The role of English in our lives has got much importance. English may be a foreign language, but it is international in its significance. It is taken as a common language, for all parts of the world today. The importance of English language in our lives is as firstly, it is spoken, read or understood in most parts of the world. Due to this language, we can belong to whole world as well as to our own country.

According to research by the British Council, "English has official or special status in at least seventy-five countries with a total population of over two billion. English is spoken as a native
language by around 375 million and as a second language by around 375 million speakers in the world. Speakers of English as a second language will soon outnumber those who speak it as a first language. Around 750 million people are believed to speak English as a foreign language. One out of four of the world’s population speaks English to some level of competence. Demand from the other three-quarters is increasing." [1]

English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, diplomacy, sport, international competitions, pop music and advertising.

Wherever you go you are expected to speak at least intermediate English, whether it is a job or university applications or participation in international and non-international conferences. 21st century is a century of globalization and communication. There more than 42 thousand language around the world. Obviously it is impossible to know all of them that is why it is so important that people can communicate through one single international language. It’s also important to point out that most of the world literature of all genres and areas of study is written in English. You know English; you get those books and gain as much information as you want.

As we know, English is an official and widely spoken language in many countries, which include Great Britain, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Those are the countries that lead today’s democracy, science, economics, technology, etc, which makes English language even more important and worth to learn.

**History of English language**

**The Anglo-Saxon Settlements**

It’s never easy to pinpoint exactly when a specific language began, but in the case of English we can at least say that there is little sense in speaking of the English language as a separate entity before the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain. Little is known of this period with any certainty, but we do know that Germanic invaders came and settled in Britain from the north-western coastline of continental Europe in the fifth and sixth centuries. The invaders all spoke a language that was Germanic (related to what emerged as Dutch, Frisian, German and the Scandinavian languages, and to Gothic), but we'll probably never know how different their speech was from that of their continental neighbors. However it is fairly certain that many of the settlers would have spoken in exactly the same way as some of their north European neighbors, and that not all of the settlers would have spoken in the same way.

The reason that we know so little about the linguistic situation in this period is because we do not have much in the way of written records from any of the Germanic languages of north-western Europe until several centuries later. When Old English writings begin to appear in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries there is a good deal of regional variation, but not substantially more than that found in later periods. This was the language that Alfred the Great referred to as ‘English’ in the ninth century.

The Celts were already resident in Britain when the Anglo-Saxons arrived, but there are few obvious traces of their language in English today. Some scholars have suggested that the Celtic tongue might have had an underlying influence on the grammatical development of English, particularly in some parts of the country, but this is highly speculative. The number of loanwords known for certain to have entered Old English from this source is very small. Those that survive in modern English include brock (badger), and coomb a type of valley, alongside many place names.

**The Scandinavian Settlements**

The next invaders were the Norsemen. From the middle of the ninth century large numbers of Norse invaders settled in Britain, particularly in northern and eastern areas, and in the eleventh century the whole of England had a Danish king, Canute. The distinct North Germanic speech of the Norsemen had great influence on English, most obviously seen in the words that English has borrowed from this source. These include some very basic words such as *take* and even grammatical words such as *they*. The common Germanic base of the two languages meant that there were still many similarities between Old English and the language of the invaders. Some words, for example *give*, perhaps show a kind of hybridization with some spellings going back to Old English.
and others being Norse in origin. However, the resemblances between the two languages are so
great that in many cases it is impossible to be sure of the exact ancestry of a particular word or
spelling. However, much of the influence of Norse, including the vast majority of the loanwords,
does not appear in written English until after the next great historical and cultural upheaval, the
Norman Conquest. [2]

1066 and after

The centuries after the Norman Conquest witnessed enormous changes in the English
language. In the course of what is called the Middle English period, the fairly rich inflectional
system of Old English broke down. It was replaced by what is broadly speaking, the same system
English has today, which unlike Old English makes very little use of distinctive word endings in the
grammar of the language. The vocabulary of English also changed enormously, with tremendous
numbers of borrowings from French and Latin, in addition to the Scandinavian loanwords already
mentioned, which were slowly starting to appear in the written language. Old English, like German
today, showed a tendency to find native equivalents for foreign words and phrases (although both
Old English and modern German show plenty of loanwords), whereas Middle English acquired the
habit that modern English retains today of readily accommodating foreign words. Trilingualism in
English, French, and Latin was common in the worlds of business and the professions, with words
crossing over from one language to another with ease. You only have to flick through the
etymologies of any English dictionary to get an impression of the huge number of words entering
English from French and Latin during the later medieval period. This trend was set to continue into
the early modern period with the explosion of interest in the writings of the ancient world. [2]

Standardization

The late medieval and early modern periods saw a fairly steady process of standardization in
English south of the Scottish border. The written and spoken language of London continued to
evolve and gradually began to have a greater influence in the country at large. For most of the
Middle English period a dialect was simply what was spoken in a particular area, which would
normally be more or less represented in writing - although where and from whom the writer had
learnt how to write were also important. It was only when the broadly London standard began to
dominate, especially through the new technology of printing, that the other regional varieties of the
language began to be seen as different in kind. As the London standard became used more widely,
especially in more formal contexts and particularly amongst the more elevated members of society,
the other regional varieties came to be stigmatized, as lacking social prestige and indicating a lack
of education.

