

The Effectiveness of Globish in Facilitating Business Oral Interpersonal Communication between Saudi Businessmen and Native Speakers

Dr. Ayman Hamd Elneil Hamdan^{1*} and Dr. Elsadig Ali Elsadig Elnadeef²

^{1,2}Assistant Professors, King Khalid University, College of Science and Arts, Dhahran Aljanoub, Saudi Arabia

Corresponding Author: Dr. Ayman Hamd Elneil Hamdan, E-mail: ranecaz@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: October 24, 2019
Accepted: November 27, 2019
Published: December 31, 2019
Volume: 2
Issue: 7
DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.7.7

KEYWORDS

Globish, effectiveness, business oral interpersonal communication, Global language, Standard English

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the effectiveness of Globish in facilitating business oral interpersonal communication between Saudi businesspersons and native speakers and it exposes the constraints hindering mutual comprehension between native and nonnative speakers. The study aims at accentuating the suitability and role of Globish, which is a simplified version of English that uses only the most common English words and phrases, in facilitating oral communication among Saudi businesspersons who do not master English proficiently. Moreover, it clarifies the simplicity and practicality of Globish in real life communicative settings. It shows the main features, date back of Globish evolution, advantages and disadvantages of Globish, peculiarities of Globish, ingredients of Globish and techniques of using Globish. It demonstrates the disagreement about the notion of Standard English, especially about linguistic levels. Furthermore, the study explains the importance of speaking English to Saudi business persons. In addition, it illustrates a vast number of intercultural communication principles. It exposes that Saudi learners are highly motivated to learn and speak English but they lack practice time in real life settings. The study shows that Globish can be useful to Saudi business persons because it meets their communicative needs in various social communicative situations as telephoning, messaging, booking flights, practicing at airport, making appointments, organizing meetings, agenda setting, interrupting, agreeing negotiations, making tricky conversations, resolving difficulties, asking for a pay rise, tackling clients, disagreeing and business condensed presentation.

INTRODUCTION

English dominates international business, politics, and culture more than any other language in human history. Thus, English has attained a status of being a global language and it has expanded throughout the world. According to David Crystal, language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country in two main ways: firstly, a language can be made the official language of the country, to be used as a medium of communication in such domains as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system. Secondly, a language can be made a priority in a country's foreign-language teaching (Crystal, 1997). However, 88% of humans were not born in an English-speaking country. Those people usually do not feel comfortable when they communicate with native English speakers because native speakers naturally speak fast with native accent and use lots of phrasal verbs, idioms and

slangs. In addition, native speakers of English use several different constructions, which express different notions (Bryson, 1990). Nonnative speakers are concerned about making mistakes, understanding with great difficulties, and being understood.

The history of the English language has been a remarkable success story. In fact, several geographical and historical factors as well as sociocultural ones have caused the initial spread of English. From the 17th to the 20th century both British and American colonialism carried the English language to all five continents. In some areas, English speakers largely displaced pre-colonial languages whereas in others, only a proportion of the native population acquired English - mainly as a second language such as in Nigeria and India (Crystal, 2001). Subsequently, in the Caribbean - particularly in Jamaica - the slave trade led to pidgin versions of English that later creolized. Furthermore, from the beginning of the 19th century onwards,

English-speaking countries accounted for most of the world's innovations, resulting in a new terminology for technological and scientific advances. The leading role of Britain in the Industrial Revolution was later inherited by the United States, which had become the fastest growing economy by the end of the nineteenth century. This encouraged many people to learn English because they wanted to discuss technological advances and take part in the economic wealth these advances brought about. Technology also plays a major part as it enables globalization and the spread of English via the Internet, telephone and mass media. Furthermore, through the use of English as an international language, a greater variety of viewpoints are represented. English is thus at the center of many globalization mechanisms and although its position as a native language is challenged by Spanish, Hindi, Mandarin and Arabic, its impact as a second and especially international language will increase further (Yeung, 1999).

