Need of Indianisation of ELE in the Digital Era

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Abstract: *The emergence of digital era has revolutionized all the domains globally, including learning a language and learning about a language. However, the colonial dominance of Western-centric perspective has led to a disconnect between the indigenous methodologies and the widely accepted so-called professional pedagogy. In the domain of language learning, the ELE (English Language Education) tried hard to put the ethnic languages of the erstwhile colonies at the verge along with subsidising the concerned pedagogy, culture, tradition, ideology, etc. In the present research paper, the researchers wish to highlight the significance of glocalisation (Robertson 27) while adopting the process of globalisation. India is the largest multilingual country in the world – this phenomenon itself proves that though all the languages share equal complexity, they have been in existence throughout the generations.*

Keywords: ELE, Language Learning, Anglicisation, Indianisation, Globalisation, Localisation, *Glocalisation*

I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital era has revolutionized all the domains globally, including learning a language and learning about a language. However, the colonial dominance of Western-centric perspective has led to a disconnect between the indigenous methodologies and the widely accepted so-called professional pedagogy. In the domain of language learning, the ELE (English Language Education) tried hard to put the ethnic languages of the erstwhile colonies at the verge along with subsidising the concerned pedagogy, culture, tradition, ideology, etc. In the present research paper, the researchers wish to highlight the significance of *glocalisation* (Robertson 27) while adopting the process of globalisation. India is the largest multilingual country in the world – this phenomenon itself proves that though all the languages share equal complexity, they have been in existence throughout the generations. However, the process of Anglicisation, particularly in the field of language, has been trying to wipe out the other languages to establish the dominance of a particular language, namely English. If the process of globalisation makes it necessary to adapt English as the medium of communication, and if it puts the heterogeneity at the centre then that process can be called as valid process. Therefore, it becomes imperative to *Indianise* the characteristic features of globalisation that ultimately leads to the world leadership and English is one of them.

As it is known, language is not a unilinear entity but a complex and multifaceted phenomenon so that it cannot be studied in isolation (Halliday 9). It is characterised through various aspects of the existing social system, including culture, tradition, politics, education, etc. (Fairclough 55). Language is not just a means of communication, but also a reflection of the values, beliefs, and history of the users (Kramsch 10). Cultural nuances, traditional practices, and political ideologies having interconnectedness among them together shape the language, while education and its result – socialization – influence how a language is acquired and used (Bourdieu 43). Therefore, while researching a phenomenon, called language, these interconnected factors have to be taken into account; failure of this perspective can lead to a constricted and incomplete understanding of a language. For example, the language policies cannot be formulated without considering the socio-politico-cultural context (Spolsky 14). Similarly, language education must take into account the socio-cultural background of the learners (Norton 12). By acknowledging the intricate

relationships between language and other socio-cultural factors, one can achieve a deeper understanding of the complex phenomenon, called language education.

English Language Education (ELE):

Throughout the generations, language education has played a vital role in facilitating the rule of dominant powers over the masses. However, in the period of colonialism language education was used as a tool of cultural imperialism, where the language of the colonizer was imposed upon the colonized; shaping their perceptions, beliefs, and values it enabled the rulers to exert control over the masses. For example, the British colonial power introduced English language education as a means of creating a class of Indians who would serve as intermediaries between the colonial administration and the local population (Macaulay, 1835). This strategy allowed the British to maintain their dominance over India, and as a result English became the language of power, governance, and education. Moreover, incorporating English words, phrases, and grammatical structures into local languages the British rulers also anglicized the Indian languages. Eroding the distinctiveness of Indian languages and traditions the linguistic imperialism had a profound impact on Indian culture as well. The all-pervasive influence of ELE also permeated various aspects of Indian life, including education, law, administration, and literature. Resultantly, the British were able to exert control over the cognitive, emotional, and social lives of Indians, thereby consolidating their colonial rule.

Taking into consideration the process of globalisation, it can be stated that learning a dominant language has become an indispensable component of the existing education system worldwide, including India (Crystal 15). A language significantly facilitates communication, cultural exchange, and academic advancement, therefore, the educational institutions emphasise more on prioritizing language instruction (Graddol 20). Being a lingua franca for international communication in various domains, such as business, science, technology, and education, English has emerged as a global language in the twenty first century (Jenkins 15). As English provides a window to global knowledge, opportunities, and cultural diversity (Kachru 25), ELE in India has become an essential part of the curriculum. By learning English, Indian students can achieve the global scholarship, participate in international collaborations, and enhance their career prospects (Sridhar 30). Therefore, for empowering students to succeed in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, the educational institutions throughout the world recognize the importance of language learning, including ELE.