In the same period a series of changes also occurred in English pronunciation (though not
uniformly in all dialects), which go under the collective name of the Great Vowel Shift. These were
purely linguistic _sound changes_ which occur in every language in every period of history. The
changes in pronunciation weren’t the result of specific social or historical factors, but social and
historical factors would have helped to spread the results of the changes. As a result the so-called
_pure_ vowel sounds which still characterize many continental languages were lost to English. The
phonetic pairings of most long and short vowel sounds were also lost, which gave rise to many of
the oddities of English pronunciation, and which now obscure the relationships between many
English words and their foreign counterparts.

Colonization and Globalization

During the medieval and early modern periods the influence of English spread throughout
the British Isles, and from the early seventeenth century onwards its influence began to be felt
throughout the world. The complex processes of exploration, colonization and overseas trade that
characterized Britain’s external relations for several centuries led to significant change in English.
Words were absorbed from all over the world, often via the languages of other trading and imperial
nations such as Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands. At the same time, new varieties of English
emerged, each with their own nuances of vocabulary and grammar and their own distinct
pronunciations [2].

American English
American English is a set of dialects of the English language used mostly in the United States. Approximately two-thirds of native speakers of English live in the United States.

English is the most common language in the United States. Though the U.S. federal government has no official language, English is the common language used by the federal government and is considered the de facto language of the United States because of its widespread use. English has been given official status by 28 of the 50 state governments.

The use of English in the United States was a result of British colonization. The first wave of English-speaking settlers arrived in North America in the 17th century. Since then, American English has been influenced by the languages of the Native American population, the languages of European and non-European colonists, immigrants and neighbors, and the languages of slaves from West Africa.

Compared to English as spoken in England, North American English is more homogeneous. Some distinctive accents can be found on the East Coast (for example, in eastern New England and New York City), partly because these areas were in close contact with England and imitated prestigious varieties of British English at a time when these were undergoing changes. In addition, many speech communities on the East Coast have existed in their present locations for centuries, while the interior of the country was settled by people from all regions of the existing United States and developed a far more generic linguistic pattern. [3]

North America has given the English lexicon many thousands of words, meanings, and phrases. Several thousand are now used in English as spoken internationally.

The History of American English

The history of American English can be divided into the colonial (1607-1776), the national (1776-1898), and the international (1898-present) periods. During nearly four hundred years of use in North America, the English language changed in small ways in pronunciation and grammar but extensively in vocabulary and in the attitude of its speakers.

English settlements along the Atlantic Coast during the seventeenth century provided the foundation for English as a permanent language in the New World. But the English of the American colonies was bound to become distinct from that of the motherland. When people do not talk with one another, they begin to talk differently. The Atlantic Ocean served as an effective barrier to oral communication between the colonists and those who stayed in England, ensuring that their speech would evolve in different directions.

Americans also came cheek-to-jowl with Amerindians of several linguistic stocks, as well as French and Dutch speakers. They had to talk in new ways to communicate with their new neighbors. Moreover, the settlers had come from various districts and social groups of England, so there was a homogenizing effect: those in a given colony came to talk more like one another and less like any particular community in England. All these influences combined to make American English a distinct variety of the language. [4]

Despite such changes, the norm of usage in the colonies remained that of the motherland until the American Revolution. Thereafter American English was no longer a colonial variety of the English of London but had entered its national period. Political independence was soon followed by cultural independence, of which a notable Founding Father was Noah Webster. As a schoolmaster, Webster recognized that the new nation needed a sense of linguistic identity. Accordingly he set out to provide dictionaries and textbooks for recording and teaching American English with American models. The need Webster sought to fill was twofold: to help Americans realize they should no longer look to England for a standard of usage and to foster a reasonable degree of uniformity in American English. To those ends, Webster's dictionary, reader, grammar, and blue-backed speller were major forces for institutionalizing what he called Federal English.