STANDARD ENGLISH DILEMMA

There has always been a certain disagreement about the notion of Standard English, especially, about which linguistic levels are involved. Some linguists claim that it only applies to grammar whereas others maintain that it extends to lexis, discourse and pragmatics as well (Rampton, Maybin, & Roberts, 2014). Another arguable point is whether pronunciation is also part of it or whether any accent can be used when speaking Standard English. A very general definition is that a standard is a codified variety that is accepted by a larger speech community and serves as a model to them. Most linguists detach Standard English from pronunciation and mainly refer to written English when they use the term (Tusting and Maybin, 2007). Although most linguists do not relate the notion of 'standard' to a specific dialect spoken in a certain country, there has mainly been two forms that have served as a model to foreign learners in the last couple of decades: British English in Europe and South Asian countries and American English for Latin America and south-eastern Asia.

English is gradually being used mainly as a lingua franca among non-native speakers leading to a decreasing importance of native-speaker accents. Research shows that even international students can find it difficult to integrate with the native speaker community and therefore re-evaluate the usefulness of a particular variety for their own purposes (Koester, 2004). They become more aware of the qualities of a native speaker, but their learning goal is mostly defined as someone who speaks International Standard English. They achieve an increased

awareness of what is really important in any international context and that is the ability to understand and to be understood.

DEFINITION AND DATE BACK OF GLOBISH

In 2004,¹ Jean-Paul Nerrière, a former businessman, supported by two Canadian teachers of English for his second book (cf. Nerrière 2006) invented a new closed system of reduced English received attention, first in France. Jean-Paul Nerrière has a general desire to provide a simplified version of English for communicating with both native and non-native speakers. Jean-Paul Nerrière believes human always needed a common language to exchange and share ideas. Therefore, he made Globish as a communication tool.

Globish is a simplified version of English that uses only the most common English words and phrases. Today, Gobish is a certain form of English, with a sentence building that is not too demanding, no trouble with accents, and a small set of useful words which are only 1500 words.

According to McCrum (2010), the rise of Globish first became obvious in 2005, when an obscure Danish newspaper called *The Jutland Post* published a sequence of satirical cartoons poking fun at the Prophet Muhammad. English slogans like **²BUTCHER THOSE WHO MOCK ISLAM**

¹ *1-For Nerrière, Globish was a kind of linguistic tool, a version of basic or so-called Easy English with a vocabulary of just 1,500 words. As I saw it, however, "Globish" was the newly globalized lingua franca, essential English merged with the terminology of the digital age and the international news media. I knew from my work in the mid-1980s on a PBS series called The Story of English that British English had enjoyed global supremacy throughout the 19th-century age of empire, after centuries of slow growth from Chaucer and Shakespeare, through the King James Bible to the establishment of the Raj in India and the great Imperial Jubilee of 1897. The map of the world dominated by the Union Jack answered to the Queen's English; Queen Victoria, in her turn, was the first British monarch to address her subjects worldwide through the new technology of recorded sound, with a scratchy, high-pitched "Good evening!" In this first phase, there was an unbreakable link between imperialism and language that inhibited further development.*

² *The rise of Globish first became obvious in 2005, when an obscure Danish newspaper called The Jutland Post published a sequence of satirical cartoons poking fun at the Prophet Muhammad. The Muslim world exploded, with riots across Afghanistan, Nigeria, Libya, and Pakistan; in all, 139 people died. But perhaps the most bizarre response was a protest by fundamentalist Muslims outside the Danish Embassy in London. Chanting in English, the protesters carried placards with English slogans like BUTCHER THOSE WHO MOCK ISLAM; FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION GO TO HELL; and (my favorite) DOWN WITH FREE SPEECH. This collision of the Islamic jihad with the Oxford English Dictionary, or perhaps of the Quran with Monty Python,*

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION GO TO HELL and DOWN WITH FREE SPEECH are typical examples of Globish (Blommaert, 2010).

Jean-Paul Nerrière, who described English and its international deployment as “the worldwide dialect of the third millennium”, had noticed that non-native English speakers in the Far East communicated in English far more successfully with their Korean and Japanese clients than British or American executives when posted to Japan with IBM in the 1990s.

3.1 Ingredients of Globish

According to Nerrière (2006), the ingredients of Globish are:

- being able to communicate with merely 1,500 words
- using a pronunciation of intelligibility, not of perfection
- teaching simple, but standard grammatical structures
- making learners “am bilingual” by making them achieve a threshold level of English.
- providing a tool for leading conversations as a business person or as a tourist in any country of the world.

