

English Language Teachers' Attitudes Toward Philippine English and Its Educational Implications

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Abstract

The study explores English language teachers' attitudes toward Philippine English (PhE) and examines how these attitudes vary based on age, gender, and educational attainment. Given the increasing recognition of New Englishes, it is crucial for educators to acknowledge the legitimacy of PhE while promoting language awareness. However, previous research suggests that some teachers hold negative views toward PhE, potentially impacting its acceptance in educational settings. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, the study gathered data from 50 English teachers at Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU) through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative analysis was conducted using statistical measures to determine teachers' general attitudes and potential differences based on demographic factors, while qualitative insights provided a deeper understanding of their perspectives. Results revealed a generally positive attitude toward PhE, indicating an overall acceptance of PhE as a legitimate variety of English. However, variations in attitudes were observed based on educational background, with those holding higher degrees displaying more favorable views. Findings support previous studies highlighting the increasing recognition of PhE among educators, although some lingering biases persist. The study underscores the need for curriculum development and teacher training programs that foster a more inclusive perspective on English language variations. By promoting a balanced approach to English instruction, educators can contribute to the legitimization and wider acceptance of PhE within academic and professional contexts.

Keywords: Philippine English, Language Attitudes, English language teaching, New Englishes

Introduction

The teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) in the Philippines has long been influenced by the prevalence of both American English (AmE) and Philippine English (PhE), a distinct variety shaped by the country's cultural, historical, and sociolinguistic contexts. The globalized nature of English has led to the emergence of various New Englishes, including PhE, which has become a significant part of the linguistic landscape in the Philippines. Despite its widespread use in daily communication, media, and education, Philippine English continues to face challenges, particularly in the realm of language attitudes. Many educators still exhibit reservations toward PhE, viewing it as an imperfect or substandard form of English. These attitudes could be rooted in the lingering influence of colonial mentality, which tends to valorize American English as the "proper" form of the language.

Previous studies have indicated that teachers' attitudes toward language varieties can significantly impact their teaching methods, student perceptions, and the overall language learning experience (Gustilo & Dimaculangan, 2018). It is critical for English language teachers to recognize the evolving nature of English and appreciate the legitimacy of localized varieties such as PhE, especially given the increasing importance of English in the globalized world. However, studies have also shown that many teachers hold negative views toward Philippine English, questioning its acceptability and validity as a medium of instruction.

This study seeks to explore the attitudes of English language teachers toward Philippine English, addressing the need for a deeper understanding of how educators perceive the local variety of English. It aims to examine how these attitudes vary based on demographic factors such as age, gender, and educational background, which may influence their perceptions of the language. Specifically, the study will investigate whether the attitudes towards Philippine English differ based on the respondents' age, gender, and level of education, providing valuable insights into the factors that shape teachers' views on the language.

Through this research, the study aims to answer key questions related to the attitudes of English language teachers towards PhE, exploring both the general perception and the factors that contribute to variations in these attitudes. By identifying any significant differences based on teachers' demographic profiles, the study will contribute to the discourse on language education in the Philippines and highlight the importance of fostering language awareness in the ESL classroom. In doing so, it seeks to inform future pedagogical practices and policy decisions that embrace the diversity of English varieties, including Philippine English, as legitimate and valuable forms of communication.

In the context of English language teaching, it is essential to promote awareness of the linguistic and cultural richness that different varieties of English offer. Through this study, the researcher hopes to provide a comprehensive

understanding of the prevailing attitudes toward Philippine English, emphasizing the importance of fostering an inclusive and open-minded approach to the diverse linguistic landscape of the Philippines. The findings of this research could potentially guide teacher education programs, curriculum development, and language policy in the Philippines, contributing to a more inclusive and culturally relevant approach to teaching English as a second language.

By addressing the gap in existing research regarding the attitudes of English teachers towards Philippine English, this study aims to offer a nuanced perspective that recognizes the evolving nature of English while promoting a more positive and accepting outlook toward the use of local varieties in educational settings.

