

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN THE GLOBAL WORLD CLASS

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### ABSTRACT

World Englishes or varieties of English has reached its significant role in the English teaching and learning processes all over the world since early 90s. Crystal (1999) stated that in the past, British and American English became the standard varieties of English but now their roles have lessened due to the existence of other varieties. , such as Australian English, Singaporean English, Indian English, etc. The fact that English develops not only in its original countries is undeniable. As English teachers, we should not close our eyes in facing this phenomenon. Our students need to be introduced to some varieties of English. Being used worldwide, English seems to get a lot of local influence which makes it appear different from the standard British or American English. Consequently, a mixture between English and the local dialects occurs. Bearing this in mind, introducing varieties of English to our students is a necessity. In an attempt to do so, the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University offers a course called English in The Global World. The course covers 5 varieties of English namely British English, American English , Australian English, Singaporean and Indian English. As part of a Program Evaluation , a study of the students' perception on this course was needed. Its main purpose was to reveal the students' perception on the relevant subjects taught in the English in the Global World course.

**KEY WORDS** : English in the Global World , perception , Varieties of English , Program evaluation

### INTRODUCTION

World Englishes or varieties of English emerged as an important element in the English teaching and learning processes all over the world since early 90s. According to Crystal (1999), British and American English became the standard varieties of English only in the past, but now their roles have lessened due to the existence of other varieties. , such as Australian English, Singaporean English, Indian English, etc. The fact that English develops not only in its original countries is undeniable. As English teachers, we should not close our eyes in facing this phenomenon. Our students need to be introduced to some varieties of English. However, in its development, English seems to get a lot of local influence which makes it appear different from the standard British or American English. Consequently, a mixture between English and the local dialects occurs. For example, Singlish or Singaporean English. It appears as a variety of English which has been heavily influenced by Chinese and Malay. Nowadays, Singlish is popular among the Asians regardless of the distorted grammar and some weird vocabulary. It exists whether we accept it or not. Considering all these facts, introducing varieties of English to our students is a necessity. In an attempt to do so, the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University offers a course called English in The Global World. The course covers 5 varieties of English namely British English, American English, Australian English, Singaporean and Indian English. As part of a Program Evaluation, a study of the students' perception on this course was needed. Its main purpose was to reveal their perception on varieties of English taught in English in the Global World class. Hence, the research questions of the study were formulated as follows.

1. What is the students' perception on different varieties of English?

2. What is their perception on the five varieties of English taught in English in the Global World class?

and the objectives of the study were accordingly

1. To find out students' perception on Varieties of English
2. To reveal the students' perception on the varieties of English taught in English in the Global World class

It was expected that the results of this study could serve as feedback particularly for the teacher of the course entitled 'English in the Global World' and other English teachers as to give them a clearer idea about the students' perception on this course in particular and the present-day varieties of English which have been worldwide spoken in general. Due to time constraint, this study will focus only on the students' perception on the varieties of English taught in English in the Global World class. They are British English, American English, Australian English, Singaporean English and Indian English. The main reason for including these varieties of English in this course is due to the large number of speakers using them all over the world that make them dominant among other varieties of English.

Following Stern (1983) perception is a central part of human individuality which may encompass effective, behavioural and cognitive responses. Perception can be said as a final thought of someone about something. He further classifies perception in language learning into three types, namely:

1. Perception towards the community and people who speak the same language.
2. Perception towards learning the language concerned.
3. Perception towards languages and language learning in general.

It is the first type, i.e. perception towards the community and people who speak the same language which is relevant to this study as culture belongs to a group of people (community) and they certainly speak the same language.

The terms most often used to describe present-day varieties of English are "New Englishes" or "World Englishes" (Nunan, 2003). He further stated that it has become customary to use the plural form of "Englishes" to stress that English no longer has one single base of authority, prestige and normativity.

