

## English as a Significant Element in the Framework of the New World Order

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the role of the English language in the changing world. The spread of English is viewed differently by various researchers. Some countries try to stand the spread of English by paying more attention to their native language: creating new terms and concepts, changing curriculum, etc. Nevertheless, most people appear to represent a commonly held view that English can satisfy most needs of the world and can become the global language.

The problem is that not only the world but the language itself is changing too. The standardized use of English has become more liberal, and various Englishes all over the world are treated on the equal basis. The question is not only “Why English?” but as well as “What English?”

English has a significant influence on the development of all the spheres of life. The article presents some ideas about new paradigms in education, and especially in the university changes.

Spread of English: a blessing or a curse. The increasing use of English has in recent years helped to transform the cultural, economic and political relations in the world. Most people accept the spread of English as natural and beneficial. English is now spoken in over forty countries as a first language and in over fifty-five countries as a second language, and “the language seems to be on an ever-increasing and unstoppable trajectory” (Graddol, 2001).

Due to these developments a vast global industry of teaching and learning English has been created. Furthermore, “there now exists a mini-industry providing popular and scholarly attempts at explaining its impact on the world” (ibid.). English has become not only the focus of many conferences, debates and negotiations, but also the language used at these occurrences, in spite of the fact that sometimes the majority of speakers are not the members of English-speaking communities. Moreover, most of them welcome the expansion of the language as “a highway of communication and information, a vital, future-oriented resource” (Stroh, 2001).

English as an international language (EIL) is a very distinctive phenomenon. English is the only language world-wide with such a status.

“EIL situation is unique and applies to the English language only – no other language has such a status, but there are some languages that have ELF” (Sifakis, 2001).

ELF (English as lingua franca) is equated with other lingua franca languages spoken widely as a means of communication in certain parts of the world, e.g. the use of Spanish in South America.

However, despite the increasing spread of English on a global scale, the manifestation of divergent opinions is rather frequently exposed.

Some of these opponents speak from the national (macro), others from local or individual (micro) level (Pennycook, 1994; Philipson, 1992).

Pennycook (1994) writes:

“A view that holds that the spread of English is *natural*, *neutral* and *beneficial* needs to be investigated as a particular discursive construct. To view the spread as natural is to ignore the history of that spread and to turn one’s back on larger global forces and the goals and interests of institutions and governments that have promoted it. To view it as neutral is to take a very particular view of language and also to assume that the apparent international status of English raises it above local social, cultural, political or economic concerns. To view it as beneficial is to take a rather naively optimistic position on global relations and to ignore the relationships between English and inequitable distributions and flows of wealth, resources and knowledge.”

This researcher has introduced a new approach – Postcolonial Performativity – dealing with both global designs and the local histories of English, and calling for a discussion of what would be the most appropriate teaching methods for resisting and appropriating English.

The differing “values” given to the role of the English language are expressed by various metaphors:

- hegemony language,
- killer language,
- vampire language,
- imperialistic tool,
- virus language,
- linguistic genocide,
- Trojan horse, etc.

Nevertheless most of us appear to represent a commonly held view about the spread of English: “the world has opted for English, and the world knows what it wants, what will satisfy its needs” (Hindmarsh, 1978). The scale of English use and spread has reached such a scope that it is high time to turn to education in one’s native language as the key linguistic and pedagogic means that could help to overcome the threat of English and to explain the role of diversity. English should not be seen as a threat to ethnic/cultural identity.

“To know a foreign language means no loss of mother tongue, no change of culture in the sense of a direct replacement of one language with another. It rather represents an extension, a new possibility, in addition to the mother tongue. It does not mean a loss of identity but an *extension of identity*, the including of being a person who also knows a foreign language and has excess to this medium and possibility to communicate with more and other people” (Svensson, 1998).

Considering English as beneficial to the world, some scholars see danger to the English language itself. Crystal (1988) notices that

“while all mother-tongue speakers inevitably feel a modicum of pride (and relief) that it is their language which is succeeding, there is also an element of concern, as they see what happens to the language as it spreads around the world ... changes are perceived as instances of deterioration in standards.”

Mazrui (1975) supports this view and writes:

“In spite of the phenomenal spread of the language, the British at home seem to look on it at best as an amusing phenomenon, and at worst as something which is tending to pollute and corrupt the language.”

The spread of English raised a lot of questions: What language is English going to be? How many kinds of linguistics are scholars going to investigate? What English should actually be taught and learned?

- British English
- American English
- European English
- International English
- Local English (Lithuanian English, Scandinavian English, Afro-English, etc.)

There is obviously still a lack of the definition of standards, which cannot be defined at the present stage of rapid developments. The definition of standards needs some stability. The concept of English as a lingua franca is also rather vague and is awaiting for wider explanation.

