



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY AROUND THE GLOBE, WITH AN OUTLOOK OF ENGLISH TESTING SERVICES

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### Abstract

*Attainment of English Language competency is very crucial for students, it's an indisputable certainty. It needs a strong foundation to reinforce the activities for deep learning. In brief, the language and communication skills are essential in the corporate environment. However, students need to excel the language skills to overcome the workforce. Likewise, the teachers too have similar concerns about students' future workplace communication skills. With regard to this concern in view, this paper was included with what is language competency, how it is playing its role among the foreign universities and also with an expectation to extend its scope towards language competency tests.*

**Key words:** competence, English, scores, communicate, language, university.

### Introduction

The word 'competence' means the ability to perform something successfully and efficiently. It is the potential of an individual to perform his/her job to generate an excellent outcome. "National training Board" of Australia stated 'competency' as the ability to execute any activity in one's job or function with a desired standard. This criterion involves respectable behavior, intelligence, knowledge and attitude. Boyatzis, Burgoyne, 1989 and Woodruff, 1933 Homby & Thomas, 1989, expounded it as the efficacy of a person to take the complete responsibility to implement or accomplish the assigned project to bring out the best results. Per Charles (1933), competency is a dimension of behavior which relates to a good performance in one's work. Mazlan (1994), it also involves the knowledge, skill and ability possessed by a person in our daily routine.

English language is an intercontinental language used extensively among many countries in the world and it is a fact that about 1,500,000,000 people speak English around the world. In addition, the most frequently used languages in the fields of academic and educational research is, the English language. Chinese and Spanish languages have a number of non-native speakers, yet, English language usage has become more significant not only with a number of NS (native speakers), but also with the highest number of NNS (non-native speakers). For that reason, the English language has become a universal language.

### Global competitiveness

The English Language was well spread all over the colonies, when the Great Britain occupied some countries such as India, Vietnam, Philippine, etc. The only benefit during the British



reign was, the people of some higher circles and their subordinates of these colonies were exposed to English so could acquire to produce while speaking the language alike the most developed English speaking countries used to speak out. But, instead archaic, the English language became widespread, got popularity, and strengthened its roots in the contemporary society. Henceforth, 'Global competitiveness' meant for the capability of the learners to compete with others in various international competitions, fields and businesses alongside the education. Today's corporate people require proficiency in Business English for marketing, banking, finance, and pharmaceutical functions, along with presentation skills, meetings, negotiations and conference calls. In this, 70 percent of the international corporate personnel communicate using their second language, English instead mother tongue as employees are from multiple nations.

Currently, non-native English-speaking employees and students occupied almost all the workspaces and edu-zones. Moreover, the factual estimations disclose that, at present there are 175 million employees working in large multinational corporations. They are working with customers in the marketing field, across the borders of the countries, in the security sector, using English language as a means of communication. A popular survey by Global English exemplifies that, there are 26,000 employees working for global corporations. Among these twenty six thousand employees, 92% of the employees opted for the requirement of English as a necessity for their present professions, whereas only 7% of the employees are confident enough to say that, their Business English is quite sufficient to hold the current positions. Unless there is a bridge language like English, the extensional activities of the global corporations would have been certainly minimized.

### **Lingua Franca**

Frequently seen meaning from the dictionaries of this Lingua Franca, is a language that is commonly used between the speakers, whose native languages are different, say in another way, it's a bridge language. Truly speaking, English borrowed these words from Mediterranean languages during the late 17th century, which means Frankish tongue or Frankish language. Unquestionably, English language is the most widely spoken languages around the world, in general, the usual way of communication is through English in between two nationalities, say, a Dutch and a Finn can use this English language, as a medium of communication between them. And as far as the technology concerned, around 80% of the Internet websites is made using the English language, where the scientists and academicians always rely on these resources, for the genuine information. Furthermore, it is not an impossible thing to get scholarships, and to waive the fee in the universities abroad, with the highest scores in the English language requirement tests. Besides, the official conversations of the international businesses, for example, an Indian Vs. a Thai and in foreign relations summits such as ASEAN, SAARC diplomats meetings, English is the most commonly used medium of language for communication, in the present-day system.