According to him, World Englishes have the following characteristics :

- Developed through the education system, rather than as a first language of the home
- Developed in an area where a native variety of English was not spoken by a majority of the population.
- Used for a range of functions, sometimes even in formal contexts, such as letter writing and literary works.

Floris (2014) mentioned 4 outstanding facts in the teaching learning of English as a foreign language globally. They are as follows,

- Following British or American styles.
- Preparing the students to be native speakers of English.
- Hiring native speakers of English to be the instructors.
- Preparing accurate, standard English and western-based culture materials that do not prepare the students to speak internationally.

However with the emergence of 60 to 70 New Englishes since 1960s, British or American English is now a minority among the many Englishes spoken all over the world. Hence, it is high time for our students to be introduced to some other varieties of English.

## METHOD

Considering the nature of this study, a mixed method namely Quantitative and Qualitative methods was used (Creswell, 2003). The Quantitative method employed Questionnaire while the Qualitative implemented interviews as the instruments.

### 1. Participants

The participants of the study were students of 2018 batch of The Faculty of Language and Arts. There were 54 students altogether. At the time of the research, they had just finished taking English in The Global World class.

### 2. Instruments

#### 2.1. Questionnaire

A set of questions were formulated in the questionnaire with the options arranged based on the Likert Scale Method. Before the administration of the questionnaire a pilot study was done in order to reveal the drawbacks of the questionnaire and to improve it. .

#### 2.2. Interviews

Some follow up interviews were conducted between the researcher and 5 research participants in order to crosscheck the results of the questionnaire and to elicit more data.

The results of the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics (SPSS 25). The outcome was in the form of Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum scores. They were interpreted and crosschecked with the results of the interviews.

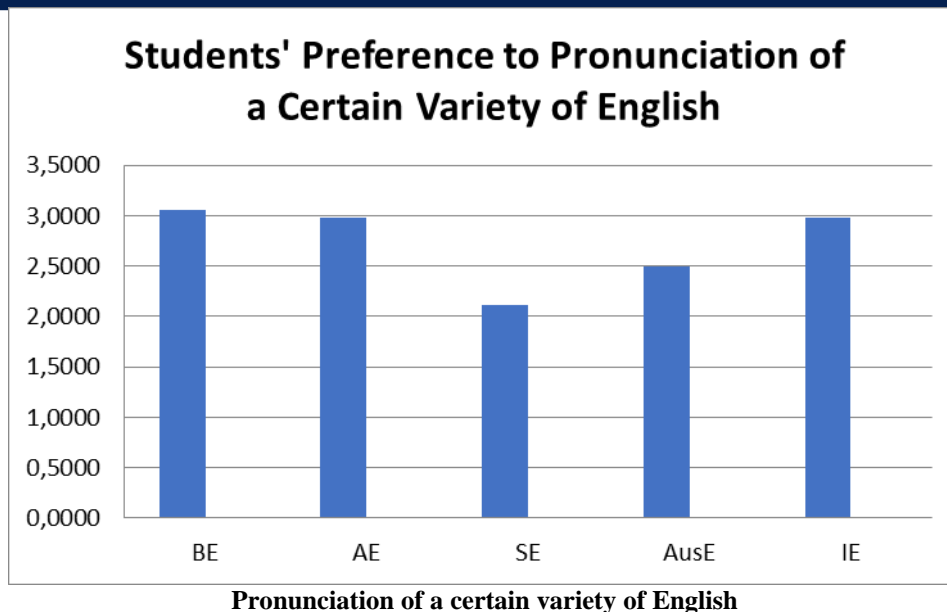
## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research participants were asked to fill out questionnaires which were divided into two parts. First, there were questions on Varieties of English in general and what components they liked about them. Second, there were questions on the 5 varieties of English in English in the Global World class. They were asked their preferences and ranked the varieties of English according to their preferences. The results of the data analysis and the detailed discussion are presented as follows.