**Research object:** the responsibility of the English language in the New World Order.

**Research aim:** to overview diverse attitudes to the spread of English in the world; to present linguistic issues caused by rapid global developments and reflected in new paradigm.

**Research objectives:** to highlight the way of a changing university towards a new paradigm; to clarify the reasons that have predetermined the use of English as the international language; to show that a language is the reflection of changes; to reveal the significance of education under the conditions of plurilingualism.

Why English? What English? How much of English? The spread of English is really challenging. Researchers stress the fact that there is a general agreement that no other language will replace *English as the global lingua franca* within the next half-century. The question is: what factors might condition the choice of the language as an international language? The language has to be

“relatively easy for individuals to acquire, it needs to possess a set of structural characteristics such as minimal inflectional and

derivational morphology, nontonal phonology, a phonemic script, and a mostly head-first canonical word-order. Although the potential challengers exhibit some of these features, it is only English that exhibits all of them” (Bruthiaux, 2001, cited by Stroh, 2001).

It is obvious that the spread of English has been predetermined not only by linguistic but by many other factors as well (historical, economic, social, cultural, etc). Language acquisition is a rather complicated phenomenon as compared to, let say, technical sciences, “where progress is more or less steady until a major discovery causes a radical theoretical revision” (Kuhn, 1970). Kuhn referred to “normal science” as a process of puzzle solving in which a part of the task of the scientist is to discover the pieces and then to fit the pieces together. Researchers have made a lot of attempts to fit the pieces of the puzzle of linguistics together unto “a paradigm – an interlocking design, a theory of language acquisition” (Brown, 1987).

Linguists have even been trying for centuries to define the term “language” adequately. “A definition is really a condensed version of a theory, and a theory is simply – or not simply – an extended definition” (ibid.). Terms or expressions appear or are created more easily than theories. Nevertheless, Marckwardt (1972) writes about “changing winds and shifting sands” in paradigm shift.

The appearance of new assumptions and notions is the evidence of the close relationship between language and thought, between language and various changes.

“Language is a way of life, it is at the foundation of our being, and interacts simultaneously with thoughts and feelings” (Brown, 1987).

As most human activities, language change is not a planned and coherent occurrence, it is rather a phenomenon that grows out of a definite trend or shift. Global changes influence language so rapidly and so deeply that the man’s mind can hardly follow them.

It might be helpful to speak of a new paradigm in different fields under the present conditions of global spread of English. Mention should be made about linguistics itself.

### Linguistics:

- multilingualism/heteroglossia,
- plurilingualism/creolisation,
- linguistic pragmatics,
- linguistic hybridity,
- discursive linguistics,
- transcend linguistics,
- linguistic human rights,
- linguistic diversity,
- demythologised linguistics.

Towards new paradigms in education. The entry of new ideas and language into different fields of life has been and is the evidence of change. Education is an ever-changing field.

“The 1990s and the approaching millennium make bold headlines, with slogans about *Access* and *Accountability*, *Adaptability* and *Appraisal*, and on through the alphabet. Is this a

new higher education? ... Are universities becoming different kinds of organisations and institutions with new kind of mission as we approach the twenty-first century" (Duke, 1995).

Education is one of the fields that benefits very significantly from the ability to use foreign languages and especially English.

The italicised words show some developments in a modern university. Going further into *globalisation* processes or the creation of the *unified space of studies* in Europe and the establishment of *entrepreneur university* or *dematerialized research*, one can expect a whole flood of a new paradigm and discourse in the present stage of the university development. There are many old assumptions which express new processes and phenomena. Many terms demand reconceptualisation in the light of current trends.

"Old criteria may be fundamentally at odds with new visions, and therefore have limited validity. At the very least, they can no longer be taken for granted" (Weil, 1989).

The problem is how the academic surrounding can evolve within a new paradigm, preserving traditional university culture and its values.

"Those universities that adhere to their traditional aims and objectives in the coming years will experience a lot more internal grinding and jarring as the nature and meaning of the new paradigm are experienced and become clearer through that experience" (Duke, 1995).

Duke (1995) elaborates a new image of the university in its changing mission and vision as that of a "*lifelong resource centre*", implementing modern *managerialism* and efficient maintenance. The terms mentioned above have already come into academic communities and have been accepted because their meanings are easy to understand. The notion "*organisational learning*" has also gained its acceptance. The meaning of this expression contains power and is firmly put within a paradigm beyond which the university change is to advance.

"The university is made and remade by new pressures and needs in new times and circumstances, as new societies emerge from the old" (ibid.).