### **English Across the Countries**

Hardly any people of a country learn neighbor language, but in case of English, most of the countries establish educational institutes to learn the English language. These educational asylums witness the importance of the English language around the globe. Though there were more than 300 indigenous spoken languages in the USA, the Americans common language of communication is English. Likewise, the immigrants, and students who would like to visit abroad to work for international companies or study, in the English speaking countries like the USA, Australia, Newzealand etc. need to learn and speak English. The Bologna Declaration in many of the European countries brought a paradigm, teaching through English

The media of Philippine released an argument about the necessity of English language, also supported the statement, 'instruction through English' to emphasize that English language is indispensable to be "globally competitive," in the contemporary era. It does mean that English is essential for the Filipinos to learn, which in turn aids, to communicate with the rest of the world. In Philippine, the literacy rate is 94 percent and 70 percent of the population are fluent in English, making it one of the largest Second Language English speaking countries in the world by holding the rank between 3-6 as the largest Second Language English speaking country. Recently, Japan Times columnist, Amy Chavez during a visit to the Philippines, wrote about how she was impressed that even people who had never stepped outside the country were fluent in English Supporting the call for English-medium schools in Malaysia, Brickfields Asia College founder Raja Singham said that English was a global language, and the country had fallen behind, in terms of global competitiveness due to the language factor.

It is a common economic theory that when the Demand exceeds the Supply, the Production can't meet the requirements. Similarly, the demand of Business English skills exceeded the supply in the present, so, silently the situation alerted the companies to invest in the development of their employees' language skills, because they were just entered' professionals, hence they lack language and communication skills, which are essential to keep pace in their workstations.

Researchers are working on all the fields aiming to provide solutions, when the international companies rely on them. One such example is, the research task between Global English, the customer and Arrow Electronics, a global provider of electronic components and computing solutions. The electronic company suggested that they are going to deliver quality English training online, in 70/20/10 method, across EMEA, as the staff are totally engaged in work. 70% occur through '*on job experience*' with problem solving and other tasks. 20% comes from 'informal learning', such as collaborations, (meetings and discussions), working with role models, getting feedback and self-correction using feedback reviews, observing others and the remaining 10% can be gained through 'formal courses' and programs.

### **English in education**



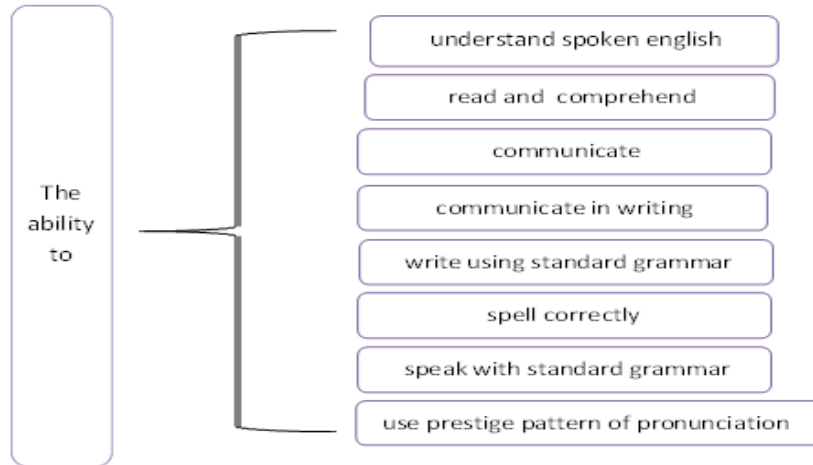
It's not uncommon in almost all the countries where English is a second language subject, to follow English as the medium of instruction while teaching. Thinking that every learner has to learn and use the language through the primary, elementary, secondary, college and the university educations, so that they can interact with anyone with ease and comfort. In order for us, to be part of the growing population of the global education, the teachers need to consider promoting these five (4+1) essential skills/factors among students. Those skills are: reading, listening, speaking, writing, and a sub skill, grammar as well. At present, English language is playing an essential role in the education sector. So, it is assumed that the language will linger to progress and benefits the society in the coming future. In schooling, global competitiveness can be distinguished as the set of abilities and skills that anchor the learners' personal and professional output in their societies and in the nation. Being competitive globally these days, entails emerging global competence. Thus, preparing the learners with a specific set of skills is essential to make them compete for a multinational employment in the global job market.

Competency in any language can't be mastered just by passing the grades, but by practice, it can be outclassed one day. But, wide range of people thinks that it's a cake walk to the native speakers, yet, distinctly, they are far from this statement. Wall Street Journal, in 1974 reported that one third of the applicants in the journalism school of Wisconsin University, couldn't meet the minimum requirements in the test where word usage, grammar, spelling, and punctuation were included. In North Carolina University, 47% of the students, those who applied for the journalism course, failed in a simple high school level word usage and spelling test.