**Table 1 Students' preference to the Pronunciation of a certain variety of English**

	<b>BE</b>	<b>AE</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>AusE</b>	<b>IE</b>
Students' Preference to the Pronunciation of Varieties of English	3.0556	2.9815	2.1111	2.5000	2.9815

**Figure 1.**  
preference



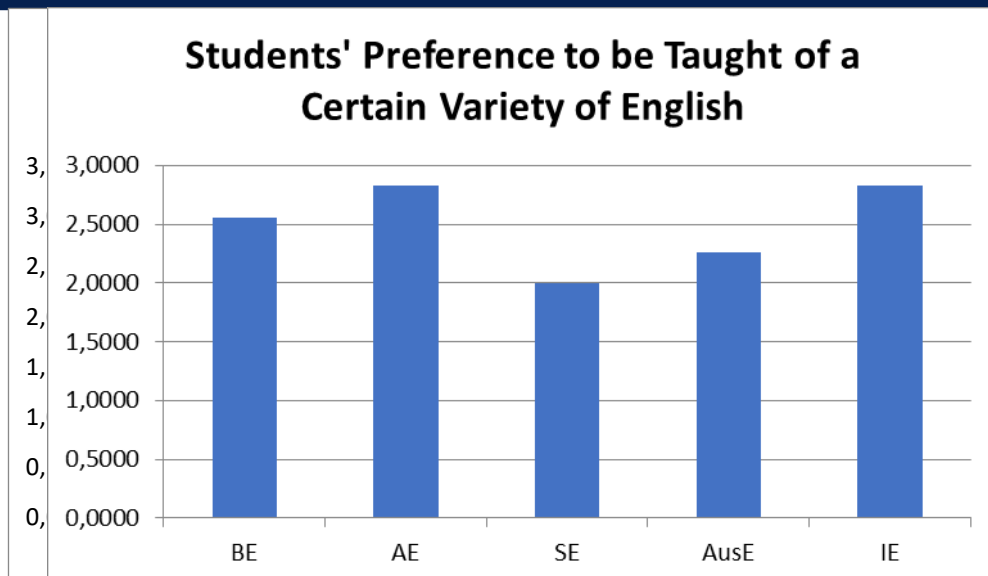
Students'  
to the

The Table and bar chart above discuss students' preferences to the pronunciation of certain varieties of English. It could be inferred that most of them preferred British English pronunciation. This is shown by the mean of their responses which is relatively high for British English (3.0556 out of 4). Following the British English is American English in the second position with the mean of 2.9815. Following American English respectively are Indian English (2.9815), Australian English (2.5) and Singaporean English (2.11).

In addition to those aspects aforementioned, there seems to be some correlation between one's willingness to learn a certain variety of English and his preference toward native speakers of English. Thus, following students' preference to native speakers of a certain variety of English is the results of students' preference to learn a certain variety of English. Here are the results.

**Table 2 Students' preference To learn a Certain variety of English**

	<b>BE</b>	<b>AE</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>AusE</b>	<b>IE</b>
Students' Preference to Learn a Certain Variety of English	2.9074	2.8889	2.1111	2.3333	2.8889



**Figure 2.** Students' preference To learn a Certain variety of English

From the table and bar chart above, it could be concluded that the participants tend to choose British English (2.9074) than other varieties of English. American and Indian English are in the same position as both of them obtain similar means (2.8889). The least preferred English varieties are Australian and Singaporean English with only 2.3333 and 2.1111 as their means.

Another aspect worth considering in this study is the participants' preference to be taught a particular variety of English. Below are the results

**Table 3 Students' Preference to be Taught a Certain Variety of English**

	<b>BE</b>	<b>AE</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>AusE</b>	<b>IE</b>
Students' Preference to be taught a Certain Variety of English	2.5556	2.8333	2.0000	2.2593	2.8333