The university problems have been studied by a lot of researchers (Newman, 1985; Allen, 1988; Barnett, 1990 and 2000), but some of them still consider the issue to be "under-conceptualized", studied too little. Distinctive statements and terms reflect different circumstances under which the university has undergone essential changes. The university gains much from these changes, it becomes the learning university itself and aims at developing a learning society. The concept "learning university" has two meanings:

- it means that the university itself is a learning institution: it must learn in order to survive;
- it means that university is an institution that ensures learning.

Researchers believe that a learning society is a condition of human survival. Therefore the word "learning" has become a miraculous concept. We can meet it in different

expressions. Some of these phrases have already been mentioned. There are some more of them:

- amplification of learning,
- continuing, learning (lifelong learning),
- short course (long, course) learning,
- internal learning (the staff development),
- adult's learning,
- liberal learning,
- up-dating learning,
- refreshing learning,
- re-allocating learning, etc.

New paradigm and discourse are like signals sent out by universities into the society and the whole world. The stream of these signals will not cease. The problem is, "how far universities may, as key teaching and learning institutions, practically speaking, adopt the new paradigm of lifelong learning" (Duke, 1995). Lifelong or continuing learning has become the main occurrence in the university change. "Lifelong learning offers a window through which to look at the role and future of universities. Looking through that window we will not see for certain what the university of the early twenty-first century will be like, but we enjoy an unusual perspective" (ibid.). A new paradigm presents a number of considerations about modern universities, their changing context, i.e. the environment in which they function and which they depend on. The borders of these surroundings expand, and changes call for the deeper knowledge of the main principles of the university and language developments.

Lithuania and its universities are not an isolated or lonely case in the world. Lithuanian universities are struggling with and facing the same kinds of problems and even the same circumstances. Historical development has introduced its distinctions, and there is a need to reorientate some attitudes and directions, but at the same time universities should preserve the good that existed in the past. The old should and can live on in the new.

The profile of Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) is undergoing very rapid shifts, and its mission is well in line with the upcoming challenges. The profile of KTU is changing towards an E-university, which could be defined in the following way:

- The Environmental University;
- The European University;
- The Electronic University.

These are some of the new paradigms of the promising future. The university is entering a competitive environment on an all-European and the world scale.

The internalisation of the university will require new strategies, tactics and professional organisation.

"The contemporary university is dissolving into the world. Its client base, its income streams and its activities: all these components underscore the dissolution of boundaries between the university and wider world... Markets, information technology, the lure of patents and technology transfer, and the multiplication of society's economic capital: all these – and many other feature – signal the insertion of the university into the values and activities of the world" (Barnett, 2000).

The process of creating new assumptions and adapting the old ones to new practices is rather broad and deep. Now, when we have already made some contribution to paradigm shift and new discourse, it is time to turn to a rather interesting world of acronyms in the field of educational developments:

AAU – Academic Audit Unit;  
 ACACE – Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education;  
 AE – adult education;  
 AFE – adult further education;  
 APEL – accreditation of prior experiential learning;  
 ASDT – academic staff development and training;  
 CAT – credit accumulation and transfer;  
 CE – continuing education;  
 CPD – continuing professional development;  
 EHE – Enterprise in Higher Education;  
 FTE – full-time equivalent (student);  
 HRD – human recourse development;  
 NAFE – non-advanced further education;  
 PI – Performance Indicator;  
 ICKUP – Professional Industrial and Commercial Updating;  
 PM – performance measure; and so on and so forth.

A new paradigm of the university, acronyms and discourse practices are new ways of seeing and understanding the university development. Different metaphors are very helpful in paradigm shift. The changing terminology about higher education helps to gain insight into the direction, nature and rate of changes. When polytechnics started changing into universities the word “enterprise” emerged, and the acronym EHE followed. Researchers distinguish four key words in this development: *enterprise*, *capability*, *competence* and *partnership*, the meaning of which disclose the main direction of the change. “Enterprise” has entered the vocabulary of education in relation to the work-related curriculum, the aim of which is to prepare young people for employment. “Competence” emerged during the campaign “Education for Capability” in the West.

“EHE is positively linked to plans that encourage a more flexible system of entry to higher education. A more open system could allow the unemployed or non-traditional students and those in employment to benefit from higher education at various stages of their lives ...” (Training Agency, 1989).

Supercomplex world order in an ordinary language teaching/learning practice. The investigation of the vocabulary of the old and the new academic discourse is a very interesting and diverse theme. The cooperative student-teacher research of the changes of the university terms was carried out in 1998-1999. The comparison of the old and new vocabulary was made, and the results of the study were published. Here are some examples from a new academic vocabulary, compiled by KTU students of the two faculties.