**English words that survived in the United States and not Britain**

A number of words and meanings that originated in Middle English or Early Modern English and that always have been in everyday use in the United States dropped out in most varieties of British English; some of these have cognates in Lowland Scots. Terms such as fall ("autumn"), faucet, diaper, candy, skillet, eyeglasses, and obligate, are often regarded as
Americanisms. Fall for example came to denote the season in 16th century England, a contraction of Middle English expressions like "fall of the leaf" and "fall of the year". During the 17th century, English immigration to the British colonies in North America was at its peak and the new settlers took the English language with them. While the term fall gradually became obsolete in Britain, it became the more common term in North America. Gotten (past participle of get) is often considered to be an Americanism, although there are some areas of Britain, such as Lancashire and North-eastern England, that still continue to use it and sometimes also use putten as the past participle for put (which is not done by most speakers of American English).[3]

Other words and meanings, to various extents, were brought back to Britain, especially in the second half of the 20th century; these include hire ("to employ"), quit ("to stop," which spawned quitter in the U.S.), I guess (famously criticized by H. W. Fowler), baggage, hit (a place), and the adverbs overly and presently ("currently"). Some of these, for example monkey wrench and wastebasket, originated in 19th-century Britain.

The mandative subjunctive (as in "the City Attorney suggested that the case not be closed") is livelier in American English than it is in British English. It appears in some areas as a spoken usage and is considered obligatory in contexts that are more formal. The adjectives mad meaning "angry", smart meaning "intelligent", and sick meaning "ill" are also more frequent in American (these meanings are also frequent in Hiberno-English) than British English.

The value of English language

Despite of not having English as an official language over the USA, the role of English language is very big in this country. Inability of speaking English may cause difficulties in many areas of social life.

The US Supreme Court understands the high value of English language, because the U.S. Constitution is written and implemented in English, and there is no official version in any other language. All major legal materials are in English, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, Presidential speeches, and Congressional debates. All statutes are in English. All judicial decisions are in English. This enormous body of law developed in English over more than 200 years cannot be translated into another language without altering, at least slightly, the constitutional principles themselves. They think that translating 200-plus years of judicial interpretations into a different language would change their meaning. [5]

Australian English

There are 267 languages in Australia (many being Aboriginal languages.) Of those, 234 are living languages, 2 are second languages without mother tongue speakers, and 31 are extinct. The Australian English language is the most common and has a formal style as well as a colloquial style. Australia still has a formal style in writing while it sustains an informal style in speaking. In the history of the Australian English language, the language has its own background when compared to American English. Australian English is younger than American and its history is different and less complex. There has been no Australian Declaration of Independence like in America. However, Australian English has not moved as far from British English as American had in the period. In the greater part of Australia, the vocabulary is still Standard English.

The English language in Australia is distinguished. Australian English is a bit different from other countries that use English as an everyday speech. Australians have their own styles and characters in using the language, vocabulary, pronunciation and accent. In addition, they have their own slang words when they speak in their groups, and women and men also have their language as well. Though Australians speak English, they have their own special words and phrases called strine. Australian Strine consists of words and phrases which have different meanings from other English (like American or British English). It also consists of words that the Australians have either made up theirselves, or they have borrowed from Aborigine words or from slang used by early settlers (Rickard 132-150).[6]

Like most cultures, Australia has its own share of slang words, metaphors, and phrases that distinguish its identity from other English speaking countries.

History of Australian English
It is believed that Australian English begins at the same time of first settlement in New South Wales in 1778. It is known that Australian words emerged in the historical dictionary of the English language in Australia in 1898. There are certain distinctive features of Australian vocabulary in this version. There is some evidence to suggest that the linguistic situation at the end of the nineteenth century was much simpler than it is now. This is due to new influences on the vocabulary, and later, the vocabulary and pronunciation of Australian English had become distinctively different from any model that British English could supply. The words that are commonly used in the Australian language nowadays come from different sources and situations. They are adopted into this language for different reasons. The main two reasons are: the immigration of English people and the accepting of local Aborigines language. [8]

The first English settlers brought over English to Australia. The Australian English language is much more nasal and less clipped than the British English accent. Though many American words and phrases have made their way to Australia, there are still many common expressions typical of the Australian talk.

Examples:

—G'day]] = Australian greeting
—Goodonya]] = —Good on you]] , used to congratulate someone —She'll be right, mate.]] = Used to reassure someone
—Bloody]] = Adjective used before almost anything and everything —Ankle biter]] = Toddler, young child
—Arvo]] = Afternoon [7]

**Australian values in English**

Australia's language reflects many of the Australian peoples' values. For one thing, Aussies seem to take things at their own pace and are more relaxed. According to an article from Boomerangmagazine.com, —Asian and Australian values: How different are they?]] They have this sort-of —happy-go-lucky]] attitude. The Australian attitude is generally more relaxed.

