

# English in The BRICS Eclipse: Learning Beyond Empire

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## Abstract

This study examines the changing ideological and pedagogical position of English in the context of BRICS expansion, particularly as the bloc increasingly represents a multilingual, multipolar, and Global South-oriented geopolitical formation. Rather than assuming that English is declining, this article argues that English is being re-semiotized from an imperial centre-language into a negotiated bridge-language for diplomacy, education, scientific circulation, trade, technological exchange, and intercultural communication. Employing a multidisciplinary mixed-methods approach, the study integrates sociolinguistics, World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, linguistic imperialism, linguistic capital theory, critical discourse analysis, and geopolitical interpretation. The data were drawn from institutional BRICS documents, global English proficiency indicators, and public geopolitical discourse from 2024–2026, including the period of Indonesia’s full membership in BRICS. The findings show that English remains a powerful form of linguistic capital, yet its symbolic authority is no longer exclusively anchored in Anglophone Western institutions. Institutional and economic data demonstrate the growing demographic and purchasing-power-parity weight of BRICS, while English proficiency data reveal uneven linguistic capital among member states. Qualitative discourse evidence further indicates that BRICS discourse foregrounds multilateralism, governance reform, development, sovereignty, cultural plurality, and South–South cooperation rather than Anglocentric imitation. This study concludes that English in the BRICS eclipse is not “less English” but “different English”: globally functional, strategically necessary, and ideologically repositioned. The implication is that English education in BRICS societies and partner countries should move beyond native-speaker dependency by integrating linguistic accuracy, intercultural intelligibility, discourse-critical awareness, geopolitical literacy, multilingual comparison, and epistemic sovereignty.

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## Introduction

English in the BRICS eclipse does not signify the end, decline, or disappearance of English; rather, it indicates a process of ideological re-semiotization in which English is relocated within a changing global order. The rapid expansion of BRICS as an increasingly influential Global South forum has transformed the political, economic, and symbolic context in which English is learned, used, and valued. BRICS is no longer merely an acronym for emerging economies, but has developed into a significant geopolitical formation with demographic, economic, institutional, and cultural weight. The inclusion of Indonesia as a full member in January 2025 further strengthens the bloc’s Southeast Asian representation and expands its role in South-South cooperation, global governance reform, and multipolar diplomacy (Government of Brazil, n.d.; Iqbal et al., 2025; Juned et al., 2025). According to BRICS Brazil (2025), the enlarged BRICS formation represents a substantial share of global territory,

population, and purchasing-power-parity GDP, indicating that English learning now occurs in a world no longer organised exclusively around Western-centric centres of authority.

This transformation is linguistically significant because English has historically functioned as a code of mobility, publication, diplomacy, science, labour, and institutional access. The EF English Proficiency Index 2025, which is based on the results of more than 2.2 million adult test-takers across 123 countries and regions, demonstrates that English remains one of the largest measurable transnational language skill regimes in the contemporary world (EF Education First, 2025; OECD, 2025). The British Council has also acknowledged that the role of English in international education and employment is changing, although its global importance remains strong (E'tibor Bekmurod qizi, 2025; Patel et al., 2023; Zhang, 2024). These institutional indicators suggest that the central question is not whether English will continue to exist in a multipolar world, but whether English learning will remain tied to imperial epistemologies, native-speaker dependency, and Anglo American cultural authority, or whether it can be reconfigured into pluricentric, intercultural, multilingual, and critically decolonial competence.

This article therefore explores English learning in the BRICS era as a post-imperial linguistic resource. English is not approached here as a simple object of rejection, nor as a neutral tool detached from power. Instead, it is understood as a negotiated semiotic instrument that may support South-South diplomacy, knowledge circulation, legal cooperation, technological transfer, intercultural translation, and global participation. In this sense, English beyond empire refers to the possibility of learning and using English without reproducing the civilizational hierarchies historically attached to Anglophone dominance. The research questions guiding this study are as follows: in what ways does the expansion of BRICS renew the symbolic economy around English? What linguistic ideologies are embedded in traditional and mainstream models of English learning? How might English education be renovated to support multilingual self-rule as an alternative to linguistic and epistemic dependency?

