

Impact of Globalization on Postgraduate Students' Asynchronous Learning in English Language

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Abstract

Globalization affects students' asynchronous learning. The term asynchronous is usually used to describe communications in which information can be transmitted intermittently rather than in a steady stream. The current study aimed to identify the impact of globalization on postgraduate students' asynchronous learning in the English language. The students of postgraduate level from distance education institutions were addressed. In this regard, a sample of 600 students was selected by using convenient sampling technique. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a self-designed questionnaire was administered. Descriptive statistics namely, percentage was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study indicate that globalization helps students to extend their knowledge. The results also show that globalization develops freedom among the English language learners for enhancing their knowledge. In addition, it was found that different social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, blog, Snapchat, Viber, and Instagram assist learner to improve their language skills. Therefore, students are robustly recommended to utilize various social networks to enhance their asynchronous learning in the English Language.

Keywords: globalization, social media, asynchronous learning, English language

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Introduction

According to Giddens (1991), globalization increases worldwide public relations and associations in such a way that neighboring events are shaped by the events taken place many miles away and vice versa. It indicates a great number of things taking place around the world. The English language is extensively used in many organizations of the world so; globalization puts effects on many fields of society including English language. Steger (2017) states that globalization is the interconnection of global economic, political, educational, and environmental process that changes the present position frequently. Phillipson, (2008) says that global English is an appropriate and proper term because it is usually acknowledged in the world and the major reason of using the English language is its suitability for the global language for communication, education, regulation, science, and political affairs and transforming the culture from one country to another.

Ammon (2010) and Nettle and Romaine, (2000) conclude in their studies that English has extremely affected the global languages as well as French, Spanish, German, and Japanese. For example, initial global scientific research was carried out in French and German just as English publications but now-a-days it is likely to find research article in English language other than German and Spanish. It is known that English is becoming increasingly widespread across the globe. Globalization has increased the spread of English language; however, many other world languages are becoming endangered. Similarly, Crystal (2003) believes that global fracas puts pressure on minority languages, resulting in languages death and extinction from the face of earth.

English is a second language in Pakistan so, the problems related to English are very common for English learners. Crystal (2000) claims that the huge increase of English is owing to globalization and the major factor is language transfer in other languages. Mufwene (2010) believes that there is an uncertainty in extending the English language that harmfully affects the national languages of different countries but it has positive effects on English language learners. It is true that English expands opportunities for learners in their living and this is possible because of knowledge in English.

The people all over the world are connected via different internet sites and social media because of the rapid development in technology. The social networking sites (SNSs) e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and information sharing tools e.g. Skype, WhatsAapp, Youtube and Flickr are used for learning the English language. A lot of information in English is

transferred from one country to another and English learners are using various internet sites for their learning purpose. Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsithi (2012) state that Facebook is a simple and suitable tool used for the purpose of learning the English language. Students work together and talk through these sites and like others sites. They learn the English language during communicating and contacting with others.

Language and the Internet

There are many ways to learn the English language. The Internet is the most useful and easiest way for learning English. Currently, 3.6 billion people use the Internet all over the world while 20 million use the Internet in Pakistan (Meeker & Wu, 2017). English is as a medium for instruction for promoting e-learning in non English speaking countries like Pakistan. Students having low proficiency are not likely to learn English effectively. In this respect, a research carried out by Abu-Lughod (2000) found that most of the respondents felt difficulty in learning English since they lack sufficient background knowledge.

Kabilan, Ahmad and Abidin (2010) state that the use of social media like Facebook would enhance students' communication skills, improve writing practice in English and learning English makes more fun and produces the ability to write English with confidence. They also found that online chatting provides a comfortable way of communication. This method not only improves students' vocabulary, productive and receptive skills but also motivates them. In addition, the results indicate that the new generation is more like toward online learning.