With regard to the above statement, it is an agreeable fact that, those who are interested in pursuing their career in journalism could do well and be more competitive in using language than other majors students. Not the only open admissions students lack necessary skills, but also many regular students attained minimal competence scores during tests, further showing the need of enrollment in remedial English courses, as language skills are needed for effective production of writing, and speaking. Therefore, it led the way for the establishment of 'Great Cities Improvement Program' to undergo the Spoken English Course.

The poor English proficiency leads to misunderstandings, delays and non-alignment across universal procedures. However, bilingual medium of instruction was full-stopped. Johnson, a linguist, supposed that those who speak nonstandard varieties of English are socially handicapped. Jimmy Breslin also alleged that, there is a danger of antiseptic Scarsdale prose, a danger of mixing linguistic statements, which do not solve the problems by ignoring reality. This is same for both Native Speakers of English (NSE) and Nonnative speakers of English(NNSE).In this instance another example, the armed men, who got recruited for the Department of Defense, possessed with lower levels of language reading skill. Thereby, the U.S. Office of Education established a program of 'right to read', where the goal of this program was to achieve 99% of literacy among Under-16 group and 90% literacy achievement for the Over-16 group by 1980. The competencies of adult basic education

program can be achieved by language communication tasks. At this point of view, it is obligatory to recall the list of linguistic competencies suggested by Labov in 1966. They are as follows:



*Fig.1Linguistic competencies of Labov*

Basic competencies taught from primary to secondary level constitutes from handwriting to both manuscript and cursive; spelling with an emphasis on correcting common spelling errors to letter writing (business and personal; composition-use of topic sentences and paragraph). Miller proposed few recommendations about the competencies, he proposed that ‘reading’ comes first in the list of competencies, later reasoning follows. Later, in 1973, Norhcutt suggested a communication tasks for the improvement of language performance. These tasks and activities of language performance sharpens the adult living skills, academic skills, the relationship between behavior and success criteria, goals, knowledge, skills abilities occupational knowledge, thought process among the young learners.

**Essential competencies for English Programs by Walter et al. (1977)**

*Table-1. Competencies essential for receiving communication from others*

Basic understandings and attitudes	Reading, listening comprehensions for daily living. Understand symbols, signs, graphics and auditory representations of words. To understand the purpose and the degree of involvement of the receiver.
Receptive comprehension abilities	To follow directions, ideas, supporting info., perceive relationships. To use language structure, context clues, dictionaries. To relate to previous info, draw inferences, distinguish the facts and opinions. To recognize bias, prejudice, and avoid judgments To gain pleasure, and self-development.



Abilities needed for aural decoding	To identify and discriminate the speech sounds. To recognize words, phrases, and aural communication. To use the pitch, stress, juncture, and tone of speech in gaining meaning.
Abilities needed for visual decoding	To distinguish and identify letters and letter groups in type and script styles. To recognize & use words, phonemic-graphemic knowledge. To use punctuation marks, non-word symbols as aids. To make use of countenance, movements, graphic symbols.

*Table-2. Competencies Needed for Expression to Others*

Understanding and Attitudes	To recognize the content, i.e. important than the mechanics. To understand that, to communicate effectively, one must be willing to acquire the specific skills needed for the performance of speaking or writing tasks. To recognize that, there are levels of usage, value of dialects To agree, the use of standard English for oral, written tasks. To be sensitive, to the opinions of one's readers or listener (s).
Abilities needed for organization and composition	To speak or write for particular purposes such as to seek information, to give directions, to make explanations, to give information, to express feelings and our opinions, to persuade, to make requests, to comply with social amenities, to provide entertainment, pleasure, or comfort. To choose content appropriate to the audience and varied structures and use dialect or standard English suitable to the occasions. To organize ideas in ways like, using sequential development, using supporting details, giving examples or illustrations, showing an effect and use, accurate facts, and valid sources of information.
Abilities needed for oral communication	To speak distinctly and to articulate sounds clearly even in informal situations. To use appropriate volume, pitch, and tone. To use suitable gestures and facial expressions.
Abilities needed for written communication	To write legibly and spell correctly the words that are needed. To use accepted punctuation and capitalization. To use an accepted form of written communication.

