

WOULD THERE BE ONE STANDARD ENGLISH AS THE GLOBAL LANGUAGE?

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ABSTRACT

Article intends to investigate whether there is the possibility of having English as a global language used all over the world with one variety only. One variety of English will reduce the miscommunication among people speaking English. The research was conducted by library research by looking at the requirements of a global language, its spread in the world, and the related problems. The results show that English has fulfilled the requirements of a global language looking from its history and the spread of its speakers. However, it has a lot of varieties in either English speaking countries or in the developing countries where English functions as a second and foreign language. The varieties are found not only in the pronunciation, but in the vocabulary and grammar as well. Usually the native languages play an important role in these varieties. All these facts indicate that English might become a global language. However, having one variety of English still needs a long time to go.

Keywords: *standard language, global language, variety, English*

ABSTRAK

Artikel bertujuan untuk melihat apakah di masa mendatang terdapat kemungkinan bahasa Inggris benar-benar menjadi bahasa global yang hanya memiliki satu standar yang dipakai seluruh dunia. Bila hal ini terjadi, maka diharapkan tidak terjadi salah komunikasi antar penutur yang memakai bahasa Inggris. Penelitian dilakukan dengan studi pustaka, meliputi tahapan melihat persyaratan, penyebaran bahasa Inggris serta masalah yang ada dalam pemersatuan standar bahasa Inggris. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa bahasa Inggris memang memenuhi persyaratan untuk menjadi bahasa global, ditinjau dari sisi sejarah, peran, dan penyebaran penutur. Namun, bahasa Inggris memiliki variasi yang banyak, baik di negara tempat bahasa ini dipakai sebagai bahasa asli, maupun di negara tempat bahasa Inggris dipakai sebagai bahasa kedua ataupun bahasa asing. Variasi bisa terjadi pada kosakata, tata bahasa, maupun pengucapan. Biasanya, bahasa asli setempat akan mempengaruhi bahasa Inggris dan menambah variasi baru di negara tersebut. Hal ini akan menyulitkan bahasa ini untuk memiliki satu standar saja. Di samping itu, masih ada juga penolakan terhadap pemakaian bahasa Inggris sehingga nampaknya keinginan untuk mencapai satu standar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa global masih memerlukan waktu.

Kata kunci: *standar bahasa, bahasa global, variasi, bahasa Inggris*

INTRODUCTION

As we know that English has been widely used in the world in almost all fields and this fact has encouraged people to learn English more and more in order to be able to communicate with all people in the world. However, there are a lot of different kinds of people in the world; some of them have English as their first language, second language or foreign language. The ones who learn English as their second and foreign language have their own first language and culture as well as various conditions which may influence them in learning English. Theoretically, if they are able to communicate in English, there should be no misunderstanding among the speakers and the hearers. However due to the backgrounds mentioned above, there might still be some possibilities to have misunderstanding and miscommunication. Here is one example of the misunderstanding taken from Gorlach (1998:53) about Australian English in Britain:

The Australian who arrives in Britain and has to go to hospital for immediate treatment. His first words to the doctor were understood as "I came here to die."

From the example, it is clearly seen that the misunderstanding is caused by the different linguistic features as the Australian pronunciation of the word 'today' is the same as the British pronounces as 'to die'

If between two varieties there is misunderstanding, it is hard to imagine the misunderstanding and miscommunication that might happen among people speaking English using different varieties. In order to avoid such misunderstanding, this paper intends to find out whether there is a possibility that there is only one variety of English in the world and later on there will be only one culture as language and culture cannot be separated.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research is conducted by library research by looking at the requirements of a global language and the fulfillment of English to them, its spread and varieties in the world and the future of English as a global language with its related problems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

English Fulfilling the Requirements as a Global Language

According to Crystal (2003:11), "A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country." In order to clarify the term 'a special role' he also puts forward the idea that the indication of the role is that the language is used in various countries, however using by a large number of people alone cannot make a certain language a global language as its use must be in three areas, as the first, second and foreign language. This thing cannot be achieved within a short time, it needs history. The one that is called by Crystal (1995) as being 'colonial past' meaning that the language has developed from one country to another country for quite a long time. Just to be used by a large number of people is not enough to make a certain language be used as the first, second and foreign language. People use a certain first language because they were born in that country or their parents use that language. The second language can be the language learnt as the obligatory such as in the curriculum because it is the national language or the language that is

considered to be important. In order that people are willing to learn a certain language as the second language or the foreign language, they need motivation either intrinsic such as willing to join the L2 society or as the instrument such as to make their life better. In either intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, people should valorize the language before learning it.

