



ISSN: 0975-833X

REVIEW ARTICLE

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Houman Bijani, Ali Sedaghat, *Manizhe Sinaei and Yaser Gerailoo

Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University Zanjan Branch, Zanjan, Iran

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 02nd October, 2014
Received in revised form
10th November, 2014
Accepted 28th December, 2014
Published online 23rd January, 2015

Key words:

Globalization, Teacher Education,
Identity Change, Far-distance learning
and Instruments of Instruction.

Copyright © 2015 Houman Bijani et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT

The impact of the phenomenon of Globalization on different aspects of human being life in twenty first century is known to everyone. Globalization has fundamentally affected the process of teaching and learning and in particular the language teacher education program. In this study, different positive influences that globalization would have on language teacher education are considered. The awareness of globalization and its adaptation to the needs of teacher education, its effects on instruments of instruction, identity change in teacher education, long-life learning and far-distance education and finally its effects on teacher-student relationship in teacher education are issues taken into account in this study. Moreover, the possible negative effects are discussed at the end.

INTRODUCTION

The creation of new ideas, identities, systems and movements is seen as the initial consequence of the phenomenon of Globalization. In the globalization phenomenon, the world is becoming a more independent place in which people from different parts of the world have the chances to know the commonalities that they have with other people from different social, cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds. Throughout the world a great number of people believe in the vital impact of globalization on societies at the political, cultural, educational and economical aspects. Stormquist and Monkman (as cited in Zughoul 2003) state that "Globalization compromises multiple and drastic changes in all areas of social life, particularly economics and culture". The role of Globalization on different aspects of human being life in 21st century is that much influential that investigating different endeavors of human life without giving a crucial role to globalization seems to be inconclusive. Many people are directly or indirectly affected by globalization patterns such as life style and behavior change. The rapid change of people's life style indicates that how powerful the globalization influences them. Gidden (as cited in Li and Dan, 2006) defined globalization as a separation of space and time, emphasizing that with instantaneous communications, knowledge and culture shared around the world simultaneously. Lunatic (2011) also defines it as "as the intensification of worldwide social relations which links distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away

and vice versa(p.1)". It shows that although there is a distance between one place to another, the globalization can bring anything, such as style, attitude, behavior, mode, etc. together.

Globalization may influence education and in particular language teacher education. It is obvious that among the unlimited number of individuals and societies being engaged in the teacher education, although globalization is accepted as a universal principle, its effects on teacher education is differently viewed. Tonna (2007) states that "different thinkers, philosophers of education and educators entertain different and contrasting perspectives on existing global trends and tendencies Given the number and variety of positions, it is impossible to consider each and every theory regarding the influence of global trends on education" (p.12). But there is a fact, which almost all teacher educators have in common. Language Teacher Education should respond to the outstanding changes which are occurring in the world today. Globalization has an outstanding role in changing of methods, approaches and techniques of language teaching and learning procedure. As a result, one of the main globalization impacts on the world of language acquisition, learning and pedagogy refers to its effects on Language Teacher Education Phenomenon. The effect of Globalization on Language Teacher Education can be viewed referring to at least five categories which are as follow:

1. The Globalization awareness and adapting it to the needs of Teacher Education
2. The Globalization and Instruments of Instruction.
3. The Globalization and Identity change.
4. The Globalization and Far-distance learning and Life-long education
5. The Globalization and Teacher- Student relationship

*Corresponding author: Manizhe Sinaei,
Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University Zanjan
Branch, Zanjan, Iran.

In the following, the effects of globalization on each of these aspects of language teacher education will be considered. Although, considering globalization, in first glance, positive impacts come to mind, as a different consideration, I will discuss the possible negative impacts that globalization may have on language teacher education in the last part of this study.