*Table-3. Competencies needed for locating information*

Understanding and attitudes	To acquire knowledge and pleasure from outside and list items alphabetically. To understand the sources like a telephone directory, card catalog. To locate information aids in achieving self-determination. To ask for assistance in locating information.
Locational abilities	To use alphabetical order to locate info., and to give specific information. To use aids to find info on tables, indexes, and format clues, maps, and diagrams.



To use aids like search online, building directories, materials, places, or people.
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## **Skills**

Skills are the primary of what all the students need to concentrate in language classes. LSRW skills are the important aspects of English language, to procure competencies and made the students master their subject disciplines together with the social conversations, yet, to be competent one has to overpower the English language with these interconnected skills such as Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. According to the way we perceive, these skills can be divided into two groups, i.e. Receptive (Reading and Listening) and Productive (Speaking and Writing). Receptive forms can be gained with comprehension of reading and listening, in the same way the productive forms can be produced by formulating the sentences, however, it is obvious for a Native English Speaker (NES), to excel speaking and listening skills rather than Reading and Writing. Including a NNES (Nonnative English Speaker) if one is good at one skill, say, writing skill, may be average at another skill. Practically, NES (Native English Speaking) students and ANNES (Advanced Nonnative English Speaking) students use more formulaic expressions. Each skill constitutes its own compartments in it, for instance, Reading skill; it needs comprehension, scanning and skimming instead grammar and spelling. Evidently, receptive skills are vital and can be gained both inside and outside the classroom. Whereas, the productive efforts of the students to frame the sentences and practice it. According to Ellis (2005), “the more exposure to both oral and written language they receive, the more and faster they will learn.” Also, socio-cultural interactions, negotiations are essential for developing proficiency.

## **Language Competence Tests**

By writing assignments, tests, project work, reports, assignments, essays, and examinations the students gain knowledge of English language along with their study streams. Nevertheless, those who would like to study abroad show their language competency by scoring required bands in Language competence tests such as IELTS, PTE and TOEFL, which is very crucial part for the aspirants, though they are the best in their stream subjects. On the contrary, the top-tier universities have own benchmarks of Language competence tests. However, the metrics applied to assess the students, are no way a match to what they learned in their academic programs. The research study of Smollett, Arakawa and Keefer, (2012) about NNES (Nonnative English Speaking) students at OCAD University, indicated that sheltering (streaming) NNES may be beneficial to improve their academic performance, whereas, Matsuda (1999), indicated that, to develop English language competency among NES and NNES students would be more effective when they are taught together with an integrated approach. Since the students are young and matured, they have more sense of consciousness about their career, so they have a strong self-motivation to accomplish both academic success and long-term practiced language attainment. Almost all the top universities maintain strict admission requirements, such as 70% marks of qualified degree,



but then again for NNES students, four recent years of study must be in English and additionally the aspirants have to prove the level of language efficiency through TOEFL (iBT) or IELTS or Advanced Level of English (400) for Academic Success program. There is an availability of various numbers of acceptable English Language Competency tests. The following are examples of such tests:

- IELTS-International English Language Testing System (Academic & General)
- TOEFL(iBT) Test of English as Foreign Language
- OET-Occupational English Test
- CAE-Cambridge Assessment of English(Advanced)
- PTE-Pearson Test of English
- Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP)(only in Canada)
- Michigan English Assessment Battery (MELAB)
- ISC-Indian School Certificate given by CISCE

The scores gained on these tests can be categorized as follows:

- Functional English Language Proficiency Level
- Vocational English Language Proficiency Level
- Competent English Language Proficiency Level
- Proficient English Language Proficiency Level
- Superior English Language Proficiency Level

For the academic purposes the score can be considered only from Competent level to Superior level. Accordingly, a few top-tier universities of world class from various countries like the USA, Canada, Australia, the UK and New Zealand were chosen to get a comprehensive idea of kinds of English language tests, and its availability and acceptability among the countries. Also to analyze which exams and scores are admissible.