Against the aforementioned backdrop, it can be argued that the dominance of ELE has led to a homogenization of educational experiences, neglecting the multifaceted nature of learning (Pennycook 12). This phenomenon has resulted in the suppression of diverse perspectives, cultural identities, and linguistic traditions (Canagarajah, 2005, 15). Throughout the process of colonialism, the imposition of a single, dominant language has created a pedagogical monoculture, where the richness of heterogeneity is sacrificed for the sake of conformity (Kumaravadivelu 20). In the Indian context, the emphasis on ELE has led to the marginalization of indigenous languages and knowledge systems (Kachru 25). The curriculum is often designed to promote a Western-centric worldview, disregarding the cultural and intellectual heritage of India (Mishra, 2010, 30). This has resulted in a disconnection between the educational system and the socio-cultural realities of the country. The learners are often forced to navigate between two disparate worlds: the world of their local culture and the world of English language education. The digital era has exacerbated this issue, as the proliferation of online resources and digital platforms has further entrenched the dominance of English (Luke 15). The lack of representation of diverse languages and cultures in digital spaces has perpetuated the homogenization of educational experiences (Warschauer 20). It is essential to recognize the importance of heterogeneity in education, as it allows for the exchange of ideas, the promotion of cultural understanding, and the development of critical thinking.

In the process of globalisation it has become imperative to all the countries in the world to learn and use foreign languages; but a number of countries have initiated efforts to indigenize foreign languages, knowledge, and cultural practices, prioritizing their own linguistic and cultural heritage. For example, China *and Japan* have launched initiatives to promote the use of Chinese *and Japanese* languages and culture in education, while also encouraging the development of indigenous languages and dialects (Feng 120). Similarly, Iran also has implemented policies to promote the use of Persian language and culture in the education, reducing the dominance of a foreign language, namely English (Borjian 15).

However, in the context of ELE, this trend of indigenization poses significant challenges. As countries increasingly prioritize their own languages and cultures, the dominance of English may be eroded. ELE will need to adapt this new reality, incorporating local languages, cultures, and knowledge systems into the curriculum (Kumaravadivelu 20). Failure to do so may result in ELE becoming increasingly irrelevant, unlike as of now local languages and cultures assume greater importance of the former. The consequences of this trend will be far-reaching; as countries assert their linguistic and cultural identities, the global dominance of English may be challenged. Consequently, it may lead to a more diverse and multilingual global landscape where local languages and cultures are valued and promoted (Canagarajah, 2005, 15).

Indianisation:

The concept of globalisation itself makes to think over the issue of localisation, and then the researchers come with a new term – *glocalisation* (Robertson 30). In this newly emerged term the journey is supposed to be from local to the global but not at the cost of extinct of localisation, rather it keeps the later at the centre and then moves to the former. Out of this argument, in the Indian context, a new term should to emerge, named 'Indianisation' (Mishra, 2010, 25). This concept of Indianisation refers to the process of incorporating Indian perspectives, values, and cultural practices into various aspects of life, including education, literature, and governance. This process also looks for the intent of decolonizing the dominant Western-centric narratives and promoting indigenous knowledge systems, languages, and cultural traditions. The significance of Indianisation lies in its potential to reclaim and reassert the cultural identity, which has been marginalized by centuries of colonialism and Western dominance. Through emphasising the concept of Indianisation, India can rediscover its rich cultural heritage, challenge the hegemony of Western knowledge systems, and assert its unique perspective on the world; hence, it can be stated that the scope of Indianisation is vast and multifaceted.

However, in the domain of education, the aforementioned process accompanies incorporating Indian languages, literature, and cultural studies into the curriculum. As mentioned elsewhere, in the field of language it propagates indigenous culture, and tradition; in literature, on the other hand, challenging the dominance of Western literary canons, it propagates the Indian languages and literary traditions. In governance, it focuses more on promoting decentralized, participatory, and inclusive decision-making processes that reflect Indian values and cultural practices.

Through Indianising various aspects of life, India can create a more inclusive, diverse, and culturally vibrant society that reflects its unique heritage and perspectives. This process has the potential to empower India and promote its cultural identity at the global sphere. Additionally, the process of Indianisation can also facilitate the development of a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of Indian culture and society. In other words, 'the Indianisation of knowledge is not a rejection of Western knowledge, but a redefinition of it in Indian terms' (Nandy 12); likewise, 'Indianisation is not a nostalgic return to the past, but a creative reappropriation of the Indian traditions and values' (Alvares 20). In the domain of education, the process of Indianisation can lead to the development of curricula that reflect the rich cultural heritage, history, and knowledge systems of India (Mishra, 2010, 30). This scenario can help students connect with their roots, develop a sense of national pride, and acquire a more nuanced understanding of the world; on the other hand, Indianisation can also facilitate the promotion of Indian languages, literature, and arts, which can enrich the ethnic cultural landscape (Parasher 15).

Against the aforementioned argument, Indianisation of ELE is a transformative approach that can have far-reaching benefits for the Indians; through incorporating Indian perspectives, values, and cultural practices into ELE, one can create a more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic education system (Kumaravadivelu 20). At the prior level, Indianisation of ELE is helpful as it enables the learners to connect with their cultural heritage and develop a sense of national pride. Through learning about the Indian literature, history, and culture, the learners can achieve a deeper understanding of the world and their place in it but according to their own perspective (Mishra, 2010, 30). However, Indianisation of ELE can also facilitate the promotion of Indian languages and dialects that can help to preserve the indigenous rich linguistic diversity (Parasher 15).