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in several overlapping traditions: World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, linguistic imperialism, linguistic capital theory, critical discourse analysis, and postcolonial approaches to language and globalization. Kachru's World Englishes framework challenges the assumption that English is owned exclusively by metropolitan Anglophone centres by showing that English exists in plural forms across inner-, outer-, and expanding-circle contexts (Kachru, 1992). Jenkins' work on English as a Lingua Franca further shifts the focus from native-speaker norms to intelligibility, negotiation, and accommodation among multilingual users (Jenkins, 2015). However, these plural and communicative views must also be read alongside Phillipson's critique of linguistic imperialism, which explains how English has historically functioned as an institutional mechanism for reproducing educational, academic, cultural, and economic inequalities (Phillipson, 1992). In this regard, English cannot be reduced to grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, or communicative fluency; it must also be understood as a field in which power, access, legitimacy, and ideology are continuously negotiated.

Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital is particularly useful for understanding why English continues to provide symbolic and material benefits in education, diplomacy, scientific publication, and global labour markets (Bourdieu, 1991). At the same time, Canagarajah's translingual orientation challenges the idea that competence in English must mean conformity to codified native-speaker standards, because multilingual users dynamically move across codes, norms, and epistemic

traditions (Canagarajah, 2013). Pennycook's analysis of English and colonial discourse is also relevant because English can simultaneously enable mobility and discipline subjectivity by concealing colonial assumptions under the appearance of neutrality (Pennycook, 1998). These perspectives are necessary for examining the BRICS context, because English learning in this setting cannot be explained by conventional Anglocentric models alone. It must be read as discourse, infrastructure, ideology, symbolic technology, and geopolitical practice.

Uneven levels of English proficiency among BRICS member states show that English continues to produce internal asymmetries of communicative power. The BRICS context complicates the traditional meaning of English. On the one hand, English remains a form of linguistic capital that structures access to global education, diplomacy, research, and employment (EF Education First, 2025; Gogazeh et al., 2026; Muhammad Zain ul Islam et al., 2026). On the other hand, BRICS discourse does not centre on native-speaker imitation, standard accent, or Anglo American cultural aspiration. Rather, it foregrounds multilateralism, global governance reform, South-South cooperation, development, sovereignty, peace, cultural plurality, and technological exchange. This indicates that English in the BRICS era increasingly functions as a negotiated bridge-language among multilingual and non-Western actors, not simply as an imperial centre-language.

There is therefore a significant research gap between English-language education studies and contemporary geopolitical analysis. Existing scholarship often treats English either as a neutral global lingua franca, a residual colonial language, an instructional medium, or an economic commodity. These perspectives are important, but they do not sufficiently explain how new multipolar formations such as BRICS reshape the pragmatic value, ideological burden, and pedagogical configuration of English learning. Likewise, geopolitical studies of BRICS usually focus on economics, diplomacy, development, and governance reform, while paying limited attention to language education and the ideological repositioning of English. This article responds to that gap by proposing the concept of post-imperial English learning, namely an approach that recognises the continuing functional importance of English while reframing it through multilingual comparison, critical discourse awareness, geopolitical literacy, intercultural intelligibility, and epistemic reciprocity.

The novelty of this article lies in its formulation of the "BRICS eclipse effect," namely the condition in which English remains globally visible and powerful, but its symbolic illumination no longer comes solely from empire, native-speaker prestige, or Western institutional legitimacy. In this framework, English is not removed from global communication; rather, its ideological function is displaced. It becomes a strategic semiotic tool for negotiating development, sovereignty, technology, education, cultural identity, and South-South knowledge exchange. Thus, English learning beyond empire does not mean anti-English education. It means anti-dependent English education: a pedagogy that trains learners not only to speak English accurately, but also to read power, mediate meaning, protect multilingual sovereignty, and participate critically in the reconfiguration of global knowledge.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine how BRICS expansion transforms the symbolic economy of English and how English education can be reimagined beyond imperial dependency. More specifically, it investigates whether BRICS expansion diminishes or changes the ideological function of English as an imperial centre-language, whether learners in BRICS societies and partner countries require critical linguistic competence beyond communicative fluency, and whether English

pedagogy that integrates local languages, South–South knowledge production, and discourse-critical methods can offer an alternative to Anglocentric instruction. In this way, English in the BRICS eclipse is not the end of English, but the beginning of learning after empire.

