of English put by Görlach (1988), Kachru (1985: 356), McArthur (1987) and Stevens (1980). Of these models, Kachru's is the most widely accepted and used one, and we will deal with this one. He offers a model of English speaking territories from the British Isles to North America, Australia and African countries. Kachru categorises three distinct English speaking countries: Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Expanding Circle. The first one is the norm-determining countries, including native speakers such as USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. What is more, Outer Circle involves mostly colonial countries such as Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka. The last group refers to the countries in which English is taught as foreign language such as Russia, Turkey, Brazil and China. Within these three groups, while the population of Inner Circle remains somewhat stable or seems gradual increasing, other two circles show greater increases. In this regard, Crystal (2008: 1) estimates that Inner Circle involves 400 million native speakers of English; Outer Circle also has nearly 400 million English speakers, and the Expanding Circle involves between 600-700 million speakers. This situation gives us 1400-1500 million users of English, and Crystal (2008) described this number as 2000 million by adding expanding Chinese speakers and revising the Indian population. Because these two countries are giving special interest to English and getting useful information is sometimes not available about English learners in both countries. Therefore, nearly one-third of the world population is suggested as competent in speaking English.

On the other hand, although Kachru's model contributed much to EIL field, it has been criticised in some aspects. Jenkins (2007: 20) argues that this model deals with English in the geographical way rather than handling the speakers of English. Such an understating draws narrow and sometimes defective borders for the users of three circles. However, there may be different types of learners in any circle, and every speaker should not be evaluated as a native speaker living in USA or UK. What is more, determining criteria between inner and outer, and outer and expanding circles may not always run as expected. To exemplify this issue, any EIL learner may be competent in English as much as any native speaker in any outer circle countries, while any learner in expanding circle may use English more than English speakers in EFL context. To this end, this requires a learner/user centred approach in picturing EIL context (Graddol, 2006: 110; Pennycook, 1994: 10; Seidlhofer, 2001: 134). What is more, Kirkpatrick (2007: 31) contends that this model underestimates the role of English in expanding countries, although it refers to its increasing importance in this region. Kirkpatrick gives the example of China employing English in higher education and industrial

matters in an increasing ratio. In this regard, more people are learning English in this country than in inner circle countries. The developing industry and economy also force China to give attention to English teaching to be able to integrate with the globalising economy and market. Additionally, English has begun to be taught as a foreign language in the former Soviet Union countries and Russia. This is an attempt to clarify the current situation of English in expanding countries. Burt (2005: 2) elaborates on this by remarking that Kachru marginalised the case of the Expanding Circle through labelling it norm-dependent. Although Kachru recognised the growing spread of English, expanding circle countries are pictured as distanced from inner circle English.

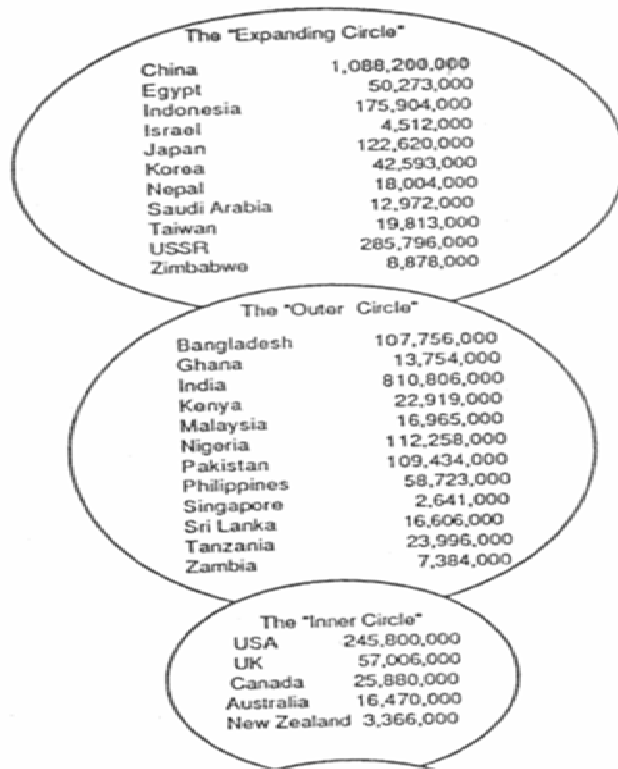


Figure 2.1. Kachru's Model (Kachru, 1992: 356)