Table.1-The USA Universities requirement:

<i>University Name</i>	IELTS-(A)	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
Stanford University	7	95	180	-	-
California University	6	80	-	53	-
John Hopkins University	7	100	-	-	-
MIT University	7	90	-	-	-
Cornell University	7	77	-	Not accepted	-
University of Pennsylvania	7	100	-	-	-

Table.2-Canada Universities requirement:

<i>University Name</i>	IELTS-	TOEFL-	CAE	PTE	MELAB
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	(A_	iBT			
University of Waterloo	7	90	-	63	85
University of British Columbia	6.5	90	-	59	-
McGill University	6.5	86	-	-	-
University of Alberta	6.5	90	180	59	85
University of Toronto	6.5	100	-	-	-
Western University	6	86	-	-	80

Table.3-Australia Universities requirement:

<i>University Name</i>	IELTS	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
Australian National University	7	100	185	70	-
University of Melbourne	7	94	185	65	-
University of New South Wales	7	94	185	65	-
University of Sydney	6.5	85	176	61	-
The University of Queensland	6.5	87	-	64	-
University of Adelaide	6.5	79	176	58	-

Table.4-The UK Universities requirement:

<i>University Name</i>	IELTS	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
Imperial College London	7	100	185	69	-
UCL, London Global University	7	100	185	69	-
University of Warwick	7	100	190	70	-
University of Bristol	6.5	90	-	-	-
London School of Economics	7	100	185	65	-
University of Manchester	7	100	185	66-73	-

Table.5-New Zealand Universities requirement:

<i>University Name</i>	IELTS	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
University of Auckland	6	90	169	58	85
University of Otago	6.5	95	176	57	-
University of Canterbury	6.5	-	-	-	-
Victoria University of Wellington	6.5	90	-	65	-
University of Massey	6.5	90	180	58	-
University of Waikato	6.5	90	-	65	-

**Analysis**

All these test scores valid for only a year or 2 or 3, it varies from university to university. Besides, some universities such as Yale University and University of Chicago have Institutional codes for these tests, where students need to use the Institutional code for the University while applying for the exam, therefore the scores directly reaches the University, so that, the concerned departments decide whether the student is suitable to offer the admission during the applied session. For some other students, the universities offer admission with a clause stating that they need to join the English Language Programs like ESOL in the campus or other competency tests going to be conducted by the university like ELPT (English Language Proficiency Test).

Some world class universities like Harvard University, only prefers some standardized tests such as the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) and the ACT (American College Testing) test scores. Some other universities like The Princeton prefer only Paper-delivered TOEFL. The University of Chicago offers a condition-based seat to those who scored below 27 in speaking module need to attend the English Placement Test and score the band that is required for the admission eligibility. Apart from internet based test of TOEFL, MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology accepts Paper delivered test with a minimum score of 577, also with regard to IELTS, the required scores are different among several departments. The John Hopkins University considers a minimum score of 600 for paper based and 250 for computer based TOEFL tests. In the same way, The University of Pennsylvania accepts a TOEFL score of 250 from Computer based test (CBT) and 600 from paper based test (PBT).

The proof of Proficiency is an exception of some countries, however, it is mandatory for Indian applicants. University of Alberta is the one like UCL of London, provides a number of options for students to get qualified for the English Language Proficiency Test, i.e. it accepts many scores such as of CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment), CanTEST (Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees), ISC certified by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations. A few universities like the University of British Columbia accept the score 60 from CAELA, whereas The University of Edinburgh accepts only the score of SELT (Secure English Language Test). The world class universities of Cambridge University and Oxford university had their Institutional codes, so the concerned departments will decide the entry into university and in Cambridge university the applicants from a group of countries are eligible without assessment or may be eligible to take classes at the Language Training Centre, but will otherwise be asked to appear for a language test.

In relation to the above five tables, among all the aforementioned tests, the highly used tests by the students are IELTS and TOEFL, but at the same time, evidently Pearson stands in third position where the students use in common as formers. Mean is the average of the given values, and it can be calculated using the following formula.



*Mean = Sum all the numbers / No. of variables*

In other words, it is the sum divided by the count. The statistical mean of each country, of the data collected above is as follows:

Mean of the each test among 5 countries:

Table-6-Mean of 5 countries scores

Country Name	IELTS	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
USA	6.83	90.33	(180)	(53)	-
Canada	6.5	90.33	(180)	60.33	83.33
Australia	6.75	89.83	181.41	63.83	-
UK	6.91	98.33	186	68.5	-
New Zealand	6.41	91	175	60.6	(85)

Table-7-World-class Mean:

