

25-november 2025

THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract. The significant impact of the English language on the development processes of countries is increasing day by day. English is one of the most widely spoken and studied languages today, and is a leader in a number of areas, including economics. This article analyzes the role of the English language in the modern world economy, its contribution to the development of the country through its direct and indirect impact on the national income of countries and the human development index.

Key words: economic development, relations between countries, international relations, multinational companies

Introduction. In the 21st century, English is one of the main languages and a driving force in the international economy. English remains a global lingua

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franca, influencing communication in business, education, technology and culture. As of 2023, approximately 1.5 billion people around the world know English as a native or second language, which is about 19% of the world's population. Research shows that the role of English in the global economy and in relations between countries is of great importance.

Literature review

Many scholars have conducted research on the importance of English for development. For example, Reksulak, Shughart, and Tollison (2004)¹, who focused on the relationship between English and economic growth, interpreted English as an economic resource, and knowledge of the language increases labor market opportunities and access to international trade. According to the authors, English is considered one of the factors that increase economic growth. Coleman (2010)² also analyzed the impact of English on the development of developing countries and emphasized that language contributes to economic growth and educational opportunities. According to the author, the benefits of English are manifested only in the context of the local education system and economic strategy.

Research date and methods. The article is based on a descriptive-analytical methodology and, drawing on existing scientific sources and experience, studies the impact of the English language on economic development.

Results and discussion

English is one of the most widely spoken and studied languages in the world today, playing a leading role in international communication, business, education, scientific research, and technology. It has acquired the status of a

¹ Coleman, H., 2010. The English language in development. *British council*, 11, pp.1-24.

² Coleman, H., 2010. The English language in development. *British council*, 11, pp.1-24.

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universal language, becoming a means of overcoming language barriers and enhancing cultural exchange between people from different countries. This process is closely related to globalization and technological development, accelerating modern economic and cultural integration.

1. The importance of English in the world

As you can see in the figure below, you can see the number of speakers of English as a first and second language around the world between 2019 and 2023. In 2019, there were 0.38 billion native speakers of English, 0.75 billion second language speakers, for a total of 1.13 billion people. In 2025, native speakers will be 0.38 billion and second-language speakers 1.08 billion, for a total of 1.46 billion people, a 22.6 percent increase compared to 2019. It shows that the popularity of English is increasing year by year due to the increasing number of speakers.

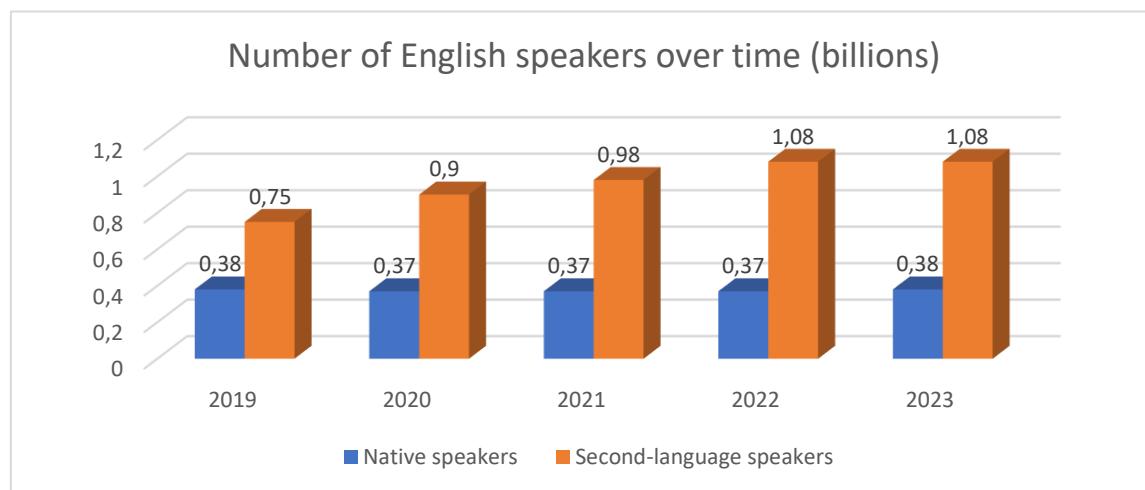


Table 1: Number of English speakers over time(billions)³

Moreover, English is used in many international relations, especially in organizations and enterprises. For example, many international organizations,

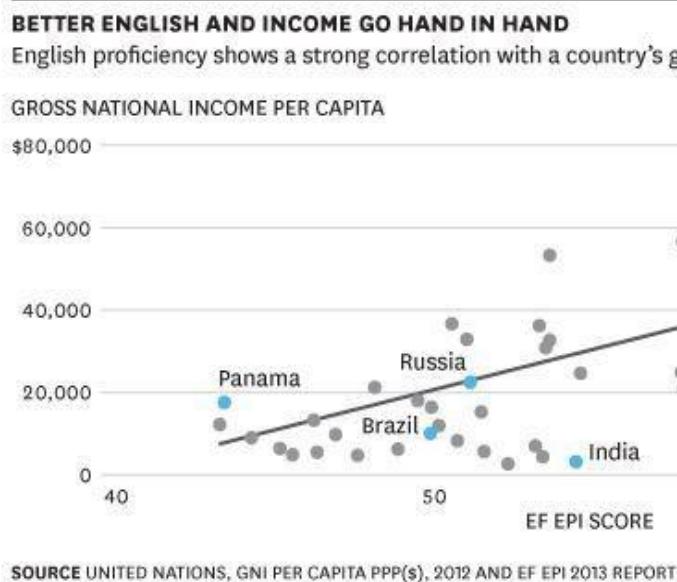
³ Wordstared <https://wordsrated.com/how-many-people-speak-english/>

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such as the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the World Health Organization (WHO), use English as the main working language. Since the establishment of the UN, English has been accepted as the main working language. This language has been used as an official and working language for conferences, meetings, and the preparation of documents.