In short, in order to be considered as the global language the phases to be followed are that first, it should have the colonial history; the second, it should be the powerful language meaning that it has influenced the world; the third, it should be spoken by people as the first, second and foreign language meaning that it is valorized by the people so that they would learn it (Crystal: 2003; Jenkinsz (2003). In the following section we are going to see whether English fulfills those requirements.

The English Fulfillment of the Requirements

The Colonial History of English

Baugh and Cable (1997) told in details the development of the English language since the beginning from the Old English from the occupation of the Romans , Middle English (1150 – 1500) to Modern English 1500 – now. In short, Jenkinsz (2003:5) divided the development of English into two diasporas.

“The first diaspora initially involving the migration of round 25,000 people from the south and east of England primarily to America and Australia, resulted in new mother tongue varieties of English. The second diaspora, involving the colonization of Asia and Africa led, to the development of a number of second-language varieties, often referred to as ‘New Englishes’.

He explained further that in the first diaspora there was a migration from England, Scotland and Ireland to North America, Australia and New Zealand. The settlement in America began in 1607 in Jamestown although the first expedition was the one led by Walter Raleigh in 1584. The spread increased fast to southern parts of America and Caribbean in the seventeenth century because of the slave trade.

In Australia, English came when James Cook arrived there in 1770 and the first settlement was in 1778. The transportation of the 16,000 convicts from Britain and Ireland to Australia in 1852 and the arrivals of a large number of people from London and the south-east made a new history of English there. In New Zealand, there were three groups of immigrants coming; the first was in 1840s and 1850s from Britain, 1860s from Australia and Ireland, and in 1870-1855 from UK.

In the second diaspora, English is transported to Asia and Africa. In West Africa, the spread of English was made ‘successful’ during the British slave trade in Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon in which English functioned as a lingua franca and therefore at that time some of the pidgin and Creole were developed. While in East Africa, English was spread to Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambania and Zimbabwe by the explorers from 1850 one of whom was the famous one David Livingstone.

In South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan) English began to spread in 1600 when the East India Company began to settled in Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. The event that led English to the peak in that country was the Macaulay ‘Minute’ of 1835 which proposed English as the language of Education..

Stamford Raffles, became the person who contributed a lot in the spread of English in British colonialism in Southeast Asia such as Singapore (1819), Malaysia (e.g.Penang and Malacca) and Hongkong in 1842)

Looking at those fact, it is clear that from the historical points of view English has begun to spread for ages and most of those countries mentioned above, are still using English (in their style) as the second language or even as the official language. However, in order that a certain language function as a second language or official language and even learnt by a lot of people in the world, English must be valorized and the valorization comes from its role in the world.

English as a Powerful Language

Baugh and Cable (1997) and Jenkinsz (2003) and Crystal (2003) mentioned that the power of the language would depend on the power of the people in politics, economy, technology and education. If in those fields, the language used is English, people will valorize it as they will get benefits after learning it. Nowadays it seems in the fields of politics, military and economy, the power is represented by the United States. Crystal 2003,10) stated that, “During the 20th century the economic supremacy of the new American superpower. Economy replaces politics as the chief driving force. And the language behind the US dollar was English.”

Technology in the form of movies, records, and internet are mostly in English. In Education, we can also see that most knowledge resources such as books, journal, articles are written in English. Because of those facts people whose native language is English are considered to be lucky and the non native people are willing to learn English as a second and foreign language.

Speakers of English

English as the native language has spread into the five continents and it has been used as the native language and the second language.

Basically, Kachru (1988:5) divided the Countries using English into three circles. The first called the inner circle includes the countries in which English is used as the native language such as The United Kingdom, The United States, Australia and New Zealand (320 – 380 million). The second circle, the outer circle is for the countries using English as their second or official language such as Singapore, India (300 – 500 million) and the expanding circle such as China, Russia (one billion) in which English is used as the foreign language.

Kachru (1988) made his first circle showing the number of the English speakers in the world as can be seen in Figure 1.