#### Faculty of Social Sciences

activity intelligence  
 continuous education  
 educational subsystem  
 ideological values  
 multidimensional control  
 organisational behaviour  
 professionalism  
 socialisation  
 strategic implications

#### Faculty of Economics and Management

business incubator  
 harmonious management  
 globalisation process  
 information society  
 optimisation model  
 preconditions  
 theoretical substation  
 total quality management  
 transition economy

The academic vocabulary of IT (Information Technologies) is the richest one. Students have arranged it according to the thematic principle:

- Transmission of information
- Mechanisation
- Mass production
- Electrification
- Digitalisation
- Integration
- Totalisation
- The vocabulary of Communications includes the following fields:
  - Cybermedia ;
  - Technologues ;
  - Communologues ;
  - Hypermedia.

Language teaching/learning opens wide opportunities to highlight global changes and to show the role of English in the world order. For example, word-formation examples present a very vivid picture of the world developments.

#### -ism

consumerism  
 essentialism  
 cognitivism  
 universalism  
 cosmopolitanism  
 professionalism  
 constructuralism  
 linguisticism  
 managerialism

#### -ability

adaptability  
 transferability  
 translatability  
 accountability  
 accessibility

#### -national

international  
 intranational  
 crossnational  
 supranational

#### re-

redesigning  
 restructuring  
 reallocating  
 reassessing  
 reconceptualising  
 requalifying  
 reconsidering  
 redirecting

#### -ation

Americanisation  
 institutionalisation  
 canonisation  
 corporatisation  
 extrapolation  
 hibridisation  
 marginalisation  
 westernisation  
 modularisation

#### -ity

performativity  
 interdisciplinarity  
 phenomenology  
 homogeneity  
 heterogeneity  
 anglocentricity  
 anglophonocentricity  
 proximity  
 specificity  
 supercomplexity  
 conceptuality

#### self-

self-questioning  
 self-referentiality  
 self-determination  
 self-exotisation  
 self-analysis

The university is a many-sided institution (multiversity), and it presents wide perspectives for research.

“Universities play many parts. They advance knowledge, civilise societies, educate young school leavers and mature students, are a source of scientific, technical, professional and managerial skills needed for the betterment of mankind, provide a forum for debate, and enrich the lives of individuals by the centres of learning” (Duke, 1995).

The future foresees even larger enrichment of the academic vocabulary as

“the relationship between different learning settings such as factories, programmes offered by professional associations, colleges, and universities would alter in such a way that boundaries between them would become porous – learners would transfer back and forth between setting, or select various mixtures of settings ...” (Knapper and Cropley, 1985).

### Conclusions

The investigation of the vocabulary of the university or its change is used in EAP (English for Academic Purpose) course as well as some supplement to any course because:

- students are interested in the academic vocabulary as it helps in their exchange practice;
- it increases student’s language competence;
- it increases student’s general competence;
- it opens wide opportunities for the cooperative student-teacher research;
- vocabulary may lead above the level of the word, i.e. to sentence analysis, text-linguistics, discourse analysis or the study of genre.

“During the last thirty years the study of language has undergone radical change: the focus of interest has widened from the purely historical to the contemporary, from perspective to the descriptive, from the theoretical system to the concrete realisation, from micro-level of the sign to the macro-structure of the text” (Snell-Hornby, 1988).

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### Anglų kalba kaip svarbus naujojo pasaulio struktūros elementas

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos problemos, susijusios su anglų kalbos paplitimu pasaulyje. Daugelis laiko šį paplitimą naudingą ir natūraliu, tačiau yra nuomonių, jog anglų kalbos plitimas kelia grėsmę kitų, ypač mažesnių tautų kultūrai ir kalbai. Mažosios tautos stengiasi išsaugoti savo kultūrą ir kalbą: kuriami nauji terminai ir sąvokos, gimtosios kalbos studijos tampa privalomos studijų programose, kuriamos valstybinės kalbos komisijos ir t.t. Straipsnyje aptariami kai kurie lingvistiniai faktoriai, kurie lėmė anglų kalbos tapimą tarptautine kalba, o vėliau ir globalia kalba. Liberalus požiūris į anglų kalbą iškelia naujus iššūkius ir pasikeitimus standartizuotoje anglų kalbos (gramatikoje, fonetikoje) struktūroje. Vis dažniau išreiškiamas nuogastavimas, kad visi šie pokyčiai daro neigiamą įtaką ir pačiai anglų k. Manoma, kad turi būti nubrėžtos ribos, apsaugančios anglų k. grynumą nuo ivairių anglų kalbų “taršos”. Straipsnyje nagrinėjama kalbos ir socialinių, ekonominių bei politinių pokyčių sąveika, jų atspindys naujadaruose arba naujose senų terminų reikšmėse. Šiuo požiūriu pateikiamas naujų paradigmų atsiradimas besikeičiančioje švietimo sistemoje ir universitetuose.

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