Globalization awareness and adapting it to the needs of teacher education

It seems that coming across the phenomenon of Globalization, the first consideration refers to understanding and the awareness of the significance of globalization in language teacher education and more importantly understanding the ways how it effects language teacher education or fulfills the requirements of language teacher education. Saurian, (2001); Jarvis and Helford, (2005) (as quoted in Tonna, 2007) hold the view that “globalization may positively influence education, since it may bring together different peoples, ideas and resources in a world-wide pool”. Teacher educators should describe and draw the framework of globalization in a way that it fulfills the needs of teacher education and makes the teachers become aware of the concepts theoretically and operationally. The adaptation of new technology and globally-defined instructional devices requires teachers, firstly, become aware of the fact itself and then learn how to operate them in line with the needs of students as Tonna (2007) states “*Technological tools and developments can be applied to good use, so as to serve the needs of students across the world*”(p.7) Therefore, if teachers want to apply the globalized technologies and developments and fulfill the requirements of educational setting, initially their importance must be understood and they must be operationally defined to teachers, of course, in teacher education programs.

Globalization and Instruments of Instruction

Technology has provided the widespread access to the world of information to everyone living in every part of the world. Mtriano (2003) in his article states that “*with the click of the mouse and going into the web sites anyone can have an access to any kind of information*”(p.291). Therefore, technology has arrived and its various educational instruments are in hand for teacher educators, teachers, students, families and the whole society. With the arrival of technology, teaching and learning are not limited to the boundaries of the classroom and the knowledge of the teacher. Education is no more about how much knowledge one has but more importantly how one manages information (Li and Dan, 2006). Before the phenomenon of globalization, in most of pre-service teacher educational settings, the most primary instrumental devices and simple teaching media such as pictures, blackboards, whiteboards and some other classroom puzzles and maps were introduced to be used by teachers to help them make the process of learning and teaching more tangible and facilitated. Lucinate (2011) believes that “*the use of computer or laptop, TV, tape recorder, LCD, e-mail, blog, etc are indicated that the globalization has changed the media of teaching*”(p.1). In the same way, in the majority of teacher education programs, the widespread use of modern media such as computer, laptops,

video projectors, different forms of computer-oriented software, LCDs, and e-mails are considered to aid the process of teacher education. Consequently, in teacher education process, teachers have to continuously upgrade themselves in the era of media. With respect the improvement of technology, if teachers are not competent enough, they won't be able to transfer the data and knowledge to their students. Through an easy access to the up-dated and modern media needed in classroom environment, sometimes students have sufficient information about those instruments, if teachers do not have that much information; they would come across real challenges and difficulties. Hence, it is a vital phase of teacher education program to make the teachers both have awareness of media and know how to use them.

Globalization and Identity Change in Teacher Education

In teacher education program and in-service teaching process, the change of identity is a significant phase which might determine the success or failure of teachers in their future profession. Teaching identity change may include two sorts of identities which are in fact different from each other: the imagined and the practiced ones. The imagined identity comes from one's imagination of the surrounding educational setting and the practiced identity originates from the actual realization and operation in real educational setting. According to Wenger (1998) *identity change may involve identities of two kinds that are substantially different in nature, the imagined and the practiced, since the former stem from imagination and the latter from real world interactions in communities of practice* (p.98). Anderson (as cited by Xu, 2013) state that “*imagined identities in a broad sense refer to identities constructed in the individual's imaginations about the relationships between one's self and other people and things in the same time and space that he or she nevertheless has virtually no direct interactions with*”. Xu (2013) believes that:

Imagination in this sense is the way people may create unlimited images of the world and themselves based on limited experiences. Their identities can hence outreach to imagined states beyond those constructed upon the real practices they are engaged in. Who they are will then depend on not only who they are but also who they imagine themselves to be (p.8).