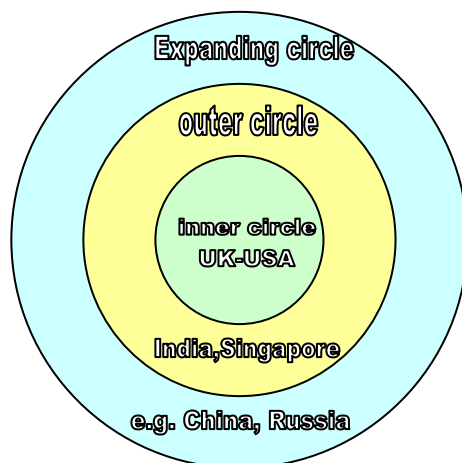


Figure 1 Kachru's Three 'Circles' of English
(Source: Jack C.1983)

Kachru in 1992 revised and developed his circle like based on the development of the population number of people. By using these circles actually Kachru wanted to show two things. The first is the potentiality of the development of English in the future and the second thing that can be found in this circle is that between two circles there is a little overlap meaning that in the Inner circle there are people coming from the Outer circle and also some of the Inner Circle may still consider English as their foreign language. This might happen due to the arrival of the immigrants who still consider that English as their foreign language.

Crystal in (1998: 2003) listed the number of the speakers of L1 and L2 in 76 countries in the world. The data of the number of speakers of English in 1995 indicate that there are 337,407,300 speakers of L1 and 235,351,300 speakers of L2. However, from the data in 2001 (Crystal: 2003) using the same raw data (countries), it can be seen that from 1996 to 2001, the number of L1 speakers is 329,140,800 and L2 speakers is 430,614,500. In general the data point out that during that time the number of L1 speakers decreases by 2,45% or 8,267,100 people. On the other hand, the number of L2 speakers increases highly by 82,78% or 194.183.300 people. The data do not include the number of people using English as the foreign language.

From the detailed data, the number of speakers in some countries would be analyzed in details as the examples. The data (Table 1) only includes 6 countries of L1 speakers and 3 countries of L2 speakers. The choice is done to make an analysis on the increasing of the number of people. The first six countries are selected because they are the most well known of English countries. The countries of L1 are chosen as the speakers as the highest (India), the speakers are unique (Singapore) and the Philipplines is the neutral one.

Table 1 The Detailed Data of the L1 and L2 English Speakers in Territories

Territory	Population		Usage estimate			
			L1		L2	
	1995	2001	1995	2001	1995	2001
Australia	18,025	18,972	15,316	14,987	2,084	3,500
Canada	29,463	31,600	19,700	20,000	6,000	7,000
Ireland	3,590	3,850	3,400	3,750	190,000	100,000
New Zealand	3,568	3,864	3,396	3,700	150	150
UK	58,586	59,648	56,990	58,190	1,100	1,500
United States	263,057	278,059	226,710	215,424	30,000	25,600
			325,512	316,051	229,334	134,250
Philippines	70,011	83,000	15	20	36,400	40,000
Singapore	2,989	4,300	300	350	1,406	2,000
India	935,744	1,029,991	320	350	37,000	200,000
						242,000
Total all data	2,024,614	2,236,730	337,407	329,140	235,351	430,614

(Adapted from Crystal 1998:2003)

From the data above it can be concluded that the total number of L1 decreases by 2,5% (337 – 329) but the total number of L2 speakers increases by 183% (235 – 351). Another thing that can be seen from the table is that the total number of L1 in English speaking countries is outnumbered the total number of L2 in three non English speaking countries as samples). An interesting fact is that in US the number of L1 and L2 is decreasing although the number of the population is increasing. The

increasing and decreasing number can be caused by a lot of things, such as immigrants, the increasing interest and maybe the needs in English so that people began to take it as the official language, the international trade that might need good English. If we use Kachru's circle (1992) the overlapped areas from the outer began to insert the inner circle and from the expanding begins to join the outer one. However, still the data show that the number of people from the English as the native language (ENL) is the smallest while the English as the foreign language (EFL)

The Present Varieties of English in Some Countries

Still regarding World English, Mac Arthur in Crystal (1995) as quoted by Jenkins (2003:19) divided the world into 8 kinds of standard English and each has several varieties. The summary of the circle can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 World Standard English