3.2 Peculiarities of Globish

The characteristics of ³Globish are as follows:

- use short sentences
- use words in a simple way; as any advertiser or politician knows • use only the most common English words, and
- help communication with body language and visual additions Jean-Paul Nerrière (2006:81).

According to Jean-Paul Nerrière and David Hon (2006:85-8), furthermore, seven concrete suggestions are as follows:

made clear (at least to me) the dramatic shift in global self-expression asserting itself across a world united by the Internet.

³ The word “Globish” was coined in 1995 by Jean-Paul Nerrière, a former vice-president of marketing at IBM. It denotes the fat-free form of English that seems to be the international dialect of modernity; Nerrière describes it as being “decaffeinated”. Nerrière conceives of it as an international auxiliary language – like Esperanto. For Nerrière, Globish promises to limit the influence of English, by creating an alternative lingua franca. This, he thinks, will make the mastery of English enjoyable by native speakers a less commercially and politically advantageous accomplishment.

- Globish has 1500 words, expandable in four ways
- .Globish uses mostly Active Voice
- Globish suggests short sentences (15 words or fewer)
- Globish pronunciation has fewer necessary sounds than traditional English
 - -Globish speakers use their body, their hands and their faces when they talk
 - ----Globish speakers are very careful about humor, idioms and examples.

3.3 Techniques for speaking Globish

There are seven steps.

1. Don’t rush and speak at your speed. Globish should be spoken slowly enough for others to catch up.

2. Use relatively simple, short sentences that contain only one idea. The purpose is to speak up straight. So, using sentences with many modifications, relative clause and adverb clause which are taught at school should be avoided.

3. Use many words. As we mentioned, Globish uses a limited vocabulary of 1,500 words, and it doesn’t use difficult vocabulary. Therefore, you have to explain, using lots of easy words when you need to express something in a different way. For example, nephew should be a son of my brother, son of my sister. Niece should be the daughter of my brother, daughter of my sister and so on.

4. Try not using idioms and metaphors. All languages contain idiomatic phrases. They are not always used or recognized by the whole of the language community. Therefore, non-native speakers find it difficult to understand it.

5. Try not questioning someone in negative questions. For example, “don’t you like a cat?” When someone asks Japanese and Russian such a question, they answer like, if they do then “No, (I like).” Or if they don’t then “Yes, (I don’t like)”. However, American people answer the opposite...That is, the logic of the affirmative and negative might change according to the area of the language. Therefore, Globish should avoid using it.

6. Use nice gestures or body language for communication. Body language also helps us communicate with others.

7. Repeat each sentence twice. This is the second reason why Globish should use many words. To make others understand what you are talking about,

you have to repeat, or rephrase it in another sentence. For example, if you would say, "I admitted it was my fault." then add it, "I accepted that I was responsible for it" If you're not able to rephrase another sentence, then just repeat the same sentence again. Caring these points, we can communicate with much more (Jenkins, 2006).

3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of Globish

The advantages of Globish are following;

- Globish is easy and simple to acquire.
- Globish is not completely a new language.
- No one must memorize so many words and phrases.
- Learning only 1,500 words in a short term enables them to communicate with people from various cultures and it makes learners confident.

These ¹advantages make some merits to be taught in Japanese Elementary school in which there are some opposite opinions about adopting English education as a compulsory subject (Grzega, 2005).

The disadvantages of Globish are:

- The systemic concepts are not explained in detail.
- Globish does not seem to be based on any practical or theoretical observations.
- The suggested vocabulary is not based on any clear concept.
- The forms are not even attached to any meanings.
- A French-⁴Globish list Nerrière offers on his website is hardly helpful.
- There are phrases that seem, for a learner of Globish, unnecessary, too idiomatic, too rare, or, in fact, wrong.
- The presentation of the vocabulary is totally unstructured.