The system of education was previously locally-defined. The identities that teachers may had during pre-service programs had fundamentally changed. If, in previous decades, teachers' imagined identities were represented by exemplar-based identities such as specific teachers or were defined based on cues such as what was going on within the traditional institutional settings in which every device or method of teaching was in hand and limited, teacher educators in new millennium should skillfully define and elaborate the new technology-based system of teaching which is the result of globalization so that teachers imagined identity is created in a way, which is in the same line with the new globalized and computerized teaching system. In this case, teachers, being equipped with the necessities of new technology-oriented methods of teaching during teacher education program, will draw a reasonable imagined identity so that their forthcoming practiced identity will be in line with their previous identity. To cut it short, due to a great improvement in pedagogical devices

and the use of technology resulted from globalization, teacher education programs should introduce the globalized devices and methods to teachers so that they create a reasonable identity which fulfills the requirements of the effect of globalization on teaching.

Globalization and Teacher- Student Relationship

Globalization and new technologies require new teacher roles and new teaching methods. Technology, as one prominent symbol of globalization, has substantially changed the way the younger generation thinks, operates and processes information. In one hand, this fact provides several challenges for language teacher educators and teachers, and on the other hand, creates new facilities and easy to access equipments to students who have the chance to practice and become up-dated. Witt (2003) holds the idea that *“due to globalization, technological developments have also opened up exciting and new possibilities for the customizing of teaching practices to engage and excite our students. Being constantly exposed to the new technology around them, the younger generations are no doubt becoming more updated than their predecessors. Our students today have access to all technology based instructional devices, some even much more than their own teachers”* (p.18), so, an important question to consider is: how best can we prepare our teachers for the future practice in this globalised world? Unlike the last century, we know that teachers are not to teach the contents and skills which are just prescribed within the domain of the textbooks. Teachers need to keep themselves continuously upgraded in line with new technological devices and pedagogical methods and skills. In short, the relationship between teacher and student is not like as being from superior to inferior. With an easy access to technology and first-hand materials teachers and students would have a mutual teaching-learning relationship in which both are engaged in and the process of language teaching is no longer one sided.

Globalization and life-long Education and far-distance Learning

Considering this fact that due to industrialization, technology is changing time and again; teachers have to continuously keep themselves updated to be in the same line with the ever changing technology. Teachers will have great opportunities to take the educational programs which were not available in the past time. With the removal of the world borders, often, incredibly, with one click on the mouse, it would be possible for the teachers to search for the programs that would help them in their in-service professional development but the ease is not always beneficial, it would provide a challenging situation, if they do not keep themselves in the same track with the ever changing technology. In other words, Teachers need a life-long participation in teacher education program. Therefore, due to influential ever changing educational paradigms, life-long engagement in teacher education is a need for teachers not to stay far from the new systems of teacher education program. Lee (2011) in response to the effects of globalization states that:

With the rapid advancement of technologies, today's knowledge may be outdated tomorrow. The learners have to continually acquire new competencies and align their

knowledge to the borders, incredibly with one click on the mouse, emerging new economy. Education systems therefore have to be flexible enough to adapt to the rapid changes in the environment and able to encourage school leavers to return to schools to acquire advance qualifications or new skills that are relevant. Schools and educators have to promote the idea of continuous life-long learning to students by equipping them with skills such as independent learning and critical thinking. (p.46)

In old systems of teacher education, teachers were engaged in pre-service program for several years and then beginning their in-practice teaching, they, by and large, lost their relationship with the program or their teacher educators and sometimes were not aware of the new events which had been taken place in the era of their profession. With the arrival of distance shortening devices such as Internet as a significant symbol of globalization, the boundaries have been removed so that teachers have always an access to the new methods of teacher education. In addition to this fact, the internet provides easily available situations such as far distance video- conferences, online discussions and online group research that in-service teachers can share their teaching experiences with their teacher educators and colleagues. In describing the importance of the internet, Kellener (1999) claims that *“the internet enables individuals to participate in discussions, to circulate their ideas and work, which were previously closed off to many excluded groups and individuals”* (p.14). Education and in particular language teacher education will find a new character completely different from its old version, in which its participants including teaching policy makers, syllabus decision makers ,educators, teachers and students will teach, learn ,verify, falsify and revise by being in close relation with each other and by learning from far distance.