WORLD STANDARD ENGLISH		
No.	Kinds of Standard English	The number of the varieties
1.	British and Irish Standard English	10
2.	American Standard English	9
3.	Canadian Standard English	7
4.	Caribbean Standard English	8
5.	West, East and South(ern) African Standard (izing) English	12
6.	South Asian Standard (izing) English	7
7.	East Asian Standardizing English	7
8.	Australian, New Zealand and South Pacific Standard English	7

(Adapted from McArthur's Circle of World English in Crystal 1995:111)

From Table 2 we can see that there are at least eight (8) standard English in the world having at least 67 (standard) varieties. The data do not include all the countries in the world such as Indonesia, which has a lot of ethnic languages that can be the source of more English 'varieties' Mac Arthur did not mention whether there are more varieties apart from the ones listed.

In order to know the varieties in one country, this paper would discuss the varieties of the standard English the United Kingdom, in the United States of America, Australia and in Singapore.

The Present Varieties in the United Kingdom

Russ (1982) gives examples of the varieties of English between the Upper Class and the non Upper Class in the field of vocabulary as follows:

Upper Class	Lower Class
<i>rich</i>	<i>Wealthy</i>
<i>bus</i>	<i>coach</i>
<i>sick</i>	<i>ill</i>
<i>table napkins</i>	<i>serviette</i>

Regarding the structure there are some differences between people in the South and in the North (Russ: 31):

South	North
<i>I want it washed</i>	<i>It needs washing</i>
<i>It needs washing</i>	<i>It needs washing</i>
<i>I won't do it</i>	<i>I'll not do it</i>
<i>I haven't done it</i>	<i>I've not done it</i>

In pronunciation, “RP is not entirely uniform and shows variation according to age, region and style.” (Russ 1981:29). It means that actually RP is not really the standard but there are differences in pronunciation between old and young or one region to another.

In the United Kingdom, the dialects are also divided into the English rural dialects and the English urban dialects. The English rural dialects consist of the Southern dialects; Southwestern dialects in which the use of *to be* is just expressed by *be* such as, *I be, we be, you be, they be*; the Southeastern dialects and the Midland dialects. Meanwhile, the English urban dialects are divided into four, the London, the Liverpool, the West Yorkshire, the West Midlands and Norwich.

From the data above we can see that even in the United Kingdom itself, there are quite a lot of dialects and varieties from the standard RP, vocabulary, and grammar. To illustrate the varieties of the English used that might cause problems in communicating, a story from the book *Practice and Progress* (1979:45) tells a person going to London in order to practice his English. However, upon his arrival in London, he found out that he was not able to neither speak nor understand English. Finally in his frustration he asked “Do they speak English?”.

The Present Varieties in America

Out of the eight (8) varieties of the American English mentioned by Jenkinsz (2003), there are four to be discussed briefly i.e. the English of Native Americans, the Hispanic American English, the English of Black Americans, and the Appalachian English.

The English of Native Americans

The English of Native Americans refers to the use of the English language by the Indian people in America. In this case there were two important points to note down. The first is that “Indian English varies from one linguistic group to another” (Toon 1982:218). Thus, practically the number of the Indian English varieties is more or less the same as the number of the Indian ethnic languages. The second point is that “Indian English is considered as a distinctive trait of ethnic pride in contact of outsiders” (Toon 1982:218). This statement shows that the Indian English will sustain in the future but it will not become the standard American English and the ultimate result is that the American English from the English of Native Americans will still have a lot of variation. Examples of English of Native Americans are *Umh, umh poo Ingismon, mee save yow Live, mee take yow to Captain Mosee and he be ver strong Man*.

Hispanic American English

The Hispanic American English is the English having the Spanish and it is spoken in the American Southwest, especially in Texas.

The examples of influences of Spanish can be seen in Toon (1981:223)

- Pronunciation
 - Spanish does not contain the English sound [æ] and [ɪ] both are usually realized as [ə] in Hispanic English. Thus in this variety *Tab* and *tub* are pronounced [təb]

- Grammar
 - Spanish uses multiple negation, for example in Spanish we say (English direct translation) Sarah no talk to no one). In Hispanic English variation, we say *Sarah didn't talk to no one*. The differences between Hispanic English and the American English might cause the difficulties in communication.