These relaxed attitudes are shown in the slang, metaphors, and phrases commonly used by Australians. Early in the history of the Australian language, people were coming up with ways to say —silly]] and many of the other words and phrases represent the relaxed value as well.

In regards to language in general, the Australian Way of Life website states the following things about values in Australia:

— All Australians can, within carefully defined limits, express and share their individual heritage, including their language and religion.

— Australia values equality of treatment and opportunity, and seeks the removal of barriers based on race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth.

—These principles apply to all Australians, whether Aboriginal, Anglo-Celtic or from non-English speaking backgrounds, native-born or naturalized. Australia seeks commitment from its entire people to their country's interests and future, to the structures and principles of its society, and to the rights of others to express their views and values. [6]

**Australian slang**

The slang in Australia developed from two situations from its past. The first is the discovery of gold in 1851: this led to a change in social status and therefore a change in the nature of popular speech. For instance, the word —digger]] was used to represent someone who searched for gold. Then, it was transferred to the Australian soldier in the First World War. Now, it has been shortened to —Dig]] and it still retains a military application today. Another —gold digging’ word is —fossick]] which was used to represent something when we searched for it. It too has gone through many changes and has been used in the phrase —fossick it up]] or —we fossick around]] and —fossicking]] is still a common, useful term to represent searching. There were many other influences on Australian slang including: the Boer War, the Second World War, the convict days, and the nomad life. In general, the country of Australia has always been a working-class nation and its slang has expanded particularly at times when men were thrown together in large numbers to complete a task or job. As a result, Australian slang tends to be very masculine with ironic humor.
Examples:
Joe = police officer (came from Joe LaTrobe, the governor of the state of Victoria in 1851) Have a single short = to be silly
Splitter = a timber cutter
Steamer = a dish of stewed kangaroo flavored with pork
Cocky = a farmer (derived from cockatoo — a small farmer who — was just picking up the grains livelihood like cockatoos do maize

Australian metaphors and phrases
Since there is a close link between the upper and lower classes of Australia’s social system, the slang is well known to both strata. Metaphors are no different. Australian metaphors have an earth bound quality that tends to confuse outsiders of the culture.
Examples:
Happy as Larry = extremely happy
Bald as a bandicoot = extremely bald
Full as a goog = drunk
Silly as a bag of worms = silly
Rough as bags = extremely rough or crude
All over someone like a rash = said of a skillful contestant or fighter
Like a stunner mullet = stupid
A roll Jack Rice couldn’t jump over = a large roll of bank notes
You don’t have to be dead to be stiff = said of someone who is very unlucky [7]

A few common Australian phrases:
To put the acid on = to bring pressure to bear on, to ask a favor
To put the hard word on = to ask a woman for sexual submission
To argue the toss = to dispute an order or decision
To get off one’s bike = to become violently angry
To crack hardy = to put on a courageous face against misfortune
To go to crook = to complain
To make a box of = to confuse

Conclusion
No English language central authority guards the purity of the language; therefore, many dialects have developed: American, British, Canadian, Indian, and Australian, to name a few. There is no standard pronunciation. But within this diversity there is a unity of grammar and one set of core vocabulary. Thus, each country that speaks the language can inject aspects of its own culture into the usage and vocabulary.

More recently still, English has become a lingua franca, a global language, regularly used and understood by many nations for whom English is not their first language. The eventual effects on the English language of both of these developments can only be guessed at today, but there can be little doubt that they will be as important as anything that has happened to English in the past sixteen hundred years. However, it doesn't matter if you speak American, British or Australian English, in any way it stays single English, which takes an enormously valuable role in today's social life.

The British Councils says — Over two-thirds of the world's scientists read in English. Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English. Eighty per cent of the world's electronically stored information is in English. Of the estimated forty million users of the Internet, some eighty per cent communicate in English, but this is expected to decrease to forty per cent as speakers of other languages get online."[1]

Nevertheless, the world is in transition, and the English language will take new forms. The language and how it is used will change, reflecting patterns of contact with other languages and the changing communication needs of people.
English is divesting itself of its political and cultural connotations as more people realize that English is not the property of only a few countries. Instead, it is a vehicle that is used globally and will lead to more opportunities. It belongs to whoever uses it for whatever purpose or need.

One question that arises about the future role of the English language is whether a single world Standard English will develop. This could result in a supranational variety that all people would have to learn.[9]

However, the future is unpredictable. As David Crystal (1997) commented, there has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English. So, there are no precedents to help us predict what happens to a language when it achieves genuine world status.

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