Globalization and its negative effects on Education

Till this part of this study, I focused on the positive effects that globalization may have on language teacher education. But as a social phenomenon it is not rational to think that all effects on teacher education are only positive. Does it have any negative effect on teacher education process? According to some critics, there are a number of ways that globalization has negatively influenced teacher education. It seems that the quality of teacher education is continuously decreasing since the individual states or societies are losing their independence and do not have their own state or local system due to the widespread global enforces which makes it difficult for local societies to have their own appropriate teacher education system. Koziolo and *et al.* (2011) believe that *“the quality of education has generally fallen, due to global forces operating at transnational level and the limits these set to the autonomy of individual states. This is because it is becoming increasingly difficult for states to deliver adequate educational support when the free market philosophy runs rampant”* (p.22). So, considering this fact that every society has its own locally defined social and cultural aspects of teacher education , if globalization plays the most and the only influential role, the teaching and language teacher education may lose its autonomy and will not respond to the locally defined aspects of teaching process. Moreover, the globalization may have other negative

effects on teacher education such as the economical effects that I don't focus on them in this study.

Conclusion

Globalization as a phenomenon of twenty first century has influenced different aspects of education and in particular language teacher education. In the new era of teacher education, language teachers are not to limit themselves to the contents of the materials and teach only skills and components of languages using a constrained tools and instruments which were traditionally used in language teaching and learning situations. Teacher educators in pre-service programs and language teachers in in-service practice should keep themselves up-dated through the globally-oriented means of instructions such as Internet, online discussions, video conferences and far-distance group works. Moreover, teachers imagined identities in pre-service programs should be appropriately determined by teacher educators so that the identities stay in the same line with the globalization and in real practice they do not find the actual practice different from their former identities. The teachers should be aware of the out comings of the effects of globalization and do not imagine their status as superior to students, since students have an access to all perquisites of new modernized tools of language instruction. So, teachers and students must be in mutual relationship and the teaching-learning process will no longer be one-sided. The lat but not the least point, globalization as a social phenomenon, in addition to the above mentioned positive effects, might have negative effects too. The loss of the autonomy of specific states or societies under the effects of globalization is a negative point which was considered in this study. There are, surely, other negative effects, such as the effect of economy and capital on language teacher education which can be studied in further researches.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of Nationalism* (revised ed.). London: Verso.
- Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Koziol, K. Greenberg, J. Williams, L. Niehubs, E. Jacobson, C. 2011. *Internationalizing Teacher Education: A Systemic Initiative*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.umd.edu>
- Li, W and Dan, B, C. 2006. *The Impact of Globalization and the Internet on English Language Teaching and Learning*: Retrieved from [the http://www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu)
- Lunatic, T. 2011. *Globalization effects the English Language Teaching*: Retrieved from <http://titynlunatic.wordpress.com>
- Matriono, E. C. 2007. *The impact of global changes on teacher education: the challenges and opportunities and a vision for culture or peace*. Retrieved from <http://www.docjax.com>
- Sethy, S. S. 2008. *Distance Education in the age of globalization an overwhelming desire blended learning*. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education-TOJDE* July 2008 ISSN1302-6488 Volume: 9 Number: 3 Article 3
- Tonna, M. A. 2007. *Teacher Education in a Globalised Age*. *Comparative Education Review*, 64, no. 1 (2007):178-208
- Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Witt, Jorg. 2000. 'English as a Global Language: The Case of the European Union'. Retrieved from: http://webdoc.gwdg.de/edoc/ia/eese/artic20/witte/6_2000.html
- Xu, H. 2013. *From the imagined to the practiced: A case study on novice EFL teachers' professional identity change in China*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 31 (2013) 79-86
- Zughoul, M, R. 2003. *Globalization and EFL/ ESL Pedagogy in the Arab World*. *Journal of Language and Learning*, Volume 1 Number 2 2003.