## Methods

This research uses a multidisciplinary, mixed-methods sociolinguistic approach, drawing on critical discourse analysis, language policy studies, international relations, and postcolonial theory. Its founding methodological assumption is that English learning in the BRICS era cannot be examined merely as a pedagogical question; it must be understood as a discursive, ideational, geopolitical, and institutional phenomenon. Utilising Creswell and Creswell's mixed-method logic, qualitative interpretation & quantitative measurement are inferred together, providing a more holistic explanation than could be achieved individually (Charli et al., 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Fàbregues et al., 2023). Data from 2024–2026 is particularly relevant for this study, as it falls at a major demographic turning point, with the expansion of BRICS, Indonesia joining as a full member in January 2025, and the defence of English, multilingualism, and South–South cooperation intensifying. Rather than a geopolitical assumption based on speculation, Brazil's presidency of BRICS, which announced its formal inclusion, made Indonesia the concrete institutional marker for this study.

Data was collected from the following three interrelated sources. Data is first compiled from official BRICS statements, government releases, reports produced by international organisations, and language-education reports listed for nan 2024-26. Secondly, quantitative data are obtained from the EF English Proficiency Index 2025, which draws on results from 2.2 million adults in 123 countries and regions, making it one of the largest available databases on global English proficiency (EF Education First, 2025; Twersky et al., 2024; Yang & Chano, 2025). Thirdly, linguistic data are derived from a sampling of publicly accessible texts (policy statements, educational reports, diplomatic adjudications & public exchanges on English, BRICS multilingualism and global-scale education). The focus is deliberately on these texts, as the research is not seeking to generalise across all BRICS discourse but to highlight dominant linguistic patterns, ideological frames, and shifts in meaning in use regarding English learning that emerge outside Anglocentric norms.

This qualitative approach can be carried out through critical discourse analysis and corpus-assisted discourse analysis. Using critical discourse analysis, we compare how English is represented as capital, dependence, bridge language, or a geopolitical instrument (Almohawes, 2026; Ato, 2025; Fairclough, 2013). Adapting a corpus-assisted analysis, the paper reveals patterns of lexical families such as "global competence," "multilingual cooperation," "South–South cooperation," "knowledge exchange", and some extracted forms from two adjectives telling us about English proficiency and decolonial education, respectively. The following lexical patterns are analysed through the frameworks of linguistic capital, World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca (Bourdieu, 1991; Jenkins, 2015; Kachru, 1992). In quantitative terms, the study employs comparative description, frequency mapping, and proportional reading of institutional data. Access (1–2 years from target date): BRICS Brazil states that "in 2024, the share of BRICS in global GDP in PPP was about 40% and up to 41% in 2025", suggesting that English learning exists now through the shift of a new economic field (Government of Brazil, 2025).

Data processing consists of five stages: source verification, text cleaning, thematic coding, lexical-frequency mapping and interpretive triangulation. Triangulation compares statistical indicators, institutional documentation, and discourse evidence. Conclusions are drawn only when

there is qualitative evidence from documentary analysis and quantitative suggestions. The paper does not argue that BRICS has supplanted Anglophone power, but rather considers whether the symbolic place of English is changing from an imperial norm to a negotiated communicative infrastructure. The methodological contribution is to consider English learning as both a measurable domain of proficiency and a discursive field that continuously reorganises language, power, identity, and epistemic geographies.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Results***

The results indicate that English in the BRICS era has not declined; rather, its ideological location has changed. The empirical evidence confirms the central argument of this article: the expansion of BRICS does not eliminate English as linguistic capital, but it weakens the assumption that learning and using English must necessarily imply Anglocentric dependence. In linguistic and geopolitical terms, English is shifting from an “imperial norm-language” to a “transactional bridge-language,” functioning as a code for diplomacy, science, trade, education, and interregional communication among societies that do not necessarily regard Anglo-American cultural authority as the central source of meaning. This finding is based on three interconnected layers of evidence: geopolitical-institutional data, English proficiency data, and discourse-semiotic triangulation.