⁴ English is the global language of business, yet English is also the native tongue of relatively few people. Whereas, Globish, a kind of simplified English that is vastly easier to use and can work almost as well as a full command of the language in most business situations. Nerrière describes Globish as a device that will 'limit the influence of the English language dramatically'. He says: 'I am helping the rescue of French, and of all the languages that are threatened by English today but which will not be at all endangered by Globish. It is in the best interests of non-Anglophone countries to support Globish, especially if you like your culture and its language.'. The need for a global language is a big part of the fact of globalization, and the dominance of English looks inevitable for a good long time to come.

- The order of the words introduced is purely random (Blommaert, 2010).

ENGLISH FOR SAUDI BUSINESS PERSONS

English is a required skill for success in today's business market though it is not the most spoken language in the world, but when it comes to business, it is by far the most important (Beamer and Varner, 2008). About 1 billion people speak Mandarin, but they are mostly concentrated in China. About 400 million people speak Spanish, primarily in Central and South America. Only 360 million people speak English as their first language, but when you include those who speak it as a second language, the number soars to about 860 million, and they span almost the entire globe. In any study or survey of business leaders, when asked about the most important skills they are looking for today, English is invariably the underlying factor (Boden, 1994). In a 2018 survey of 2,000 business leaders by LinkedIn, English was the foundation of the top three skills companies were looking for: leadership, communication and collaboration. In a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 73.4 percent of employers said they wanted job candidates with strong written communication skills. While the educational system focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, 75 percent of employers stated that there should be a greater emphasis on written communication skills in college. (Koester, 2004) English is a requirement for more jobs in more countries than ever before in human history. Even 20 or 30 years ago, having a strong grasp of the English language was not as important as it is today. In the past, English was required in global companies only for senior management. Today, companies' clients and suppliers, their technical support teams and their own management can be spread across several countries. In global trade and commerce, including e-commerce, English today is a must.

Saudi Arabia has special status in the world due to various factors such as being an oil affluent country which owns tremendous staggering global business movement. In addition, it has wealthy tycoons and businesspersons who run gigantic companies and have various investments over the world. Hence, Saudi business persons tackle international companies over the world and they communicate with international business persons while travelling abroad or telephoning them; besides, Saudi Arabia is a cosmopolitan country where lots of native speakers work in many Saudi companies (Kameda, 2005). The crucial demand of speaking English among business persons who do not study abroad in native countries

has become a necessary demanding issue. Notwithstanding, most of Saudi business persons, who finish high education, have studied English for nearly eight years but they encounter problems when talking to native speakers and in most cases, they fail to convey their message appropriately. Pedagogically, Saudi learners are highly motivated to learn English and they are so daring to speak English with highly preference. Nonetheless, most of them are reluctant learners and they tend to learn English through Arabic translation. In addition, they do not practice English a lot (McKay, 2002). Business persons need English for oral interpersonal business communication and they need to understand and be understood by native and non-native speakers while communicating orally. Thus, ⁵Globish can be useful to Saudi business persons because it satisfies their aim of using English in basic interpersonal business communication.

The common English needed for Saudi business persons involve telephoning, messaging, booking flights, practicing at airport, making appointments, organizing meetings, agenda setting, interrupting, agreeing negotiations, making tricky conversations, resolving difficulties, asking for a pay rise, tackling clients, disagreeing and business condensed presentation (Charles, 1996) Having business-level fluency in English means that you are capable of conducting business in English without needing someone else to translate or to interpret words for you. You are able to have conversations with co-workers, management, clients and suppliers as well as being able to read company documents and read and write emails (Hewings & Nickerson, 1999).

English is now the global language of business and more multinational companies are mandating English as the common corporate language—Airbus, Daimler-Chrysler, Fast Retailing, Nokia, Renault, Samsung, SAP, Technicolor, and Microsoft in Beijing, to name a few in an attempt to facilitate communication and performance across geographically diverse functions and business endeavors (Kameda, 2005)..