**Figure 3. Students' Preference to be Taught a Certain Variety of English**

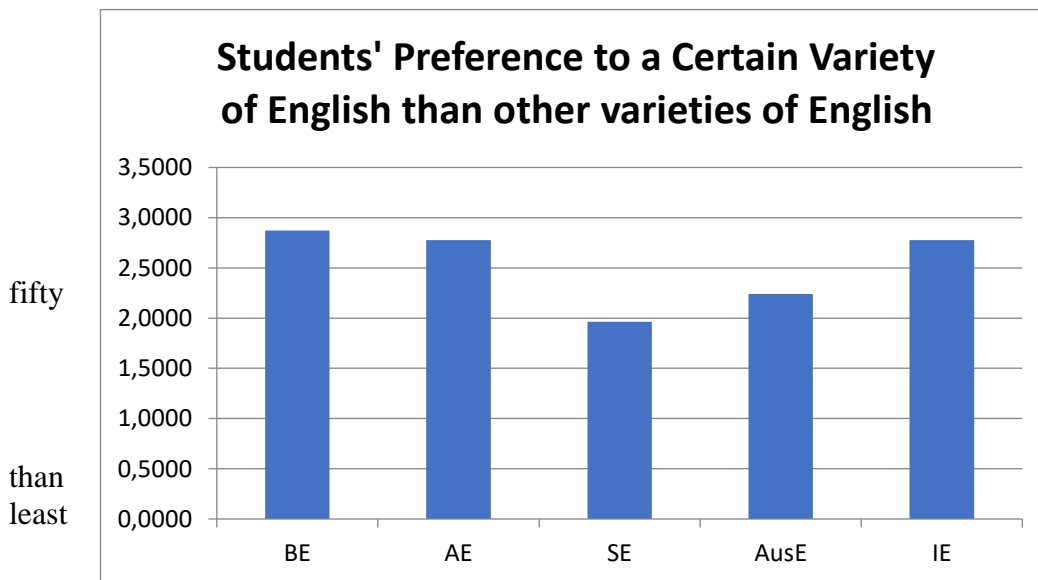
As shown in the table and bar chart above, the participants perceive American (2.8333) and Indian English (2.8333) as important to be taught compared to other English varieties. Having high

motivation in learning a certain English variety might help them master it better. Therefore, this aspect can be very beneficial for a learner. In addition to this, other varieties' means are 2.5556 (British English), 2.2593 (Australian English) and Singaporean English (2.0000).

Another aspect contributing to the participants' preferences to a certain English variety is their preferences compared to other English varieties. As one might like a variety of English, he/she could rank his/her preferences and the results are as follows.

**Table 4 Students' Preference to a Certain Variety of English**

	BE	AE	SE	AusE	IE
Students' Preference to a Certain Variety of English than other varieties of English	2.8704	2.7778	1.9630	2.2407	2.7778