The first quantitative result concerns the institutional and demographic scale of BRICS after enlargement. The official BRICS Brazil documentation identifies the expanded BRICS formation as including Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Iran. Indonesia’s formal acceptance as a full member under Brazil’s 2025 BRICS presidency provides a concrete institutional marker for the bloc’s expansion into Southeast Asia. According to official BRICS data, the expanded formation represents 38.3% of the world’s territory and 49.5% of the global population, comprising countries from America, Asia, Europe, and Africa. This institutional scale is linguistically significant because English learning no longer takes place solely within the symbolic order of a North Atlantic world. Instead, it increasingly operates within a multilingual South–South formation in which Portuguese, Russian, Hindi, Mandarin, Arabic, Amharic, Bahasa Indonesia, Persian, and other languages coexist with English as diplomatic, educational, and economic resources.

The second quantitative result concerns the economic scale of BRICS. Based on the April 2025 IMF World Economic Outlook data reported by BRICS Brazil, the eleven BRICS economies grew by 4.0% in 2024, exceeding the world average of 3.3% and the G7 average of 1.7%. The same source reports that, in purchasing-power-parity terms, BRICS accounted for 40.2% of world GDP in 2024 and was projected to reach 41.0% in 2025, while the G7 share was reported at 28.8% in 2024 and projected at 28.3% in 2025. These figures carry important sociolinguistic implications. English has not disappeared from global communication; however, the centre of gravity around which English circulates has become increasingly multipolar. Consequently, English learning increasingly serves interdependence among non-Western and semi-peripheral economies rather than functioning only as access to Western universities, corporations, or journals.

**Table 1.** BRICS Growth and Purchasing-Power-Parity Portrait

Year	Indicator	BRICS Eleven	World Average	G7 Average	BRICS vs World Gap	BRICS vs G7 Gap
2024	GDP Growth (%)	4.0	3.3	1.7	0.7	2.3
2025	GDP Growth Projection (%)	3.4	2.8	1.2	0.6	2.2
2024	Global GDP PPP Share (%)	40.2	-	28.8	-	-
2025	Global GDP PPP Share Projection (%)	41.0	-	28.3	-	-

The third quantitative result is derived from English proficiency data. The EF English Proficiency Index 2025 describes itself as the largest ranking of countries and regions by English skills, based on test results from more than 2.2 million adults aged 18 and above across 123 countries and regions (EF Education First, 2025). The global average score is 488. Among selected BRICS member states, English proficiency is highly uneven: South Africa ranks 13th with a score of 602; Russia ranks 49th with 521; Ethiopia ranks 65th with 499; Iran ranks 68th with 492; the United Arab Emirates ranks 72nd with 487; India ranks 74th with 484; Brazil ranks 75th with 482; Indonesia ranks 80th with 471; China ranks 86th with 464; Egypt ranks 89th with 458; and Saudi Arabia ranks 115th with 404. The gap between South Africa and Saudi Arabia is 198 points. Compared with the global average, South Africa is 114 points above, Russia 33 points above, Ethiopia 11 points above, while Indonesia is 17 points below, China 24 points below, Egypt 30 points below, and Saudi Arabia 84 points below. These numerical gaps show that BRICS is a multilingual formation in which English functions as a lingua franca, but access to that lingua franca is unevenly distributed across member states.

**Table 2.** BRICS English Capital Portrait

BRICS Member	EF EPI 2025 Score	Gap vs Global Mean 488	Gap vs Top Score South Africa 602	Internal Range Reference
South Africa	602	114	0	198
Russia	521	33	-81	198
Ethiopia	499	11	-103	198
Iran	492	4	-110	198
United Arab Emirates	487	-1	-115	198
India	484	-4	-118	198
Brazil	482	-6	-120	198
Indonesia	471	-17	-131	198
China	464	-24	-138	198
Egypt	458	-30	-144	198
Saudi Arabia	404	-84	-198	198

This unevenness is the key linguistic finding of the study. If English were merely a postcolonial residue, BRICS expansion would be expected to signal its decreasing relevance. If English were simply a neutral global tool, disparities in proficiency would appear only as technical educational differences. The data suggest a more complex interpretation: English remains a stratifying symbolic resource, but its ideological authority is being reorganised. In Bourdieu's terms, English remains linguistic capital because it provides access to valued markets in education, research, diplomacy, and employment (Bourdieu, 1991). However, within the BRICS context, the final authority of this capital is no longer exclusively held by the native speaker. What is required is not native-like imitation, but critical, confident, discursive, and cross-linguistic competence across multilingual institutional worlds.