The learners of the English language utilize available technology to interact with others. Block and Cameron (2002) point out that computer mediated communication helps learners understand both language use and intercultural exchange. According to Zhang, Hong, Takeuchi, and Mossakowski (2012), the main goal of the English language proficiency is to assist students to deal with social and environmental challenges. In this scenario, television is a major source in the present condition for developing learners' thinking and perception. The language learners learn new words when they interact with people while speaking their native language. Various sources such as television, radio, mobile phones, and internet available in every home are effective sources for learning as well as improving the English language.

In the 21st century, almost every person has electronic gadgets or accessories such as mobile phone, radio, tape recorder, and the Internet etc that are used for getting knowledge. The learners of the English language

improve their vocabulary through watching television, listening to radio, and surfing the Internet (Warlaumont, 2010). Through tape recorders, learners record the conversation and difficult words and listen repeatedly whenever they want. The world is changing day by day through the vast use of technologies and lots of information is received from television. Pakistan is a multilingual, multicultural, and multiethnic country. The people of Pakistan belong to five ethno-linguistics groups such as Punjabi, Pashtuns, Blochi and Sindhi and Mohajras. In Pakistan, the influence of English is pervasive and estimated that only a few per cent people know the English language even though it is the language of commerce, administration, law, military, and education. In Pakistan, all the elite and rich families prefer to enroll their children in English medium institutions (Block, 2006).

Language Variations

Variation in the English language is one of the major aspects in the current scenario due to mobile and new media communication tools. The wide spread of mobile texting codes and acronyms are used in daily communication all over the world (Hjarvard, 2004). Moreover, standardized and well known of acronyms and abbreviations are also used to express feelings and emotions and this is possible due to the connection of media and technologies. This change affects the lives of people on a large scale. Erling (2005) finds that heterogeneous language learning environment is helpful for language learners where two varieties of English; namely, standardized English and the Internet speakers exist together in different domains. The dialects are changed according to place and time and native speakers of the English language can easily understand the dialects, but it creates difficulty for foreign language learners (Mutsaers & Swanenberg 2012).

Different Cultures and the English Language

Globalization supports millions of people who belong to different cultures. They form of global communication trend is English Language Teaching (ELT). In this form, teachers and learners use the Internet and technology that encourage the communication between them hailing from different places. Warschauer and kern (2000) maintain that now-a-days, language learners can communicate with their teachers, classmate, fellows and native speakers through electronic mail. The multimedia course can offer students' plentiful information than textbooks. Hall (1992) speaks of national cultures changing into modern form and cultural values brought

a massive in the world. Moreover, the western culture is being transformed to the parts of the world gradually. Regional and ethnic values are formed in a new and powerful culture.

The quality of education and language learning varies from culture to culture. The environment and the personal interest of learners play an important role in their academic development. The school personnel, members of the families, environment, and communities provide help and support to students for the quality of their academic performance (Michael 1998).

English Language Skills

English language skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing are effectively learned through globalization. Furthermore, the globalization poses positive effects on English learners since they learn new words due to the global village (Deumert, & Lexander, 2013). Demiraslan and Usluel (2008) emphasis that skills are necessary not only for students but also for teachers to improve their learning experiences since knowledge is the initial stage as the basis on which skills are developed.

Social Media and the English Language

In the global era, the role of social media is playing very important role in learning the English language. There are many social sites, which are helpful for second language learners. A social networking service is an online platform and medium used to establish relationship or social interaction among individuals and language learners who share interests and activities. The social networking services allow users to share their ideas, interests, activities, and incoming events within their individual networks. The web based social networks provide services such as e-mail or instant messaging to users. The various kinds of social networking services; namely, Facebook and Twitter are widely used worldwide. Besides, Myspace and LinkedIn are being used most widely in the world (Lenhart & Madden, 2007).