Literature Review

Attitude towards the Philippine English Variety

ESL Teachers and Learners

Bautista (2001b) represented the attitudes of selected Luzon University students and faculty toward Philippine English using the same Bautista instrument (2001a). She used convenience samples of both faculty and students from three state universities in Luzon and a private university who were available to fill out the questionnaires. The findings first revealed the participants' acceptance and appreciation of Philippine English, as well as their knowledge of the English variety they speak, which has characteristics that can be identified as Philippine English. Teachers and students agreed that they spoke Philippine English but aspired to speak American or British English, implying that the English they spoke was inadequate. When interacting with fellow Filipinos, the respondents favored the Philippine English variety in general.

ESL Teachers' Attitude

Bautista (2001a) investigated the attitudes toward Philippine English of 88 English Language Department faculty members at the Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University-Manila, and the University of the Philippines in Diliman revealed that the English professors from three leading Philippine universities showed a positive and strong attitude toward Philippine English as a variety. Escalona (2018) found that English teachers at Bukidnon State University have a positive attitude toward Philippine English as a variation of Standard English after administering the same Bautista questionnaire. Alieto and Rillo (2018) investigated the positive attitude toward Philippine English at the secondary level of basic education using variables such as gender, socioeconomic status, years of service, and academic achievement. Still, the results showed a positive attitude towards PhE. The studies mentioned previously about the attitude towards PhE have positive results but in Gustilo and Dimaculangan (2018) study about the attitude of Filipino English teachers toward 21st century Philippine English writing in which part of a larger study which seeks to produce a wordlist of early 21st century Philippine English lexicon and determine the attitude of ESL teachers toward Philippine English variety revealed that the selected ESL teachers in the Philippines have negative attitude towards specific Philippine English words despite the fact that they are alive, and they continue to grow. It is true that some language teachers are still ignorant of the nature of the Philippine English variety and the concept of World Englishes, which may explain their lack of interest in the sociolinguistic reality of Philippine English and their negative attitudes toward particular Philippine English lexes.

ESL Learners' Attitude

Borlongan (2009) conducted a study to selected group of students from a Philippine private university in Manila to look at the language used, attitudes, and identity in relation to Philippine English. In the segment asking about the respondents' languages used and preferred, as well as language attitudes and identity in relation to Philippine English, the questionnaires were adapted from Mann and Pribhai-Illich (2007) and Mann (2007). Instead of using the original domains of use and verbal activities provided by the adapted questionnaires, the domains and verbal activities explored in previous language surveys in the Philippines were used in the segment that asked about the respondents' languages used and preferred summarized by Gonzales and Bautista (1986). The results of the survey showed that English is the language of current use in the vast majority of domains and verbal activities, and even more domains and activities are dominated by English as the language of preference. Hernandez (2020) conducted a similar study on attitudes toward teaching educated Philippine English to Filipino graduate students from a prestigious Teacher Education Institution. The research, which included 95 graduate students in the Philippines pursuing doctorate and master's degrees, found that their attitudes toward teaching educated PhE were generally positive. On the one hand, their trust in using not only educated PhE but also PhE and American English was evident (AmE). There are students who are positive about Philippine English, but there are also some who are less positive about the variety. Wattananukij and Crabtree (2020) investigated the existing attitudes of Thai undergraduate students toward Philippine English based on a comparison of attitudes between students with and without prior experience studying with Filipino teachers. The participants in this study were 20 Thai undergraduate students, 10 of whom had previously studied with a Filipino instructor and 10 of whom had not. A Verbal Guise Test (VGT) and

semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. The findings indicate that, on average, Thai undergraduate students less positive attitude toward Philippine English than in previous studies.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine English language teachers' attitudes toward Philippine English (PhE). The research utilized a structured questionnaire to gather quantitative data, which was followed by qualitative interviews to validate and expand on the survey findings. This approach was chosen to address the limitations of survey-based research by allowing respondents to elaborate on their perspectives. The mixed-methods design provided a comprehensive understanding of teachers' attitudes and acceptance levels toward PhE, following Bryman's (2006) assertion that integrating quantitative and qualitative methods enhances research reliability and depth.

