

English developed remarkably as a global language in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. For the first time, a single language became sufficiently universal that it could be considered a lingua franca for communication around the world between speakers of different languages.

Traditionally the history of the English language has been divided into three main phases: Old English (450 -1100 AD), Middle English (1100 -circa1600 AD) and Modern English (since 1600 AD). However, it appears that Global English represents a new, fourth



phase in which its main use is between non-native speakers around the world. This new phase in the history of English has only just begun and both the linguistic form and status of the language are rapidly developing.

Since the nineteenth century many people have discussed the possibility that the majority of the world's population could speak English. We may be witness to this occurrence in the next few years. Economic globalisation and recent developments in communications technology have both contributed to the development of Global English (and it has helped accelerate both), however the roots of English as a world language lie much further in the past. Some suggest that the first English colonies in Ireland and Wales in the 11th century, or the English-speaking settlements in North America in the 17th century that brought cheap labour from Africa are the earliest origins of Global English. But British colonial expansion in the

19th century contributed the most to the large communities where English is used as a second language: West and East Africa and South and South-East Asia.

New Englishes, as new varieties of English are known, arose rapidly from contact with local languages in these areas and, by the end of the 19th century, there was concern that they were diverging so much from native-speaker varieties of language that English would become a series of related but unintelligible languages, in the same way that Spanish, French and Italian had evolved from Latin. In that way Global English could have become only a celebration of diversity, similar to World Music, instead of the lingua franca it is today.

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Text A

We will start with a section from the Open University website.

The Politics of Global English

The spread of English around the world was historically a colonial process. Does the emergence of Global English represent a form of neo-imperialism, serving the economic and cultural interests of the English-speaking countries - especially the United States of America?

Undoubtedly, there has been an economic advantage for English speakers during recent decades. Individual native speakers have found themselves with a skill much in demand overseas.

Multinationals based in English-speaking countries have found it easier to outsource manufacturing and services to parts of the world with cheap labour. But Global English has not arisen because of a conspiracy between English-speaking governments or multinationals.

Learning English is now seen as being of economic benefit to individuals and national economies in every part of the world.

In fact, the continuing spread of English may no longer be in the economic and political interests of English-speaking countries. Universities across the world are now able

to attract international students who might otherwise have gone to English-speaking countries by teaching their courses through the medium of English.

And in future, monolingual English-speaking graduates will find it difficult to compete, even in their own countries, with job applicants from other countries who speak several languages - including English - fluently, who are more internationally mobile and more experienced in intercultural communication.

For many centuries, Latin served as a lingua franca between educated elites in Europe. Global English may be the new global Latin but just as the use of Latin gradually faded away, so Global English may not prove to be a permanent phenomenon.

It took centuries for Global English to develop and, like Latin, it may take centuries for its influence to decline. The global linguistic future is already looking more complex. Language learners in some parts of the world are already queuing for classes in Chinese, Spanish and Arabic.

Source: <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/english-language/global-english>

Text B

This is part of an article (2010) from the *New York Times*.

As English Spreads, Indonesians Fear for Their Language

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Paulina Sugiarto's three children played together at a mall here the other day, chattering not in Indonesia's national language, but English. Their fluency often draws admiring questions from other Indonesian parents Ms. Sugiarto encounters in this city's upscale malls.

But the children's ability in English obscured the fact that, though born and raised in Indonesia, they were struggling with the Indonesian language, known as Bahasa Indonesia. Their parents, who grew up speaking the Indonesian language but went to college in the United States and Australia, talk to their children in English. And the children attend a private school where English is the main language of instruction.

"They know they're Indonesian," Ms. Sugiarto, 34, said. "They love Indonesia. They just can't speak Bahasa Indonesia. It's tragic."

Indonesia's linguistic legacy is increasingly under threat as growing numbers of wealthy and upper-middle-class families shun public schools where Indonesian remains the main language but English is often taught poorly. They are turning, instead, to private schools that focus on English and devote little time, if any, to Indonesian.

For some Indonesians, as mastery of English has become increasingly tied to social standing, Indonesian has been relegated to second-class status. In extreme cases, people take pride in speaking Indonesian poorly.

The global spread of English, with its sometimes corrosive effects on local languages, has caused much hand-wringing in many non-English-speaking corners of the world. But the implications may be more far-reaching in Indonesia, where generations of political leaders promoted Indonesian to unite the nation and forge a national identity out of countless ethnic groups, ancient cultures and disparate dialects.

