

The evolving english language



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Rittie Jacob 13th April, 2009 Essay On Change And Development In The English Language The Evolving English Language The English language has taken an interesting course of development from an obscure tongue to an international language with the dynamic and significant impact made on the language due to the efforts of standardisation in the context of regional diversity. This essay discusses in brief the development of the English as an international language, standardization and its significance on English as an international language.

Right from the Anglo-Saxon period, English has constantly evolved to become what it is today. Its richness can be contributed to the fact that it has accommodated the changes brought in by a number of foreign influences for centuries. However the language remained within the confines of the geographical English boundaries for quite a few centuries. The advent of industrial revolution followed by colonization, laid the foundation for English to become a global language. The ambitious conquest as well as the philanthropic efforts of the colonist undertaken across the continents, set grounds for leaving behind a rich legacy of the language and its usage long after the colonists were gone. The establishment of missionary educational institutions, hospitals and churches, the traditions of which were followed even after the colonial era played a major role in the English language flourishing in foreign soil. Knowing the language was more of a status symbol in many colonial and post colonial nations, which also led to its increased usage and prominence among world languages.

'At the present time, non-native speakers outnumber native speakers and these non-native speakers use English for a variety of purposes, including, very often, intercultural communication,' says Ahmet Acar in the Asian EFL

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Journal.

This widespread nature of the language has made standardisation necessary than ever before. However it should be noted that the concept of 'standardisation' of the English language is not a recent one. Its beginnings could be traced back to the days when printing was introduced on the English soil. Despite the criticism and controversy evoked by the subject its significance on developing English as an international language cannot be denied or ignored. The global diffusion of the language has given rise to regional varieties such as Indian English, Singaporean English, African English etc. Thanks to the efforts of the patrons of the language, English has to a large extent been able to maintain its original richness.

It is an unavoidable fact that the purity of the language is tarnished as it yields itself to international influences. But " To let things drift in the belief that they will put themselves right and all will turn out for the best in the end, is no more intelligent in language than it is in politics or economics," says Fredrick T. Wood in Outline History of English Language. Thus efforts like standardisation are required to put a check on the language from moving away from its original framework.

CITATIONS

Acar, Ahmet, Research Assistant, Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey, Models, Norms and Goals for English as an International Language Pedagogy and Task Based Language Teaching and Learning. http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept_06_aa.php

Wood, Fredrick T., Outline History of English Language, Page 275, Paragraph1, Chapter 21, Conclusion.

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