The study targeted 50 English teachers from Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU), including both permanent and temporary faculty members from various colleges. These respondents held different academic qualifications, such as Doctor of Philosophy in English Language, Doctor of Education, and Master of Arts in English, with some still pursuing their master's degrees. The selection criteria ensured a diverse representation of English language educators familiar with language variations. However, the study was limited to faculty members teaching English within the five JRMSU campuses, excluding English teachers from off-campus locations and those outside the English discipline. In addition to the survey, 20 teachers were selected for interviews with the highest and lowest ratings on their attitudes toward PhE.

Data collection was carried out through online survey questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, with respondents voluntarily participating after providing informed consent. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic information, attitude statements, and an acceptability scale based on a 4-point Likert scale adapted from previous studies. The study adopted scoring procedures that categorized responses into favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward PhE. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants to provide deeper insights into their responses. The ethical approval process involved obtaining clearance from the university's research ethics committee, followed by securing endorsements from the graduate school and the university president to administer the study across five campuses.

The collected data were analyzed through a systematic process, including tallying responses, coding, and reverse coding for positive and negative statements regarding PhE and American English (AmE). Statistical methods were used to compute mean ranges, while qualitative data from interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically. This approach enabled the identification of patterns and discrepancies in teachers' attitudes and acceptability levels. The study's rigorous methodology ensured that findings were well-supported, offering valuable insights into how English teachers perceive and accept Philippine English as a legitimate language variety.

Results

Teacher's Profile

In the study, the teachers were surveyed on their profile specifically age, gender, and educational attainment. The purpose of the profiling was to collect the key demographic information of the respondents to support their attitude of the Philippine English.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile in Terms of Age and Gender

Age	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	F	%	F	%	F	%
22-28	6	12.0	18	36.0	24	48.0
29-38	4	8.0	12	24.0	16	32.0
39-55	1	2.0	6	12.0	7	14.0
56-76	0	0	3	6.0	3	6.0
TOTAL	11	100.0 (22.0)	39	100.0 (78.0)	50	100.0 (100.0)

The table shows that 78% of respondents are female and 22% are male, indicating a female-dominated English teaching profession. Nearly half (48%) fall within the 22–28 age group, suggesting many are early-career educators, while 32% are aged 29–38, 14% are 39–55, and only 6% are 56–76. Across all age groups, females consistently outnumber males. This aligns with Zhang's (2011) assertion that gender significantly influences language attitudes across communities and cultures, highlighting its role in shaping perceptions in education.

Table 2. Respondent's Profile in Terms of Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
BS Holder	12	24.0
CAR (MS/MA)	21	42.0
MS/MA Degree Holder	6	12.0
CAR (PhD/EdD)	6	12.0
PhD/EdD Degree Holder	5	10.0
TOTAL	50	100.0

Table 2 presents the respondents' highest educational attainment. 24% hold a bachelor's degree, while 42% have completed master's degree academic requirements (CAR - MS/MA). Only 12% have earned a master's degree, 12% have finished Doctorate academic requirements (CAR - PhD/EdD), and 10% hold a Doctorate degree. The results indicate that most English instructors have pursued graduate studies, with many completing their master's degree requirements—a key qualification in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). Hernandez (2020) found that graduate students in language education generally had positive attitudes toward teaching Philippine English (PhE), suggesting that higher educational attainment may influence language attitudes.

Language Attitude

This section will present the language attitude among English language teachers.

Table 8. Language Attitude among ESL Teachers towards PhE

Statements	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Philippine English is actually mistakes made by people who speak poor English.	3.12	±0.86	Disagree	Somehow Positive
2. If we speak Philippine English, we will not be respected by other speakers of English.	3.28	±0.80	Strongly Disagree	Positive
3. If we use Philippine English, people from other countries will think we are uneducated.	3.18	±0.82	Disagree	Somehow Positive
4. Foreigners do not understand us if we talk to them in Philippine English.	2.90	±0.81	Disagree	Somehow Positive
5. Spoken Philippine English will be internationally acceptable only if it does not show traces of regional pronunciation.	2.78	±0.82	Disagree	Somehow Positive
6. It is to be expected that there will be regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary in Philippine English.	3.54	±0.50	Strongly Agree	Positive
7. Using words from our own culture is a necessity in developing Philippine English.	3.30	±0.67	Strongly Agree	Positive
8. It is natural to have different varieties of English like Australian English, Singaporean English, Philippine English.	3.62	±0.49	Strongly Agree	Positive
9. Filipinos have the right to modify American English to make it suitable for use in the Philippines.	3.10	±0.79	Agree	Somehow Positive
10. The variety of English that should be used in Philippine newspapers should be educated Philippine English.	3.14	±0.76	Agree	Somehow Positive