Further, Indianisation of ELE is ecofriendly because it promotes a more sustainable and environmentally conscious approach to education; through incorporating Indian perspectives on ecology and conservation, the learners can learn

about the importance of living in harmony with nature (Gandhi 25). However, Indianisation of ELE can also facilitate the use of local and indigenous materials in education that can reduce the carbon footprint of the education system. Taking into consideration the aforementioned argument, it can be stated that Indianisation of ELE is a democratic process that promotes a more inclusive and participatory approach to education; through incorporating Indian perspectives and values in their learning, the learners from various backgrounds can feel more included and valued in the education system (Nandy 12).

On the other hand, Indianisation of ELE can also facilitate the promotion of critical thinking and debate, which are essential skills for democratic citizenship. Eventually, the Indianisation of ELE is a vital step towards creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic education system. Incorporating Indian perspectives, values, and cultural practices into ELE, the stakeholders of the education system can promote a more nuanced understanding of the world, preserve India's rich cultural heritage, and foster a more environmentally conscious and democratic society.

Indianisation and the Digital Era:

The process of digitalization has often been regarded as the driving force behind globalization (Castells 15); however, it can also be described as to be leveraged to facilitate a journey from localization to globalization. In other words, digitalization can be utilized to promote local cultures, traditions, and values while simultaneously connecting with the global community (Kumar, 2018, 20). Through digital platforms, local communities can showcase their unique cultural heritage, traditions, and practices to a global audience (Mishra, 2019, 25). This process can help promote the cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and cooperation. Through leveraging digital platforms, the local communities can connect with the global community while preserving their unique cultural heritage. Moreover, this synergy between digitalization and localization can foster a sense of community and social cohesion among the local stakeholders. It can also promote and propagate the cultural exchange programs, educational initiatives, and economic collaborations that benefit both local and global stakeholders. The advent of the digital era has revolutionized the way one learns, communicates, and interacts with the world.

In the given context, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool that can facilitate the betterment of the world through globalization (Castells 15). At present, the Indian learners can leverage AI to become essential constituent of this global endeavour. Through AI-powered learning platforms, the Indian learners can access high-quality educational resources, connect with peers and mentors worldwide, and develop skills that are in demand globally (Kumar, 2018, 20). Moreover, AI can facilitate personalized learning, enabling Indian learners to focus on areas where they need improvement, thereby enhancing their overall learning outcomes (Rai 30). As Indian learners become more proficient in AI-powered skills, they can contribute to the betterment of the world in various ways. For example, they can develop innovative solutions to address global challenges such as climate change, healthcare, and education (Mishra, 2019 25); likewise, they can collaborate with international peers to promote cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and cooperation. Eventually, the confluence of AI, digital era, and globalization can present Indian learners with unprecedented opportunities to contribute to the betterment of the world.

In the digital era, AI has drastically changed the landscape of ELE. In the process of Indianisation of ELE, AI can empower the Indian learners to become the contributors of the betterment of the world (Kumar, 2018, 20). Enabling Indian learners to acquire proficiency in English at an unprecedented pace, as mentioned elsewhere, the AI-powered language learning platforms can provide personalized instruction, adaptive assessments, and real-time feedback (Rai, 2020, 30). Moreover, AI-driven Indianisation of ELE can help Indian learners develop a unique cultural perspective, connecting local values with global competencies (Mishra, 2019, 25). As a result, the Indian learners can emerge as the world leaders, equipped with the skills, knowledge, and cultural sensitivity required to succeed in an increasingly interconnected world (Singh 15).

II. CONCLUSION

Indianisation of education system in general and of ELE in particular would enable the stakeholders of the education system to engage with the diverse perspectives, along with fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities of the world. Through promoting heterogeneity in the process of education, preparing learners to thrive in an increasingly

interconnected world, one can create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. Moreover, the Indianisation of ELE would also facilitate the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as the learners would be encouraged to explore multiple perspectives and challenge the existing dominant narratives; on the other hand, this scenario would empower learners to become active participants in the global knowledge economy, rather than mere recipients of the Western-dominated knowledge.

However, enabling learners to navigate complex global issues and develop context-specific solutions, this approach would encourage the cognitive creativity, diversity, and innovation. Through integrating the local knowledge systems and perspectives into the global education processes, the Indianisation of ELE can help learners develop a nuanced understanding of the global issues along with their local implications. Eventually, preparing them to thrive in a rapidly changing, interconnected world, this perspective would foster a sense of global citizenship, cultural sensitivity, and social responsibility among the learners. It can be stated that a more just, equitable, and sustainable future for all can be created through embracing Indianisation of ELE in the digital era!

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