The qualitative discourse evidence reinforces this interpretation. The BRICS Leaders' Declaration, as reported by the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia in 2025, emphasises strengthening multilateralism, reforming global governance mechanisms, promoting peace and international stability, deepening economic cooperation, supporting sustainable development, and strengthening human, social, and cultural development (Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2025). This discourse differs from late twentieth-century English-learning discourses centred on native fluency, standard accent, or British and American cultural exposure. The dominant semantic clusters in BRICS discourse include governance, cooperation, reform, stability, sustainability, and cultural development. From within this discursive space, English is positioned as a transnational interface for negotiating policy, trade, technology, and meaning rather than as a civilisational blueprint.

The triangulation of institutional, economic, proficiency, and discourse data yields four major findings. First, BRICS is a large and expanding Global South coordination forum grounded in institutional data, rather than a marginal political formation. Second, economic data indicate that the bloc has significant purchasing-power-parity weight and projected growth in 2025, exceeding the global and G7 averages. Third, measurable disparities in English proficiency among BRICS states create internal asymmetries of linguistic capital. Fourth, BRICS discourse is characterised by multilateralism, reform, development, and cultural partnership, rather than Anglocentric cultural imitation. Taken together, these findings point to a clear conclusion: the future of English learning in BRICS societies is not “less English,” but “other English.”

The most original finding of this article is what may be called the BRICS eclipse effect. An eclipse does not destroy the object; rather, it changes the illumination through which the object is viewed. English remains visible, useful, and powerful, but the symbolic light it casts no longer comes solely from empire, native-speaker prestige, or Western institutional legitimacy. Instead, English increasingly mediates Chinese industrial diplomacy, Indian high-technology labour, Indonesian geopolitical pragmatism, Brazilian agricultural and environmental diplomacy, Russian strategic discourse, Gulf economic restructuring, African development agendas, and South–South cooperation more broadly. It remains English, but its meaning becomes more democratic, negotiated, and geopolitically plural.

The first research hypothesis is therefore confirmed: BRICS expansion does not reduce the usefulness of English, but transforms its ideological function from an imperial centre-language into a negotiated bridge-language. The second hypothesis is also supported: learners in BRICS and partner societies require critical linguistic competence because English now operates within contested discourses of governance, development, sovereignty, and epistemic justice. The third hypothesis is partially supported: the data strongly suggest the need for pedagogy based on local languages, discourse analysis, and South–South knowledge production, although classroom-level experimental data are still required to determine direct learning outcomes. These results provide a reproducible baseline for future studies comparing EF EPI country scores, BRICS institutional documents, and corpus-assisted discourse patterns from public texts produced between 2024 and 2026. The evidence supports a novel pedagogical claim: English beyond empire must teach students not only to speak properly, but also to read power, mediate meaning, protect multilingual sovereignty, and participate in the reconfiguration of global knowledge.

## *Discussion*

These results suggest that the central issue examined in this article is not the decline of English itself, but the displacement of its ideological centre. English remains institutionally powerful, globally useful, and pedagogically necessary; however, the symbolic authority attached to English is increasingly being reorganised within a multipolar world order. In this context, BRICS has become too large to be dismissed as a marginal geopolitical bloc. According to official BRICS Brazil data, the enlarged formation constitutes 49.5% of the global population and 38.3% of global territory, with member states spanning America, Asia, Europe, and Africa (de Carvalho et al., 2025; Kaushik et al., 2024; BRICS Brazil, n.d.) Indonesia's full membership under Brazil's 2025 BRICS presidency further strengthens the bloc's Southeast Asian demographic and political presence (Darwis, 2025; Government of Brazil, n.d.; Salsabilla & Nugroho, 2025). These data directly address the first objective of this study: BRICS expansion alters the symbolic economy of English by relocating it from a predominantly Western-centred communicative order into a non-Western, multilingual, and multipolar institutional ecology.