11. The variety of English that should be used on Philippine radio and television should be educated Philippine English.	3.04	± 0.82	Agree	Somehow Positive
12. Only those Filipinos who speak American English should be hired as English teachers.	3.40	± 0.90	Strongly Disagree	Positive
13. The variety of English that should be taught in Philippine schools should be American English, not Philippine English.	3.00	± 0.96	Disagree	Somehow Positive
14. Newsreaders and reporters who speak American English are good examples of how English should be spoken.	2.80	± 0.88	Disagree	Somehow Positive
15. If we want to be understood internationally, we must use American English.	2.70	± 0.88	Disagree	Somehow Positive
16. The standard of written English in the Philippines has been steadily declining.	2.54	± 0.76	Disagree	Somehow Positive
17. The standard of spoken English in the Philippines has been steadily declining.	2.68	± 0.80	Disagree	Somehow Positive
Grand Mean	3.07	± 0.78		Somehow Positive

The table presents the language attitude of the ESL teachers toward PE. The data show that the grand mean of 3.07 with a corresponding 0.78 standard deviation is interpreted as Somehow Positive. As supported by the study of Bautista (2001a) which revealed that the English professors from three leading Philippine universities showed a positive and strong attitude towards Philippine English as a variety. Also, same result yield in Escalona (2018) as found that English teachers at Bukidnon State University have a positive attitude toward Philippine English. In addition, Alieto and Rillo (2018) study showed a positive attitude towards PhE. However, this finding goes against the findings of previous studies that looked into language attitudes toward PhE. Two (2) of the studies cited in this paper expressed a negative attitude toward PhE. Tupas (2006), for example, reported that young teachers believe PhE is not an ideal model. This belief implies negative attitude of the English variety in question. Second, according to Martin's (2014) study, teachers do not see PhE as a model, but rather note that the GAE is their standard, despite the fact that they are aware that what they are speaking is not the standard that they claim to be the model, but PhE.

One of the highly rated statements is the strong disagreement of the respondents on the negative statement towards PhE *"If we speak Philippine English, we will not be respected by other speakers of English"*, which shows that they have positive attitude towards PhE. As Bautista (2001b) stated that speaking a local variety of English cannot be a basis in gaining respect. They also strongly agree on the positive statement towards PhE which means they have positive attitude towards the variety *"It is to be expected that there will be regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary in Philippine English"*. Teachers believe that regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary in Philippine English are to be expected when compared to Standard American English. Most of these people in other countries, as Strevens in Mahboob and Dutcher (2014) points out, do not speak Standard English on a regular basis. They speak in dialects and varieties that reflect their backgrounds and lifestyle choices in everyday life. They also have positive attitude of the statement *"Using words from our own culture is a necessity in developing Philippine English"*. This means that the majority of respondents believed that in order for Philippine English to develop, Filipinos must use words that are true to the Philippines and its culture. As Constantino (1982) points out, American English ushered Filipinos into a strange, new world in which they began to learn new languages and ways of life and became alienated from their own. Another statement which was highly rated is *"It is natural to have different varieties of English like Australian English, Singaporean English, Philippine English"*. It appears that Filipino teachers, particularly English language faculty, would welcome the introduction of local words into PhE. It shows that most of the respondents strongly agree that it is but natural to have different varieties of the English language. Philippine English is not only a legitimate, but also an institutionalized and standardized variety of English, according to Bautista (2000a). She also stated that no one can deny the existence of Philippine English, as well as other varieties such as Indian English, Nigerian English, and Singaporean English. These are all legitimate English varieties, albeit new ones, and they are just as valid as the older varieties known as British English, Canadian English, and Australian English. Positive statement towards AmE is also highly rated by the respondents and it shows that the respondents in effect were proclaiming their positive attitude toward PhE but were not thereby turning their backs completely on AmE. They strongly disagree on the statement *"Only those Filipinos who speak American English should be hired as*

English teachers” which means they also acknowledge Filipinos who speak other varieties especially PhE to be hired as English teachers.