IELTS	TOEFL-iBT	CAE	PTE	MELAB
5.56	76.63	150.40	51.04	84.16

IELTS exam is conducted for an overall band of 9, and each skill also has the same band. Table-6 shows that the students who got admission in New Zealand and Canada top-tier universities are scoring an average of 6.41(=6.5) and 6.5 overall band subsequently. Conversely, the less average TOEFL- (iBT) score of the students, i.e. 89.83 is accepted out of 120, by Australian top-tier universities. Surprisingly, it is beneficial to the students writing TOEFL exams for Australia and IELTS for New Zealand and Canadian universities. In contrast, the world class education and invention is more in the USA, the UK and Australia, but the acceptable IELTS scores are 6.83, 6.91 and 6.75, which is going to be 7 overall band on adjusting the decimal. If a student likes to join a top university in Australia, he/she has to get 7 in IELTS or 89.83=90 in TOEFL. It is very clear from the following equivalent chart.

TOEFL	IELTS
0 – 31	0 – 4
32 – 33	4.5
35 – 45	5
46 – 59	5.5
60 – 78	6
70 – 93	6.5
94 – 101	7
102 – 109	7.5
110 – 114	8
115 – 117	8.5
118 – 120	9

*Note: A green arrow points from the TOEFL score range 70-93 to the IELTS score 6.5. A red arrow points from the IELTS score 7 to the TOEFL score range 94-101. A green checkmark is next to the TOEFL range 70-93, and a red X is next to the IELTS score 7.*



Taking the PET and CAE tests into consideration, it is needless to analyze MELAB as its acceptance ratio is very minimum when compared to all other four tests. The least acceptable score of PET is 53 from the USA, but only one top university among six, yet it is going to be the luckiest option for USA aspirants. The next comes Canada and New Zealand with a mean of 60.33 and 60.6. Later comes the Australia with a score of 63.83. The highest required score of PET is by the UK universities, i.e. with a mean of 68.5 score. The overall score is 10-90 points for Pearson's test, where all the skills are based on distinct test items, for eg. Speaking test contained the components like loud reading to test pronunciation. CAE is not commonly accepted test in the USA and Canada, whereas its general acceptance as an entry requirement test in Australia, the UK and New Zealand. The CAE mean of New Zealand is 175, whereas for Australia it is 181.41 and for the UK it is 186 in Cambridge Advanced English Test.

Unlike we teach English, we don't compromise learning native language from other speakers, unless the faculty is well trained and mastered the language. Henceforward, it is needful to say, whatever is the study investigation, the existing resources of English language competent learners are very less, unless the aspirants are self-motivated. Also, quality realia and human resources are in a way to say, nil, during teaching, in IELTS coaching centers.

### **Be.... Come(ing) a native speaker**

English is not a language of daily life. So, learning is possible with a self disciplined and organized learning process. Nothing like other subjects, such as mathematics, and physical science, English can be learned only by regular practice. Emphatically, second language learners always miss their common idioms in their speech, unless they would have given a big try to make it habitual.

### **Is English part of Global competency?**

Nowadays international language proficiency is required to sustain worldwide competition and innovations, and inventions, also, to get more knowledge as the days are highly competitive. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) suggests that, by 2020, 40% of all college graduates will come from China and India. Kenneth Rapoza, a senior contributor to Forbs magazine, cites a Mckinsey & Company study showing that, only 13 percent of graduates from emerging countries are suitable for employment in global companies, and that the foremost reason is 'lack of English skills'.

### **Conclusion:**

There is no fault in the language or teachers of English, but it's not always flawless, hence assumed the presence of a distinguishable pull back with grades in comparison with native and national languages. Though, always its not the case and practically it is just impossible to make the population of every country to be literate of the English language, yet, only a section of people, by "global competitiveness", those who are in the employment arena



should make oneself capable to compete with one's peers in the national and international markets, keeping the goal to facilitate that kind of competitiveness through trainings or attending classes whatever they call it, until they get self confidence of what they are using is a standardized version of English.

Increased globalization, blended learning approach in teaching and concept of Business English, increased translations, Social media, and pop culture witness the paradigm shift of an improved percentage of the English language development in the long run and people are still willing to improve their language by honing their competencies through English language. There is a need to reinvent and gain again the neo-notional language skills to succeed the 'global competitiveness' with positive attitude in acquiring the aforesaid language, the English, that goes beyond mastering the four LSRW skills to include high competency to challenge the transnational grounds, where the competitors become the world class challengers. Finally, coming across public communication genres daily, such as media (television, newspapers, internet), social communication, public speaking and debating make the students to utilize both the productive and receptive skills, so that, the achievers shouldn't miss the global trend.

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