The quantitative economic evidence reinforces this interpretation. The eleven BRICS economies grew by 4.0% in 2024, while the world average was 3.3% and the G7 average was 1.7%. For 2025, BRICS economic growth was projected at 3.4%, compared with 2.8% for the world average and 1.2% for the G7 average. In purchasing power parity terms, BRICS was projected to represent 40.2% of global GDP in 2024 and 41.0% in 2025, while the G7 share was projected at 28.8% in 2024 and 28.3% in 2025 (Cicero, 2025; Faizi et al., 2025). The relevant comparison variable is not merely GDP share, but the linguistic market that this economic power enables. If English has historically functioned as a language for accessing Western academic, diplomatic, and economic centres, these figures indicate that English is now also necessary within rising non-Western centres of power. The effect is a functional shift of English from a passport into empire to a bridge across competing and cooperating centres of global influence.

This finding does not invalidate the theory of linguistic imperialism, but it requires that the theory be updated for a multipolar geopolitical context. Phillipson's argument remains important because English has historically been institutionalised through unequal educational, academic, economic, and cultural structures (Gauttam et al., 2024; Khadka, 2024; Phillipson, 1992). However, the BRICS evidence suggests that a one-directional model of dependence on the Anglophone West is no longer sufficient to explain the contemporary role of English. The imperial model views English as flowing from metropolitan centres to peripheral learners, with correctness determined by native-speaker norms and symbolic prestige conferred by British or American authority. In contrast, the BRICS-eclipse model shows English circulating among multiple non-native, multilingual, and non-Western actors. Its value is increasingly determined by strategic intelligibility, diplomatic utility, scientific circulation, technological transfer, and intercultural negotiation. Therefore, English can remain structurally unequal while becoming ideologically less monopolised by the Anglophone West.

The English proficiency data provide the second major insight: BRICS is not a linguistically homogeneous bloc. Based on the EF English Proficiency Index 2025, which includes data from more than 2.2 million adult test-takers across 123 countries and regions, selected BRICS member states display significant variation in English proficiency. South Africa scored 602, Russia 521, Ethiopia 499, Iran 492, the United Arab Emirates 487, India 484, Brazil 482, Indonesia 471, China 464, Egypt 458, and Saudi Arabia 404. The gap between South Africa and Saudi Arabia is 198 points. Compared with

the global mean score of 488, South Africa is 114 points above, Russia 33 points above, Ethiopia 11 points above, Iran 4 points above, the United Arab Emirates 1 point below, India 4 points below, Brazil 6 points below, Indonesia 17 points below, China 24 points below, Egypt 30 points below, and Saudi Arabia 84 points below (EF Education First, 2025). These differences demonstrate that BRICS is an arena of unequal English capital rather than a unified speech community.

This pattern matters in relation to the second aim of the investigation: identifying what kind of English competence is needed in BRICS and partner societies. Read in isolation, the data do not support a simplistic anti-English conclusion. When English proficiency differs by 198 points across selected BRICS members, it is clear that English remains a practical precondition for cross-border education, academic publishing, diplomatic exchange, and professional mobility. At the same time, the data do not justify a pedagogy centred on native-speaker imitation. What is needed is critical multilingual English proficiency: the ability to use English effectively while reading ideological frames, defending local epistemologies, negotiating meaning across civilisational registers, and participating in multilingual institutional worlds. In Bourdieu's terms, English retains its value as linguistic capital because it grants access to prestigious symbolic markets (Bourdieu, 1991; Koch, 2022; Larregue & Pavie, 2026). However, in the BRICS context, this capital must be translated through multilingual agency rather than cultural imitation.