It is a fact that frequent use of internet has changed our everyday life and communication setting. There are many valuable opportunities for learning English language such as face to face communication in non-native context and online learning including social media (Wellman, 2004). The new global village needs a unified language for communication which used for messaging, chatting, and e-mailing. O'Dowd (2007) believes that high speed of internet connection and communication

sources such as e-mail, instant messaging and videoconferencing allow people to communicate with friends, family and colleagues. The online communication develops socialization among language learners.

Facebook

Facebook is a big source to teach ESL students (Selami, 2012). Some other related social networking sites can strengthen the relationship between students and teachers. The learners and teachers share their ideas, videos and choose the solution of online forums when they needed. According to Kabilan, Ahmad, and Abidin (2010), Facebook also develops an interaction among both teacher-student and students with their fellows. It assists teachers to connect with their students to discuss about the assignments and classroom activities. It also helps teachers to contact with their students even outside the classroom.

Facebook, Blog, and Twitter are still serving the learners as entertainment on a large scale. However, sometimes online teacher-student relationship could be tricky and students face problems because they are not aware of these sites properly. Simon (2008) claims that SNSs are helpful for learners to connect with teachers when they do not take a class and discuss about their homework, tutoring, and other academics matters. On the other hand, SNSs have potentiality to create inappropriate relationships between teachers and learners.

According to Simpson (2012), Facebook and Twitter are useful networks for language learning. The results indicate that learning English through social media is very interesting that makes learning easier for helping them improve their communication. The language learners feel happy when they are learning through these sites. The study also found that Facebook and Twitter as learning tools are warmly welcomed by students.

Social networking sites can be utilized as a social learning resource. These sites create platform that are the results of untiring effort of technology experts, educators, trained teachers, teaching theorists, psychologists, and sociologists. As professed by Selami (2012), researches on educational advantages of social network focuses on special areas such as social learning, e-learning, environmental learning, and business education.

Twitter

Twitter as a social site plays an important role in learning English. Twitter is a short form of communication and this has positive effect of millions of users. It is inserting and unique method to keep the students in touch with teachers and other language learners (Simuforosa, 2013). It is

an age of technology, the language learners all over the world use Twitter to convey messages and share their ideas related to their language. The second language learners solve diversified issues by enquiring their teachers, and share their view with friends (Ramage, 2010).

YouTube

YouTube is the largest used social network all over the world as 100 million users visit each month. This social site has dedicated special materials for education. Teachers upload information and share with other educators and students. According to Brook (2011), YouTube is an online tool that facilitates language teachers and provides authentic contents to supplement textbook materials. It is very important that teachers link language learning with real language via authentic materials. Kuo (2009) found significant effects of YouTube video clips on EFL learners regarding their listening skill performance. The results reveal that a native speaker's setting benefit EFL learners.

In 2009, YouTube created a new education site called YouTube EDU that uploads thousands of lectures for teachers and students from different universities of the world. The learners belonging to college and universities can access this site free of cost. It is a quick tool for developing English skills. YouTube is a social network to reveal a number of ESL related videos posted by students and teachers. They can share their ideas and information with those who are unaware and less confident about posting their videos. The videos are used to promote discussion in class, and encourage learners. This is a rapid source of learning English skills (Mayora, 2009).

The repetition drill improves learning when learners like to practice watching any video. The variety of topics depends according to the need of learners. According to Arrington (2009), YouTube in education is used for many purposes for example, class videos are provided to students for flexible learning that is helpful for better understanding of contents. The language related videos are used for different learning styles and students create videos for research resources and projects. Alm (2006) discussed the use of YouTube for increasing motivation among language learners that is based on self-determination theory and according to this theory; students need to have a feeling of relatedness, competence, and autonomy.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a highly used site for the learning purpose of language and it has second widely used tool for language learners to get detailed

information about any topic (Ammon, 2010). The English learners and students learn a lot of knowledge and information that can not be found in textbooks. Lipponen, (2002) claim that Wikipedia develops students' asynchronous communication skills to a great extent. The most common and easy application for students of wikis is getting instructions for writing. Lamb (2004) states that using a Wikipedia as a tool maximizes the benefits of reflection, revision, and publication. The Wikipedia application can also be utilized for interaction, discussion, corporation, and tutorials carried inside and outside classroom.

