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**Impact of Global English Literature on  
Communication Skills in English**

**H. L. Narayanrao, M.A., PGJMC, PGDHE**

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**Introduction**

Communication skills in English are perceived today by both academics and industry as an important and dynamic aspect of individual personality. Communicating means an action + reaction = interaction, between two or more people. Study of Global English literature will help us acquire better communication skills, among other benefits.

**Global English Literature**

English literature is written on the basis of the history of England. Literature is composed in English by the writers not necessarily from UK or USA. For example, Robert Burns was Scottish, James Joyce was Irish, Dylan Thomas was Welsh, Edgar Allan Poe was American, V.S. Naipaul was born in Trinidad, and Vladimir Nabokov was Russian, but all are considered important writers in the history of English literature. In other words, English literature is as diverse as the varieties and dialects of English spoken around the world. In universities, the term often labels departments and programmes using English in secondary and tertiary educational systems. Despite the variety of authors of English literature, the works of William Shakespeare and John Milton remain important throughout the English-speaking world.

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Indian English literature (IEL) refers to the body of works by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of Indian diaspora, such as V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie, who are of Indian descent.

It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. Indo-Anglian is a specific term in the sole context of writing that should not be confused with the term Anglo-Indian. As a category, this production comes under the broader realm of postcolonial literature- the literature in English from previously colonized countries such as India.

### **Culture and Communication Through Indian Writing in English**

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is Indian in terms of its storytelling qualities. Rabindranath Tagore wrote in Bengali and English and was responsible for the translations of his own work into English. Dhan Gopal Mukerji was the first Indian author to win a literary award in the United States. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a writer of non-fiction, is best known for his "The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian" where he relates his life experiences and influences. P. Lal, a poet, translator, publisher and essayist, founded a press in the 1950s for Indian English writing in the contemporary period.

R.K. Narayan is a writer who contributed over many decades and who continued to write till his death recently. He was discovered by Graham Greene in the sense that the latter helped him find a publisher in England. Graham Greene and Narayan remained close friends till the end. Similar to Thomas Hardy's *Wessex*, Narayan created the fictitious town of Malgudi where he set his novels. Some criticize Narayan for the parochial, detached and closed world that he created in the face of the changing conditions in India during the times in which the stories are set. Others, such as Graham Greene, however, feel that through Malgudi they could vividly understand the Indian experience. Narayan's evocation of small town life and its experiences through the eyes of the endearing child protagonist Swaminathan in *Swami and Friends* is a good sample of his writing style.

### **Our Present Need: Dynamic Communication**

*Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary*, defines communication as giving, receiving and exchanging of information and ideas with another person or a group of people.

That communication skills in English are important is clearly recognized by most educational agencies including the UGC which has suggested making Communication Skills in English as a compulsory subject. On the basis of such demands, English Literature/language is to be taught to help students of all the branches and disciplines of study to improve their communication skills in their respective fields of study.

### **The Relevance of Communication in Inter-Disciplinary Pursuits**

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Technical subjects such as medicine, engineering, applied and basic sciences as well as technology are all taught using English in most Indian University. Learning English as a subject will help the students and teachers of these disciplines to communicate well in their subjects. However, this “subject of English” should focus more on the communication skills – how to communicate effectively using English in normal day to day life as well as in the context of professional communication.

We also need to recognize that the study of current English literature, written by writers from many countries, is not a barrier to learn communication skills. These will provide appropriate social contexts. These also help our students to gain knowledge of the global conditions and thus enable them to seek employment around the world and live in those contexts with some understanding. Apart from these ultimate benefits, students also develop the process of communication skills and learn the basic and applied language skills useful for the study of different subjects such as Arts, Science, Management, Engineering, and Medicine, etc.,

### **English is a Global language**

It is a matter of fact, that English language is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a "world language", the lingua franca of the modern era, and while it is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language. Some linguists believe that it is no longer the exclusive cultural property of "native English speakers", but is rather a language that is absorbing aspects of cultures worldwide as it continues to grow. It is, by international treaty, the official language for aerial and maritime communications. English is an official language of the United Nations and many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee and Commonwealth Games.

English occupies the prime position among nations in the contemporary multi-national and global business environment. Within every corporate sector in India, and in the field of academics, professionals do communicate in English on major economic, personnel, media and other related issues. The academicians and the professionals use English to strengthen their general concepts in verbal and non-verbal and in written communication for achieving the required results in educational institutions and in the corporate business world.

Most of the books, magazines, and newspapers written in English are available in many countries around the world, and English is the most commonly used language in the sciences with *Science Citation Index* reporting as early as in 1997 that 95% of its articles were written in English, even though only half of them came from authors in English-speaking countries.

### **Global Skills Through a Global Language and Global Literature**

This increasing use of the English language globally has had a large impact on many other languages, leading to language shift and to claims of linguistic imperialism. English itself is now

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open to language shift as multiple regional varieties feed back into the language as a whole. For this reason, the 'English language is forever evolving'.

Study of Global English Literature will help the following:

1. Study of Global English literature will help improve human and interpersonal relations.
  2. Study of Global English literature will help achieve effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
  3. Study of Global English literature will help overcome the barriers to communication.
  4. Study of Global English Literature will equip students and professional to have an understanding of emerging global culture and global business norms.
  5. Study of Global English Literature will continue to enrich the national languages, cultures, business, political and judicial institutions.
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