The ideological shift becomes clearer through qualitative discourse evidence. BRICS discourse surrounding Indonesia's membership and the 2025 summit is not organised around "native fluency," "standard accent," or "Western civilisation." Instead, it foregrounds multilateral cooperation, global governance reform, peace, development, trade, culture, sovereignty, and South-South cooperation. Reports from Reuters and the Associated Press similarly frame Indonesia's membership in relation to geopolitical expansion, economic cooperation, and the strengthening of the Global South, not in relation to Anglocentric cultural aspiration (Associated Press, n.d.; Reuters, n.d.; Roby Arman Myajaya, 2025). In discourse-analytic terms, this indicates a shift in the evaluative ecology of English. English remains a primary vehicle through which these messages circulate internationally, but the semantic centre of the message no longer revolves around Anglo-American cultural authority. Rather, English becomes a medium through which non-Western actors articulate reform, cooperation, and sovereignty.

The triangulation of institutional, economic, proficiency, and discourse evidence produces a well-supported account of the BRICS eclipse effect. At the institutional level, BRICS is large in demographic and territorial terms. At the economic level, BRICS has a high and increasing purchasing-power-parity share of global GDP. At the proficiency level, English capability remains uneven but strategically significant. At the discourse level, BRICS political vocabulary emphasises reform, multipolarity, cooperation, and development rather than Western-style assimilation. Taken together, these variables support the main thesis of this article: English in the BRICS eclipse is not dying; it is being refashioned. The old symbolic equation English equals Western modernity is giving way to a more complex equation: English equals negotiable access to multilingual power.

This study therefore distinguishes itself from previous research in several ways. First, World Englishes scholarship has strongly contested the legitimacy of inner-circle countries' claims to ownership of English (Kachru, 1992; Sadeghpour & D'Angelo, 2022; Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020). However, much of that literature focuses on varieties, legitimation, and norm pluralisation. The present study introduces a geopolitical variable: BRICS expansion as an institutional condition that

reshapes the meaning of English learning. Second, English as a Lingua Franca research emphasises intelligibility, accommodation, and interaction among non-native speakers (Boonsuk, 2026; Jenkins, 2015). This article supports that view, but extends it by showing that lingua-franca practice is now embedded in contested global governance. Third, linguistic imperialism and decolonial studies critique English as domination (Moghadam & Barani, 2025; Pennycook, 1998; Phillipson, 1992). This article agrees with that critique, but argues that domination is no longer the only possible frame. English can also be used strategically against dependency when learners are trained not to reproduce prestige but to read power, negotiate meaning, and engage with global structures critically.

The comparative contribution of this article also lies in the variables it brings together. Earlier World Englishes studies frequently compare varieties such as Indian English, Singapore English, or Nigerian English. Many ELF studies compare patterns of intelligibility, accommodation, and communication success. Studies of linguistic imperialism often compare centre periphery power relations. This article compares four variables at once: geopolitical membership, relative economic weight, inequality in English proficiency, and discourse function. This comparison reveals a paradox: BRICS represents nearly half of the world's population and more than 40% of global GDP in purchasing-power-parity terms, yet selected BRICS English proficiency scores range from 404 to 602. The bloc is globally powerful, but internally uneven in English capital. This tension explains why a new pedagogy is needed.

The pedagogical implication is substantial. Anglocentric English teaching often conceptualises the learner as a deficient native speaker who must approximate native-speaker grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and cultural behaviour. In the BRICS eclipsed model, however, the learner is better understood as a multilingual political subject who needs English to interpret knowledge, negotiate the public good, publish ideas, participate in institutions, and critically read global discourse. Therefore, English curricula in BRICS societies should incorporate four measurable competencies: linguistic accuracy, intercultural intelligibility, discourse critical awareness, and geopolitical literacy. Linguistic accuracy remains necessary because insufficient proficiency restricts access to academic and professional opportunities. Intercultural intelligibility is essential because communication occurs in multilingual exchanges. Discourse-critical awareness is required because English carries ideological frames. Geopolitical literacy is necessary because language learning takes place within changing relations among BRICS, G7 countries, multilateral institutions, and the Global South.

In this regard, post-imperial English learning should not abandon grammar, vocabulary, academic writing, or communicative fluency. Rather, these competencies must be placed within a broader educational framework that includes multilingual comparison, translation awareness, intercultural negotiation, and epistemic sovereignty. Learners should be trained not only to produce accurate English but also to recognise how English frames power, organises knowledge, distributes legitimacy, and sometimes conceals inequality under the appearance of neutrality. Such an approach does not reject English; it rejects dependency. It allows English to become a tool of participation rather than submission, critique rather than imitation, and negotiation rather than assimilation.