The English of Black American

The American Black people used to be considered having the status of slaves however, their status has been increasing and nowadays they are considered as having “full participation” in the society varied not only blue but also white collar occupations. Accordingly, the language or the varieties used is also increasing in status. Black people can speak English (Black English) without being considered having low status. People coming from high class can speak Black English

The examples below is the Black English Pronunciation and Structure (Toon 1982:223)

- Pronunciation
 - The loss of [l] : *toll* = *toe*; *tool* = *too* (homonyms)
- Structure
 - *I talk* – *he talk*. There is no inflection for the third singular person;
 - *we talks* . The inflection s for the plural first singular person;
 - the use of ‘gonna’ as the marker for 233 future in black speech.
 - *I talk* could mean *I have talked/I talked/I talk* (simple present). Thus there is no tenses
 - *You out the game; everybody not black*. There is a deletion of copula
 - *I don't have no money*. The double negative is found (238) : *I don't have no money*

Appalachian English

Appalachian English can be found in southern west Virginia. Some of the characteristics are:

- The sound [θ] becomes [f] e.g. *phone book, a birfday party* or *this ham* []deleted ‘is ham
- It has not the same rules of concord as the standard American e.g. *The cars was*; *A boy and his father was*
- It has deletion → *I think she been down*

Besides the four kinds of the English varieties in America, Baugh (1993) divided America based on regional dialects i.e. Eastern New England, New York City, Upper North, Lower North, Upper South, Lower South, General American, Black English Vernacular.

From the data above, it can be concluded that there are quite a lot of varieties in American standard English from which it is assumed to be widely used. The differences in the varieties may cause the confusion in understanding each other especially when people try to learn it.

English in Australia

According to Gordon and Sudbury (2002:71), Australian English which is often called AusE, “has its origins in dialect mixture and not in a transported English dialects.” It is basically the mixture of south-eastern British English and the varieties were mixed in Britain before transportation.

Most of the varieties are in the pronunciation and in the forming of the new words in according to the situation and the borrowing from the Aborigin. The examples below are taken from Egleson (1982: 417).

e.g. *flying doctor* : this word exists because the distance between one place to another is quite significant so that sometimes a doctor should fly in order to cure somebody. *Sow-cocky* (dairy farmer), *share milker* (a farmer who works a dairy and shares the profit with the owner) : these words occur because of the cattle.

Some examples from the Aborigin borrowing are the words such as *boomerang*, *gunya* (hut). In grammar the AustE has the word *bin* as the marker of past tense, omission of copula.
e.g. *He bin find a big fat one; we just playing, howmany huncles, one little boy trouser*

Singapore English

The English spoken in Singapore called Singlish developed its own characteristics. Platt (1982) reported a research comparing the standard RP (Received Pronunciation) used by the Singaporeans. The research tested 210 words and asked people to pronounce them. The results showed that among 210 words, there were 72 deviations on stress and 69 shifted their stress.

In the lexical items, Singapore English borrows words from other language such as the word *kampong* (village) from Malay, *tokay* (merchant) from Chinese. Sometimes the meaning of the word changes from the original one like in the word *hawker* (original meaning is someone seller of various usually portable goods becomes itinerant seller of various portable goods. In grammar, there is no standard of the copula use (Richards 1983:158).

In the phonology area (Tay (1978) in Richards (1983) found out that there is a shift such as the decrease in aspiration: voiceless stops maybe voiceless stops maybe weakly aspirated in all position e.g pen; replacement of final stop: final stops may be replaced by glottal (map).

The shift also happens in Grammar such as lacking of the marking of past tense, e.g. *My father bring my mother over*; lacking of the third marking of past tense such as *He mix a lost with them*; and the deletion of it e.g. *If by bus – is very convenient*

Singapore English has the morpheme addition 'la' e.g (Richards 1977:163)

- That depend on you *la*, ... that up to you *la*. Cannot *la*, I said no *la*.,

In communication with others, Singapore English differentiates the Rhetorical norm --- Communication form and code switching Richards (1983:13-164) e.g. The words *ride*, "*Good God*", *help* in the communication form become *tumpang*, *allama*, *tolong*. Also, as the people of Singapore consists of varied ethnics, there are a lot of code switching between English - Cantonese, English Mandarin, English – Hokkien (a dialect of Chinese) e.g.