Clearly, the respondents displayed somehow positive attitude towards PE but somehow hesitant to use the variety. As depicted in the table for they have somehow attitude towards PhE. Nevertheless, they strongly disagree on the statements that were negative towards PhE, strongly agree the positive statements of PhE, disagree about the statements that were favored to the use of American English, and disagree about the negative statement about the English in the Philippines. Despite the fact that they only have somehow positive attitude, still, they tend to embrace the importance of the variety and slowly accepted it as a whole.

The findings corroborate the results from the interview (see Appendix I). The participants clearly displayed somehow positive attitude towards Philippine English. Their responses when they are asked about their thoughts about Philippine English show that they have indeed a positive attitude towards the variety. From the interview, 75% of the participants consider Philippine English as a variety of English, and 33.33% of this 75% even proudly considers it as their own variety of English that has its own features, as stated by the following interviewees:

Interviewee 4: "Philippine English is already on the way to standardizations. It has its distinct grammar and other linguistic levels: phonological and others. This PhE has also local or regional varieties, and these varieties are representing different and distinct cultures."

Interviewee 13: "Philippine English has its own grammatical and lexical features."

The remaining 66.67% declare it as an accepted variety of English, as expressed by the following interviewees:

Interviewee 3: "Philippine English is a variety of English in the Philippine and it is widely known and accepted by some Filipino teachers."

Interviewee 8: "Philippine English is a legitimate, unique and a new variety of English."

Also, the participants are further asked if they have positive attitude towards PhE English. From the interview, 90% of them have a firm positive attitude towards Philippine English. Most of these from the 90% expressed that they have this positive attitude because they believe that Philippine English is “our own variety of English” as stated by Interview 18 below:

Interviewee 18: "Yes. It made me proud that we have our own variety of English."

Further analysis of their answers lead to four specific reasons why they have a positive attitude, and these are: (1) Philippine English will soon be accepted internally; (2) Philippine English is an expression of Filipino identity; (3) Philippine English has its own linguistic features; and (4) Philippine English is not a mistake in contrast with Standard English. Below are the excerpts from the interviewees:

Interviewee 1: "Yes, I am positive about the Philippine English that it will be widely accepted in greater platforms in no time."

Interviewee 4: "Yes, PhE is unique and a way of showing who we are."

Interviewee 9: "I strongly regard that PE has its distinction when it comes to linguistic components. Thus, the acceptability and perspectives of the Filipino speakers should be heightened."

Interviewee 5: "Yes, I do have positive attitude towards PE because I believed that English is English. We as second language speakers, we are definitely linguists and by using own variety of English, I think this is the new norm. Our own variety is not a mistake of the Standard English but as a variety that is diverse and must be locally accepted."

Another reason for having a positive attitude is on communication. For the participants, they responded:

Interviewee 8: "Yes, as I find it comfortable to speak PhE, and I believe that this is something that should be embraced."

Interviewee 12: "Yes, because this will encourage Filipinos to speak in English freely, without/despite being ridiculed by other people."

However, the participants displayed only a somehow positive attitude towards PhE. They are asked if they have negative attitude towards the variety and they answered that they have negative attitude of the issues on academic standards, as expressed by the following interviewees:

Interviewee 2: "My concern is only if the PhE will not be accepted with the more known English society."

Interviewee 6: "... I would also negatively view situations where the standard forms are not acknowledged in any formal converse. This is my view to grant acceptance over the use of PhE in selected situations but also connecting to what is the standard in prescriptive times."