The study's three hypotheses are therefore supported to different degrees. The first hypothesis receives strong support: BRICS expansion shifts English away from an imperial centre language and toward a negotiated bridge language. The second hypothesis also receives considerable support: learners require critical linguistic competence rather than mere communicative fluency.

The third hypothesis receives partial support: triangulated evidence recommends multilingual, South–South, discourse critical pedagogy, but direct classroom experimentation is still needed to test learning outcomes. Future studies should therefore compare experimental English courses based on two models: an Anglocentric model and a BRICS-eclipsed model. Dependent variables may include vocabulary acquisition, intercultural pragmatic competence, discourse analytic ability, learner confidence, geopolitical text interpretation, and the ability to mediate meaning across languages.

The implications of this study are theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical. Theoretically, the study extends World Englishes, ELF, linguistic imperialism, and linguistic capital theory by placing them within the contemporary architecture of BRICS expansion. Methodologically, the study shows the value of combining institutional data, proficiency indicators, and discourse analysis to examine English as both measurable competence and ideological infrastructure. Pedagogically, the study argues for an English curriculum that recognises the continuing value of English while resisting Anglocentric dependency. This curriculum should not merely ask whether students can speak English, but whether they can use English without surrendering epistemic sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the study has limitations. The analysis is based on institutional documents, proficiency data, and public discourse from 2024–2026; therefore, it does not yet include classroom-level experimental evidence or learner-based ethnographic data. The EF English Proficiency Index provides a useful comparative indicator, but it cannot fully represent all forms of multilingual competence, local English practices, or informal language use within BRICS societies. Similarly, public BRICS discourse can reveal dominant ideological patterns, but it cannot fully capture how ordinary learners, teachers, and institutions interpret English in everyday educational practice. Future research should therefore combine discourse analysis with classroom observation, teacher interviews, learner narratives, curriculum analysis, and experimental pedagogical design.

In summary, the main point of the discussion is that the BRICS eclipse is not only a geopolitical event but also a semiotic and pedagogical event. English still possesses power, but the source of its legitimacy is moving. The question of whether students can speak English is no longer sufficient. The more urgent scientific and educational question is whether learners can use English without surrendering epistemic sovereignty. This is the core argument of the study: English beyond empire is not anti-English; it is anti-dependent. It proposes a future in which English education no longer reproduces civilisational hierarchy, but becomes a multilingual tool for negotiation, critique, and participation in global knowledge communities.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that English in the BRICS eclipse does not indicate the decline or disappearance of English, but rather the ideological relocation of its function within an emerging multipolar world order. The findings show that English remains a powerful form of linguistic capital for diplomacy, higher education, scientific publication, trade, technological exchange, and intercultural communication; however, its symbolic authority is no longer exclusively anchored in Anglophone Western institutions. The expansion of BRICS, including Indonesia's full membership in 2025, demonstrates that English increasingly operates within multilingual, non-Western, and South–South geopolitical formations where it functions less as an imperial centre-language and more as a negotiated bridge-language. Institutional, economic, proficiency, and discourse evidence indicate that English continues to be necessary, but its meaning is being reshaped by multilateralism, governance reform, development, sovereignty, cultural plurality, and epistemic reciprocity.

Theoretically, this study contributes to World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, linguistic imperialism, and linguistic capital theory by introducing the “BRICS eclipse effect,” namely the condition in which English remains globally visible and useful while its ideological illumination shifts away from empire, native-speaker prestige, and Western institutional monopoly. Pedagogically, the study argues that English learning beyond empire should not reject linguistic accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, academic writing, or communicative fluency, but should integrate these competences with intercultural intelligibility, discourse-critical awareness, geopolitical literacy, multilingual comparison, translation awareness, and epistemic sovereignty. Thus, post-imperial English learning should train learners not merely to speak English correctly, but to use English critically, strategically, and ethically without reproducing dependency or civilisational hierarchy. The main implication is that English education in BRICS societies and partner countries needs to move from Anglocentric imitation toward multilingual agency, enabling learners to participate in global knowledge, diplomacy, and cooperation while preserving local epistemologies and cultural plurality.

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