- "*Boy, hopeless. . . . Not original. Damn sia sui* (Hokkien meaning I always lose)
- "*I am very certain that during emergencies he siong gau toa* (Hokkien meaning grown up earlier)

The future of English as a global language

When we look at the fact that English has a historical record of the language of the colonial past, is a powerful language, and has a lot of speakers as L1 and L2 from various countries in the world, indeed that English is a global language. However, the facts above also show that there are a lot of varieties of even the standard English. The standard itself has more than one and within a standard there may still be abundant varieties spoken by native, L2 speakers and moreover foreigners.

In general according to Gorlach (2002:12) ,“ The demand for English will continue, which means that more and more people will acquire broken, deficient forms of English” compared the standard one (American). The examples are as follows:

A small restaurant in Jerusalem offered breakfast comprising “Jim, Chess, English, Better, Bread” (the word Chess is actually Cheese).

However, according to Gorlach (2002:13)

“New forms of communication are likely to create greater tolerance and acceptability meaning that people will be more tolerant towards differences”.

Thus the position of English as the global language is stable.

When talking about the global English, surely it would be idealistic to think about one variety only and hopefully it will result in one culture. The story of the Babel Tower in the past has taught us that with one language and one culture, there will be a very good communication, and with a good communication, people, apart from God’s will, can do anything. However, the question is as there are a lot of varieties in English in the world, which variety becomes the global one or at least is there any possibility that the varieties would be reduced so that one day in the future there is only one global English with one variety.

Regarding the world standard English (one) variety, this paper will see whether the American English would fulfill the requirements of a global English. A language is said to be global if it fulfills three requirements; the language of the colonial past; the language is considered to be powerful or influential and it has countries and people who use it as the first, second and foreign language.

American English was not the language of the colonial past. The function of being a language of the colonial past is to make sure that the language is spread all over the world. In this case, the American English does not fulfill the requirement and neither do the other varieties. Regarding the speakers of the American English, whether it is used as the first, second and the third languages, again there has been no exact data for American English or for the others. The data from Crystal (1998, 2003) do not refer to a certain varieties but English in general. The data from Jenkins (2003) indicates that the American English has 8 varieties but it does not mention the number of the users. Thus in fact, there is no data about the number of the users of a certain variety all over the world.

However, talking about the powerful language as American is a powerful language as the United States of America is a powerful country. Powerful means that the language influences the world by having important roles in politics, economy, education, military, technology. Compared with the other varieties, American English is the one that fulfills this requirement.

Nevertheless, there are still some constraints that slow down the success of the American English to be the world English. First of all, the rejection of the American English which usually come from ‘enemies’ of the United States of America. If the enemy does not respect America even though it is a powerful country, it is likely that that country would not like anything coming from America including the language. The teaching of English is considered to be “linguistic imperialism” (Elyas, 2008). However, in his study of the university freshman students at King Abdul university he found that the students had an opinion that English is not considered as “an indication of an imperialistic purpose of Westernization of their Arabic identity (Elyas, 2008, 28).

Besides, from the educational issue, actually there are two things that can be done; the first is sending a good American English teacher to teach English and the second sending people to study in America. Apart from the financial issues, it is not easy to find a qualified American English teacher because in America itself there is varieties of American English, and among the people who speak American English, not all of them are capable of teaching a language, and the main issues concerning this is how many American teachers do we need for the world? The second issue that sending people to America so that they will learn American English is good, but the place where they study should be

chosen well, otherwise the person will learn and practice the variety of American English. Relying on the English local teachers is difficult because it is assumed that it is not easy to find qualified English teachers and it is more difficult to find local teachers who speak using 100% American English without being influenced by the local language.

CONCLUSION

Looking at the fact that English has been the language of the colonial past, it has been used by a lot of people as their native language, official, second and foreign language from various countries in the world, and nowadays English is a powerful, influencing language, there is no doubt that English has the big possibility in becoming the global language or the World Standard English. However, if we look at the facts that there is more than one Standard English in the world and moreover there are a lot of varieties of each standard whose number might be increasing in the future, it can be concluded that now we have World Standard Englishes instead of World Standard English. The standard American English for the time being is the potential variety to be considered as the World standard in the future, however there are still a lot of constraints such as whether it is accepted by all countries, whether the people would change their language identity, and whether there is a possibility to teach American English to the people all over the world. Considering those facts, it seems that it is unlikely that that we will have only one World Standard English. For the time being, the World Standard Englishes is still hard to achieve, moreover, the World Standard English seems still a long way to go.

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