The government recently announced that it would require all private schools to teach the nation's official language to its Indonesian students by 2013. Details remain sketchy, though.

"These schools operate here, but don't offer Bahasa to our citizens," said Suyanto, who oversees primary and secondary education at the Education Ministry.

"If we don't regulate them, in the long run this could be dangerous for the continuity of our language," said Mr. Suyanto, who like many Indonesians uses one name. "If this big country doesn't have a strong language to unite it, it could be dangerous."

New York Times

Text C

This is the "abstract" (a summary) of a university research paper (2005).

English in China: The Impact of the Global Language on China's Language Situation

The language situation of today's world is drastically different from that which existed in the past. English has become the global language – it is used more and is more widespread than any other language has ever been. At the same time we are faced with large-scale language endangerment which could result in the extinction of half or more of the world's languages.

While not the only reason for language endangerment, the status of English as the global language has important consequences for all other languages and therefore deserves to be studied carefully. However, exactly what English means for other languages and cultures is far from simple and there is no general agreement on this issue. English has been seen as a destructive language, a pluralistic language and as an irrelevant language.

This thesis explores the issue of global English as it applies to China. English language learning and teaching has been, and by all indications will continue to be, an important part of China's reform and modernisation. China is also an ethnically and linguistically diverse country with 55 minority nationalities and over 80 languages. What does the spread of English mean for China's language situation?

Drawing on data gained through fieldwork and published sources, I argue that English in China is multifaceted, that it has destructive, pluralistic and irrelevant elements. English is now used more and has higher status in China than at any time in the past and this has raised some concerns. However, English is not

displacing Chinese language or culture. English is actually taking on Chinese features in both form and function. The Chinese language, far from being threatened, is currently expanding both in China and the world at large.

Much effort has gone into promoting *putonghua* and there is great interest in learning Chinese in many parts of the world. China's minority languages, like those elsewhere, are under varying degrees of threat. However, English is not the main reason for this situation. At the present time at least it has relatively little presence in minority areas. Despite the fact that it is not destroying China's languages and cultures, English remains a significant issue for China and must be dealt with thoughtfully and carefully, especially among the minority nationalities.

I argue that it is possible for China to acquire English without losing its linguistic diversity. Whether this can be achieved is a question of the resources and political will required to do so rather than any inherent difficulty with speaking two or more languages. To this end, the Context Approach is put forward as a possible way to improve English language teaching and learning among the minorities. In light of the results of this study, I suggest new directions for research, both on language issues in China and in general. I also argue for a new approach to our study of English as a global language and language endangerment.

We need to appreciate the complexities of English on a local level as well as a global level and focus our attention more on how English can be taught to speakers of endangered languages in such a way that does not lead to language loss.

Text D

This is part of an article from an online version of a magazine about contemporary art and culture.

Three artists – one Swedish, one American and one German – are talking together at an opening. The Swede says: 'We know we don't speak English so good.' The American disagrees while unconsciously adding a correction: 'I think you both speak English well!' And the German says: 'Not really, but we don't care because we have an understanding.'

That's no joke – nor is it a jab at these nationalities and their ability to master foreign languages. It's yet another conversation I've overheard where a native English speaker was outnumbered by non-native English speakers. And the non-natives are no longer embarrassed about making mistakes, precisely because they are speaking English primarily with other non-natives. What's important in these conversations is being understood, not being correct.

But what language are they speaking, if not bad English? Jean-Paul Nerrière might say 'Globish' (short for 'Global English'). In 2004 the French businessman wrote *Don't Speak English... Parlez Globish!*, a guide to learning, not the Queen's English or American English, but a simplified English with only 1,500 words to talk with people around the world, whatever their mother tongues. For Nerrière – and followers such as Robert McCrum, author of *Globish: How the English Language Became the World's Language* (2010) – non-native English speakers have developed their own English, which native speakers cannot always understand. With Globish, natives no longer have the last word.

from the article 'Speak Easy' by Jennifer Allen,
frieze magazine, issue 137 March 2011

Text E

This is an account of Braj Kachru's model of World Englishes.

In this model the spread of English is imagined in terms of three Concentric Circles of the language:

- the Inner Circle – a spread from the United Kingdom to countries where native English speakers have settled down in large numbers (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States) where English is a *first language* for many
- the Outer Circle – where English is a *second language* for many (e.g. Hong Kong, India, Singapore)
- the Expanding Circle where English is a *foreign language* (e.g. Germany, Hungary, Poland, China, and Japan)