E-Mail

Paolillo (2001) reveals that computer network is very effective medium of communication for ESL learners to improve language skills. Students exchange their ideas via e-mail that is one of the on-line learning activities. It supports learners to improve their language skills through intercultural E-mail classroom connection (IECC). IECC is an effective service for teachers to connect with partners belonging to different cultures. The purpose of this study is to address impacts of globalization that affect students for learning English language at graduation level in Pakistan. It also highlights the effects of globalization on students' asynchronous learning in the English Language. The major objective of the study is to identify the impacts of globalization on students' learning the English language.

Methodology

This is a descriptive research that is based on quantitative approach. The students studying at distance institutions; namely Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad Pakistan and Virtual University of Pakistan including their study centres situated at Lahore, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, Multan, and Faisal Abad were addressed in the study. One hundred and twenty (120) students were conveniently selected from each district totaling 600 respondents. The detail is given in Table 1. As regards the data collection, a self-designed questionnaire consisting of 31 items was designed on 6-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was validated in the light of the experts' opinions. In addition, the internal consistency reliability of the tool was established at 0.87 by using Cronbach's alpha.

Table1

Sample size

Sr.#	Districts	Female Respondents	Male Respondents	Total
1	Lahore	60	60	120
2	Bahawalpur	60	60	120
3	Sahiwal	60	60	120
4	Multan	60	60	120
5	Faisal Abad	60	60	120
Total	5	300	300	600

Data Analysis and Results

As stated earlier, the study aimed to analyze the impacts of globalization on postgraduate students for learning the English language. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS Version 22. The following tables reveal the description in connection with the objectives of the study.

Table 2

Respondents' views about the role of globalization in learning the English language (N: 600)

Sr. Item #	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 Globalization increases the use of English language.	343 (57.17)*	134 (22.3)	33 (5.5)	34 (5.6)	23 (3.8)	33 (5.5)
2 Globalization develops freedom of learning among English language learners.	76 (12.7)	45 (7.5)	37 (6.1)	154 (25.7)	154 (25.7)	134 (22.3)
3 Globalization assists in learning English through English music.	75 (12.5)	54 (9.0)	32 (5.3)	134 (22.3)	155 (25.8)	150 (25)
4 Communication with foreigners is helpful for learning English.	340 (56.7)	130 (21.7)	37 (6.1)	42 (7.0)	20 (3.33)	31 (5.17)

*Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents agreed that globalization increases the use of English language while most of the respondents disagreed that globalization develops freedom of learning among English language learners. In addition, majority of the respondents disagreed that they learn English through English music. However, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that communication with foreigners is helpful for learners English.

Table 3

Respondents' views regarding the role of media in learning the English language (N: 600)

Sr. #	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Learning English through online dictionaries	89 (14.83)*	46 (7.67)	35 (5.83)	245 (40.83)	123 (20.5)	62 (10.33)
2	Learning English through online books	76 (12.7)	34 (5.66)	54 (9.0)	212 (35.3)	90 (15)	134 (22.3)
3	Learning English through English novels	78 (13)	35 (5.83)	55 (9.17)	234 (39)	78 (13)	120 (20)
4	Learning English through websites	57 (9.5)	67 (11.17)	98 (16.33)	195 (32.5)	78 (13)	105 (17.5)
5	Learning English through international magazines	89 (14.83)	56 (9.33)	123 (20.5)	145 (24.17)	78 (13%)	109 (18.16)
6	Learning English through newspapers	108 (18)	79 (13.17)	147 (24.5)	122 (20.33)	59 (9.33)	85 (14.17)

*Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents disagreed that online dictionaries help learners in learning English language. In addition, most of the respondents disagreed that online books, English novels, websites and international magazines help learners to learn English. Whereas, majority of the respondents agreed that learning through English newspapers helps them in learning English language.