In general, this finding corroborates with the results of the studies made by Bautista (2001a) which revealed that the English professors from three leading Philippine universities showed a positive and strong attitude toward Philippine English as a variety. The same result yield in Escalona (2018) as found that English teachers at Bukidnon

State University have a positive attitude toward Philippine English. In addition, Alieto and Rillo (2018) study showed a positive attitude towards PhE. However, the findings contradict those of previous studies that looked into language attitudes toward PE. Teachers, according to Martin (2014), do not see PE as a model, but rather note that the GAE is their standard, despite the fact that they are aware that what they are speaking about is not the standard that they claim to be the model, but PhE. Tupas (2006), young teachers believe that PE is not an ideal model. This belief implies a negative attitude towards the variety in question.

Discussion

Teacher's Profile

The study surveyed teachers on their profile, focusing on age, gender, and educational attainment, to understand their demographic background and how it may relate to their attitudes toward Philippine English (PhE).

Age and Gender

The findings in Table 1 highlight that the English teaching profession in this study is female-dominated, with 78% of respondents being female and only 22% male. This trend aligns with existing research (Zhang, 2011), which indicates that gender plays a significant role in shaping language attitudes in educational settings. The majority (48%) of respondents are between the ages of 22 and 28, indicating that many are early-career educators. The next largest group (32%) falls within the 29-38 age range, while fewer teachers belong to older age brackets (14% aged 39-55, and only 6% aged 56-76). The gender disparity is consistent across all age groups, reinforcing the notion that English teaching in the Philippines is a profession predominantly pursued by women.

Educational Attainment

Table 2 presents the respondents' highest educational attainment. A significant proportion (42%) have completed their master's degree academic requirements (CAR-MS/MA), while 24% hold only a bachelor's degree. Notably, only 12% have completed their master's degrees, while another 12% have finished Doctorate academic requirements (CAR-PhD/EdD), and 10% hold a doctorate. This indicates that most English instructors have pursued graduate studies, which is often a prerequisite for teaching in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). Research by Hernandez (2020) suggests that higher educational attainment may influence teachers' positive attitudes toward Philippine English, supporting the notion that academic exposure fosters greater appreciation for linguistic diversity.

Language Attitude Towards Philippine English

The findings in Table 8 illustrate that the respondents have a "Somehow Positive" attitude towards Philippine English, with a grand mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 0.78. This suggests a general acceptance of PhE, though some reservations remain. The study aligns with previous research (Bautista, 2001a; Escalona, 2018; Alieto & Rillo, 2018), which found that English teachers in various Philippine universities hold positive views of PhE. However, these results contrast with those of Tupas (2006) and Martin (2014), who reported that younger teachers and some educators still perceive General American English (GAE) as the ideal model for teaching English.

One of the highest-rated statements in the survey was the strong disagreement with the notion that speaking Philippine English results in a lack of respect from other English speakers. This supports Bautista's (2001b) claim that a local English variety should not be a determinant of social respectability. Respondents also strongly agreed with statements affirming the natural evolution of different English varieties, such as Australian, Singaporean, and Philippine English, reinforcing the legitimacy of PhE as a recognized variety. Similarly, the belief that using culturally rooted words is essential for the development of PhE was highly rated. This reflects Constantino's (1982) perspective that the adoption of American English once alienated Filipinos from their linguistic identity, making the evolution of PhE a crucial step toward cultural reclamation.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight that English language teachers generally have a positive attitude towards Philippine English (PhE). The demographic data reveal that the majority of respondents are young female teachers, with a significant number having completed at least academic requirements for a master's degree. These characteristics may have influenced their openness to linguistic variation and their acceptance of PhE as a legitimate variety of English. The respondents' attitudes toward PhE indicate a growing recognition of its legitimacy and necessity in the Philippine linguistic landscape. They strongly disagree with the notion that PhE is merely a collection of errors or that it leads to a lack of international respect. Instead, they acknowledge regional differences in pronunciation and vocabulary as natural and affirm that incorporating cultural elements into PhE is vital for its development. While respondents appreciate the need for educated PhE in media and education, they do not dismiss the role of American English (AmE), as evidenced by their agreement with statements emphasizing AmE's influence.

These findings align with previous research that suggests a shift in perceptions, where teachers acknowledge PhE's value while still considering AmE as a reference standard. However, this study also contradicts some earlier findings that suggested a prevailing negative attitude towards PhE among younger educators, demonstrating that perspectives on English language varieties are evolving.

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