⁵ *The central ideology of Globish is as a tool of international communication which is not artificial but a language void of all figurative speech that English possess. Globish speakers avoid all figurative language and never tell jokes, meaning there is no need to engage with Anglophone literature, culture or humor and it is easy to learn. Though Nerrière actually likes to think of it as more of a tool than a language as it is not a vehicle of a culture” but a tool of communication.*

GENERAL RULES FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

1. The only generalization one can make: “Don’t generalize.”
2. Language not only serves for transporting information, but also for creating interpersonal bonds.
3. Formulate questions in such a way that the addressee cannot answer with “yes” or “no”, but that the addressee has to make explicit statements or explicitly choose an option.
4. Listen and watch others and yourself attentively and consciously. There might be hidden misunderstandings.
5. Respect other cultural values as equally valuable and in the entire context of the other culture.
6. Use standard speech or general colloquial speech. Speak slowly and distinctly. Your sentences should not be too complex. You may support your utterance with body language.
7. Do not make unexplained utterances that require “insider” knowledge.
8. Be aware that linguistic politeness rules may be different from situation to situation.
9. If you feel that there is a misunderstanding, you should verbalize this in a circumspect manner.
10. Feel friendly toward the other. Smile!

CONCLUSION

English language has become a part of the global consciousness and it has gained a high status as a global language. Nonetheless, many English versions emerge among nonnative speakers, in addition, Globish as a simplified version of English has become worldwide populist tool. The rise of Globish first became obvious in 2005, when an obscure Danish newspaper called The Jutland Post published a sequence of satirical cartoons poking fun at the Prophet Muhammad. Nerrière, posted to Japan in the 1990s, had noticed that non-native English speakers in the Far East communicated in English far more successfully with their Korean and Japanese clients than British or American executives. Standard English was all very well for Anglophones, but in the developing world, this non-native “decaffeinated English”-full of simplifications like “the son of my brother” for “nephew,” or “words of honor” for “oath”—was becoming the new global phenomenon. For Nerrière, Globish was a kind of linguistic tool, a version of basic or so-called Easy English with a

vocabulary of just 1,500 words. Globish is the newly globalized lingua franca, essential English merged with the terminology of the digital age and the international news media. Globish facilitates oral communication particularly for nonnative business persons.

REFERENCES

- [1] Beamer, L., & Varner, I. I. (2001). *Intercultural communication in the global workplace*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- [2] Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- [3] Boden, D. (1997). The business of talk. Organizations in action. *ORGANIZATION STUDIES-BERLIN-EUROPEAN GROUP FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES*-, 18, 544-544.
- [4] Bryson, B. (1990). *Mother Tongue: The English Language*, William Morrow, New York.
- [5] Charles, M. (1996). Business negotiations: Interdependence between discourse and the business relationship. *English for Specific Purposes*, 15(1), 19-36.
- [6] Crystal, D. (2001). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press.
- [7] Crystal, D. (2012). *English as a global language*. Cambridge university press.
- [8] Grzega, J. (2005). Towards Global English via Basic Global English (BGE)/Socioeconomic and Pedagogic Ideas for a European and Global Language (with Didactic Examples for Native Speakers of German). *Journal for EuroLinguistiX*, 2(65-164).
- [9] Hewings, M.; Nickerson, C. (eds.). (1999). *Business English: Research into practice*. London/New York, Longman
- [11] Nerrière, J. P. (2006). *Parlez globish!: don't speak English--*. Editions Eyrolles.
- [12] Jenkins, J. (2006). The spread of EIL: A testing time for testers. *ELT journal*, 60(1), 42-50.
- [13] Kameda, N. (2005). A research paradigm for international business communication. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 10(2), 168-182.
- [14] Koester, A.(2004). *The language of work*. London/New York, Routledge,
- [15] 136 p.
- [16] McKay, S. L. (2002). Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and perspectives. *NY: OUP*, 142-146.
- [17] Nelson, M. (2006). Semantic associations in Business English: A
- [18] corpus-based analysis. *ESP Journal*, 25(2):217-234.
- [19] Ponchini, G. (2004). Discursive strategies in multicultural business
- [20] meetings. Bern, Peter Lang, 338 p.. Methodological foundations in linguistic ethnography. Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies (Paper 125), King's College London.
- [21] Tusting, K., & Maybin, J. (2007). Linguistic ethnography and interdisciplinarity: Opening the discussion. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 11(5), 575-583.
- [22] Yeung, L. N. (1998). Linguistic forms of consultative management discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 9(1), 81-101.