4. English as a Political Language: Advantageous or Disadvantageous

Crystal (2003a: 10) elaborates on the spread of English as a required and natural process due to the current developing technological and sociological conditions. He also advocates this spread by indicating the importance of English to provide communication between people from different nations and thus enabling globalised economy, education, academic meetings and dispersion of knowledge (Crystal, 2003a: 13; Jenkins, 2010: 10; Pennycook, 1994: 8). However, the researchers like Krauss (1992: 16), Pennycook (2007: 31) and Tollefson (1995: 38) do urge the opposite views. Tollefson indicates that the spread of English is considered as natural due to the colonial movements and colonial dependent economic growth. Growing ELT field is seen as beneficial as it encourages and appreciates the teaching of English. However, Cooke identified English as a Trojan horse, representing the imperialism and destructing the local languages (1988, cited in Tollefson, 1995: 39). What is more, Tollefson (1995: 40) contends that teaching English has been rewarded for continuing the capitalist system and thus creating an elite class involving native English speakers. On the other hand, Phillipson (1992: 31) questions the reasons for English becoming widespread throughout the world, and asks "Why English?" He then argues that this spreading of English induces the death of many languages. Krauss (1992: 115) furthers this claim by stating that only 10% of world languages are regarded safe while the rest are in danger of extinction within 100 years. Renewed version of this study concretely pictures this situation in 2013.

Alarmingly, 2,384 (32%) living languages in the world are currently at some stage in the process of language loss. That is more than the number of languages (2,216, 30%) that have experienced enough language development to rise above the default stage of vigorous oral use (Simons & Lewis, 2013: 10).

Simons and Lewis (2013: 11) urge that dead or dying languages be mostly found in Australia, New Zealand, South America, Northern America and Southeastern Asia, while the least dead or dying languages are in Sub-Saharan Africa and Melanesia. The contrasting features of these regions are having been colonised

or not. The first group of territories was colonised, and English and other European languages are now spoken, yet the latter regions were not colonised, and thus preserved their nature.

On the other hand, the advantages of EIL cannot be underestimated such as building communication bridges between different peoples from different nations, helping the dispersion of knowledge and technology, contributing to increasing global economy. Upon these conditions, it is undeniable that EIL helps people in getting merged with other worldly citizens, however, if its spread goes on in such a growing nature, other national languages will find themselves facing to extinction.

5. The Future of English/es

The English language is now spoken by somewhat 2 billion people of whom 400 million is the native speaker, 400 million uses it as the second language and the rest speaks it as a foreign language (Crystal, 2008: 1). These speakers are located diversely throughout the world from Europe to America, Australia, Africa, and Asia. English achieved special status in more than 70 countries such as Ghana, India, Nigeria and Singapore. Although the standards of inner circle countries are still effective, new Englishes are emerging in these diverse regions. For example, Singlish and Spanglish are accepted mixed versions of English. The former one refers to Singaporean English difficult to be understood by any native speaker, and the other deals with English and Spanish combination language used in North America (Crystal, 1999: 1). To support such a movement, Crystal (2010: 17) argues that cultural and linguistic features of local languages change the nature of Standard English in countries such as Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Cameroon. He exemplifies this by the following sentence: "The bakkie had to stop at a red robot". This utterance was used in South Africa and the bakkie refers to the truck and red robot red light. What is more, a vocabulary corpus of English would be influenced by the emerging Englishes because these new Englishes have their roots from their original countries' life style, culture, literature, religion, law and other cultural and regional features. As many of these local words are not found in English, these words will be added to regional English. In this regard, Crystal (2010: 17) argues that English is becoming a world language, but it loses its British origins as it gets something from each language where it is spoken. Indeed, this is the ongoing destiny of English since the Anglo Saxon invasion. It interacted with many languages and borrowed vocabs and structures. Now, it has a relationship with many languages and it is becoming a mixed language where it is spoken and gaining official status. It is also striking that although there are many distinctions among spoken Englishes, the same is not valid for written English, and there is somewhat a standard written English language. Crystal (2003a: 141) forecasts that the same would be fulfilled for spoken English and the criteria should be determined for standard spoken English. Such a thing may be required in the future and a family of Englishes may also flourish through involving other distinct varieties of English.

Conclusion

English language has gained the statue of an international language being spoken in all over the world. Primary reasons behind this development is colonial movements, industrial revolution, political and economic power of USA and the specific conditions of 20th century such as globalisation and developing technology and information system. Colonial movements enabled English to be spoken in a wide region and industrial revolution facilitated this movement. With the second half of the 20th century, USA flourished as one of two economic and political power which contributed to the English language to continue and develop its effect. What is more, developing technology could be ranked as the most effective factor rendering English as an international language. Different countries and people required such a language to be able to understand each other, and as Crystal expressed before; English was in the right place at the right time (2003a: 78-120).

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