2. The relations between income and English proficiency

Studies show a direct correlation between a country's English proficiency and its economic performance. Indicators such as Gross National Income (GNI) and GDP increase. The latest edition of the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI), the world's largest ranking of English proficiency by country, found that increasing English proficiency in a country is associated with increasing per capita income. And at the individual level, recruiters and HR managers around the world report that job seekers with good English skills earn 30-50% more than their counterparts in their home country.



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Figure 2: The relations between gross national income per capita and EF EPI⁴

As you can see in the graph (see graph 2), the EF English Proficiency Index shows the national income per capita of countries and, through it, the relationship between the national income of countries and English. Countries with a high EF EPI score indicate that they have a high national income, for example, Singapore. Countries with an average indicator, such as Russia and Brazil, can be seen as having an average income. English may not directly contribute to increasing income, but this language can serve to increase income by expanding international economic relations, technology, education and business opportunities.

3. The correlation between English proficiency and the Human Development Index

The Human Development Index is an indicator that measures education, life expectancy, literacy, and living standards. As you can see in the figure below, there is a limit to this correlation. Low and very low-skilled countries, such as Guatemala, have different levels of development. However, countries with average or above-average skills, such as Norway and Russia, do not fall below the "Very High Human Development" level on the Human Development Index.

⁴ World economic forum <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2017/03/the-link-between-english-and-economics>

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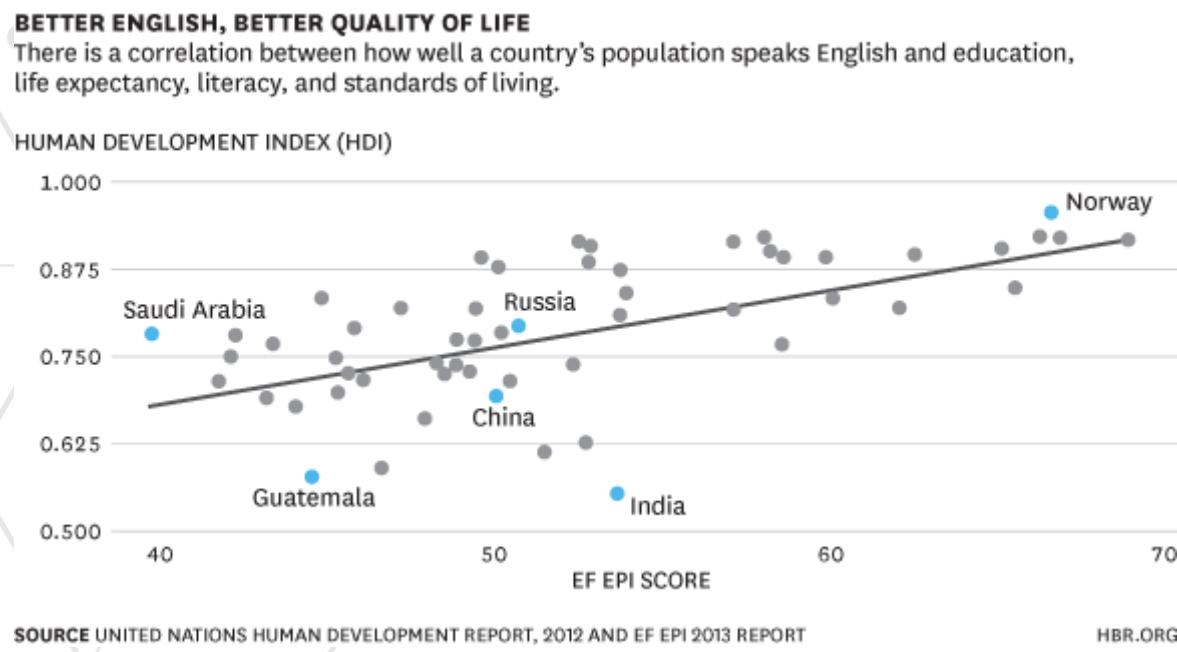


Figure 3: The Indicators between HDI and EF EPI SCORE

English plays an important role not only in relations between countries, but also in areas that contribute to the development of the country. In a relatively uniform sample of 15 EU countries, the average probability that two people chosen at random from two different countries will be able to communicate in English is 22% (taking into account native English speakers and English speakers as a foreign language). This increases intra-EU trade by a quarter on average. English plays a particularly important role, while German, French and Russian, on the other hand, produce weaker and more mixed results.⁵ In multinational companies, communication between employees and managers is also conducted in English. For example, in order to facilitate communication and collaboration between geographically diverse functions and business efforts, a growing number of multinational companies, such as Airbus, Daimler-Chrysler, Fast Retailing, Nokia, Renault, Samsung, SAP, Technicolor, and Microsoft in Beijing, are

⁵ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00181-015-0999-7>

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making English a mandatory corporate language.⁶ The importance of English in the labor market is very high, as there is a high demand for specialists who know English. Knowledge of English provides opportunities to work in international companies, including those listed above, find work in foreign countries, participate in international projects, and helps in professional growth. This skill is an important tool for establishing contacts and gaining knowledge on a global scale. English helps countries develop and companies attract investors and establish economic relations.

Conclusion. In conclusion, since English is the most widely spoken language among other languages, focusing on learning and developing the language directly contributes to the sustainable economic growth of the country. English is an integral part of the international economy and plays an important role in the economic development of countries. It facilitates international business and trade relations, helps to introduce new technologies and innovations more quickly, and also increases national income and human development index by attracting foreign investment and establishing economic ties.

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