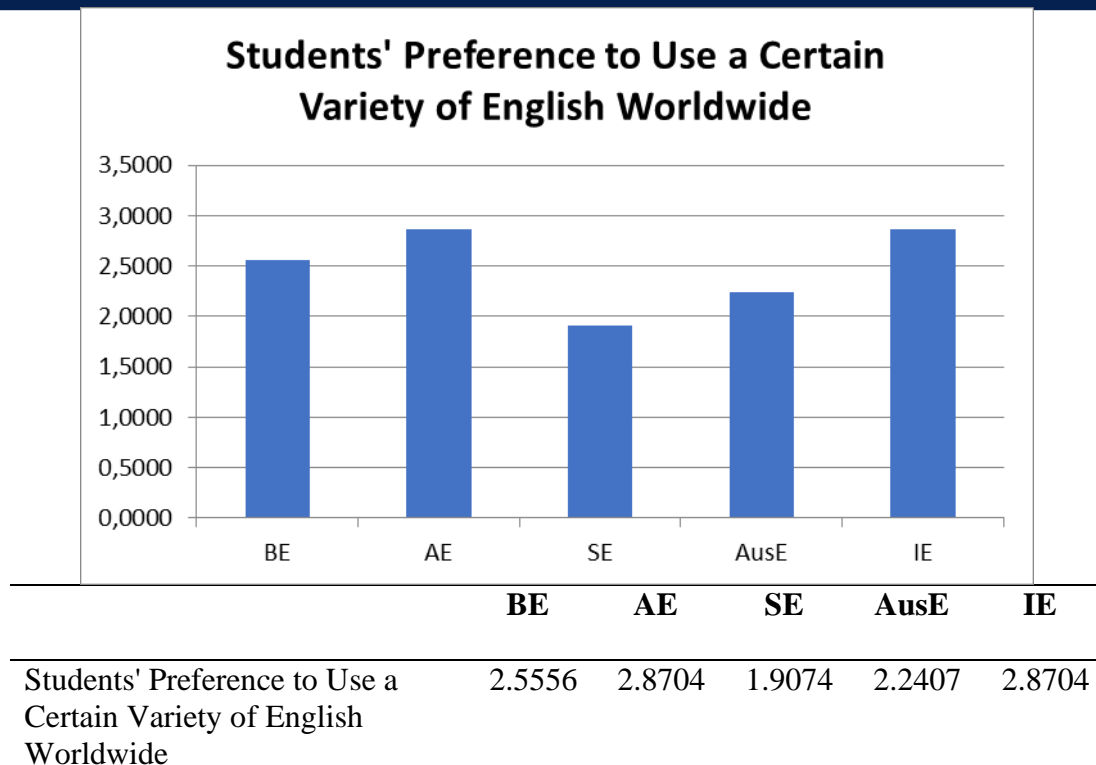
**Figure 4. Students' Preference to a Certain Variety of English**

From the four participants stating their preferences toward a certain English variety the others, the mean is Singaporean English

(1.9630). This means only some of the students prefer to speak Singaporean English. Australian English comes next with 2.2407 as its mean. American and Indian English are considered as more preferable than the first two English varieties as their means are both 2.7778. British English reaches the highest score that is 2.8704 followed by American and Indian English. Thus, British English is the most preferable English variety than the other varieties.

Participants' tendencies to use a certain variety of English become an essential factor worth considering in this study.

**Table 5 Students' Preference to Use a Certain Variety of English Worldwide**



**Figure 5. Students' Preference to Use a Certain Variety of English Worldwide**

The table and bar chart above show students' preferences to use a certain variety of English worldwide. As can be seen, the mean for Singaporean English is only 1.9047. Thus, It can be concluded that this variety of English is the least preferable. Australian English (2.2407) is considered more preferable to be used worldwide. Meanwhile, British English, even though is used in many countries around the world does not occupy the highest position as its mean is only 2.5556. The highest mean goes to American and Indian English with both means fall about 2.8704.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the most preferable variety of English taught in English in The Global World class is American English followed by Indian English, British English, Australian English and Singaporean English consecutively. In terms of pronunciation, the students' best preference falls on



American English followed by British English in the second place. Interestingly, students prefer to be like native speakers of English rather than American English. The spelling of American English as well as the vocabulary also turn out to be the students' most preferable choice. Regarding usage, students on the average prefer to use American English and Indian English while British English comes third followed by Australian English and lastly Singaporean English. The average students agree that the five varieties of English taught in English in the Global World are what they need to learn about World Englishes.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

With the wide varieties of English spread all over the world now, it is important to introduce the students not only to the five varieties of English as taught in English in the Global World class. They need to be exposed to more significant varieties of English. The advancement of technology especially in electronic media can be utilized in obtaining samples of communication in various kinds of English. Students should be encouraged to browse the internet for the purpose of finding them. So far, in the English in the Global World class, the five varieties of English have been exposed to the students through the presentation of movies, talk shows, speeches, seminars and so forth in each variety of English. Based on the results of the interviews, students find such presentation not only very useful but also entertaining.

As for further research, it is suggested that not only students but also teachers can be involved as participants as it will be more enlightening as well as innovative to reveal their knowledge, attitudes and impression on varieties of English used worldwide.

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