Table 4

Respondents' views about the role of electronic media in learning the English language (N: 600)

Sr. #	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Learning English through television	57 (9.50)*	89 (14.83)	58 (9.67)	98 (16.33)	123 (21.50)	175 (29.16)
2	Learning English through BBC programs	55 (9.17)	79 (13.15)	65 (10.83)	89 (14.83)	154 (25.67)	158 (26.33)
3	Learning English through Tape recorders	29 (4.83)	45 (7.50)	65 (10.83)	123 (21.50)	150 (25)	188 (31.66)
4	Learning English through English movies	135 (22.50)	156 (26)	59 (9.83)	80 (13.33)	113 (18.83)	57 (9.5)
5	Learning English through Facebook	145 (24.17)	174 (29)	56 (9.33)	79 (13.170)	79 (13.16)	67 (11.16)
6	Improvement in pronunciation by the use of the Internet	176 (29.33)	133 (22.17)	29 (4.83)	59 (9.83)	105 (17.5)	98 (16.33)
7	Mobile phones as a big source	169 (28.17)	147 (24.50)	56 (9.33)	66 (11)	123 (20.50)	39 (6.5)

	for learning English						
	Learning English	136 (22.67)	132 (22)	141 (23.50)	56 (9.33)	96 (16)	39 (6.5)
8	through interacting via messengers						
	Learning English	112 (18.67)	144 (24)	176 (29.33)	78 (13)	57 (9.50)	33 (5.5)
9	language via twitter						
	Improving English	56 (9.33)	90 (15)	58 (9.67)	98 (16.33)	133 (22.17)	165 (27.5)
10	language skills through YouTube						
	Learning English	132 (22)	133 (22.17)	167 (27.83)	90 (15)	45 (7.50)	33 (5.5)
11	language through WhatsApp						
	Learning English	164 (27.33)	172 (28.67)	46 (7.67)	67 (11.17)	92 (15.33)	59 (9.83)
12	language through Wikipedia						
	Learning English by	39 (6.50)	39 (6.50)	79 (13.17)	135 (22.50)	143 (23.83)	165 (27.5)
13	interaction with English speakers on Skype						
	Learning English	67 (11.17)	49 (8.17)	98 (16.33)	167 (27.83)	107 (17.83)	112 (18.67)
14	language through ESL pod						
	Learning English	58 (9.67)	93 (15.50)	59 (9.83)	129 (21.50)	126 (21)	135 (22.5)
15	language through italk						

16	Learning English through e-mail	30 (5)	29 (4.83)	99 (16.50)	109 (18.17)	156 (26)	177 (29.5)
17	Learning English through flickrs	25 (4.17)	76 (12.67)	77 (12.83)	137 (22.83)	149 (24.83)	133 (22.16)
18	Learning English through blog	29 (4.83)	77 (12.83)	49 (8.17)	156 (26)	178 (29.67)	111 (18.5)
19	Learning English via Snapchat	78 (13)	89 (14.83)	67 (11.17)	157 (26.17)	155 (25.83)	54 (9)
20	Learning English through Viber	167 (27.83)	134 (22.33)	123 (30.51)	45 (7.50)	76 (12.67)	55 (9.17)
21	Learning English through Instagram	156 (26)	156 (26)	97 (26.17)	87 (14.50)	48 (8)	56 (9.33)

*Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents disagreed that television helps learners in learning English. They also disagreed that BBC programs and tape recorders help learners in English language learning. Whereas, most of the respondents agreed that English movies, use of Facebook help the learners in learning English language. Moreover, the use of the Internet helps improve the pronunciation of learners. In addition, majority of the respondents agreed that mobile phone is a big source for learning English language. Moreover, most of the respondents agreed that English language learners learn English through interaction via messengers, use of twitters, YouTube, WhatsApp and Wikipedia. Whereas, majority of the respondents disagreed that learners learn English by interacting with English speakers via Skype, ESL pod and italk. In addition, most of the respondents disagreed that e-mail, flickrs, English blog and Snapchat help learners in learning English language. However, majority of the respondents agreed that use of Viber and Instagram help learners in learning English language.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the impact of globalization on postgraduate students' asynchronous learning in English language. In this respect, the role of social and electronic media in English language learning was focused. According to the results of the study, globalization helps learners to learn the English language. It gives opportunities to English language learners to communicate with native speakers for the enhancement of English language learning. Moreover, newspapers are more helpful for learners to develop the English language than online dictionaries, online books, English novels, websites and international magazines. In addition, television, BBC programs and tape recorders are not considered as the useful mode for English language learning. Emphasis is given on the use of mobile phone for learning English language. The results are consistent with Schoepp's (2001) findings who concluded that the major sources of the language learning such as the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Wikipedia and Messenger are more helpful for learners to learn the English language than email, flickr and Snapchat. In addition, according to Gikas and Grant (2013), external factors control the process of the English language learning and it becomes difficult for learners to use the particular language in different situations.

The current study identified factors that affect learners for learning English at postgraduate level. Simuforsa (2013) claims that today's students spend lots of time in using computers, laptop, videogames, social media, digital music players, cell phones and playing video games, and other devices of the digital age. These all trimmings were useful for English learners at postgraduate level. Gudanescu (2010) investigates factors of English learners which lead to contact apprehension in the EFL classroom. The findings of the study show that most of the students had either fright or painful experiences about their learning which affected language learning procedure. The results are consistent with the findings of Weiser (2000) who concluded that not only gender affects, but also the differences in learners' background knowledge change the pattern of learning English. The outcomes of the study are discussed in connection with the major works that were established, which are associated with attitude towards valid resources, inspiration, language ability, language difficulty and language learning approaches. These results show a number of noteworthy differences based on gender and intention of respondents for language learning.

The present study investigated the impacts of globalization on postgraduate students for learning English language. This study reveals

positive effects of globalization on students as they use the Internet and language learning websites for language learning purposes. The English language learners get information through new language learning sites and technologies. It is clear that in this age of globalization, the information can be sorted easily by accessing through social sites such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, blog etc. Warlaumont (2010) concluded that students improved their learning by using Facebook. Moreover, EFL learners greatly promoted their learning from social sites. Bloch (2007) states that a number of postgraduate students increase their thinking style and develop academic writing skills of the English language via blogs.

According to this study, the positive effects of globalization on postgraduate students were crucial since globalization has made revolutionary changes in the world. Different communities are connected with each other and as a result, the English learners communicate with people having different cultures and learn about new traditions, life style, and cultures that emerge in the world because of globalization. The results of the study are not consistent with Lam (2006) who claims that amalgamation of diverse cultures with different communities merged each other lose their identity, distinctiveness, and importance due to globalization.

In addition, some other positive factors help learners for improving learning of the English language. For example, television, tape recorder, English magazines, online forums, mobile phones, and online language learning books are very helpful for English learning. In this era of globalization, online dictionaries assist learners to improve their pronunciation of difficult and/or unknown words. According to the results of the study, the use of social media is more helpful for learning English language. Learners mostly use the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Wikipedia and Messenger to learn English language.

Recommendation

The results of the study indicate that globalization affects students' patterns of learning English language. Therefore, it is recommended that the use of the Internet should be expanded and availability of this technology should also be insured for the English language learners. It is also concluded that students use the Internet and social sites for the purpose of enjoyment more than language learning; therefore, the students are suggested to utilize the Internet for learning purposes additionally. It is more important that in future research; the researchers should highlight

the negative effects. The English language learners are also recommended to utilize modern technology in a positive sense to a great extent in order to enhance their English language proficiencies.

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