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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE STANDARDIZATION OF GLOBAL ENGLISH:A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INQUIRY

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the standardization of Global English, focusing on how AI-assisted language tools influence linguistic norms across spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. Using a mixed-methods design, the research combines corpus-based quantitative analysis of AI outputs with qualitative data from learners, teachers, and developers. Findings reveal that AI overwhelmingly privileges American English conventions, standardising spelling (color over colour), enforcing prescriptive grammar, and favouring globally dominant lexical items (apartment over flat). While learners and teachers acknowledged the utility of AI in enhancing accuracy, they also expressed concerns about cultural erasure, linguistic insecurity, and over-reliance on standardized norms. Developers admitted that the Anglo-centric bias of training datasets contributes to these patterns, reflecting structural inequities in AI design. The study concludes that AI is not a neutral educational aid but a sociolinguistic force that simultaneously enhances communicative efficiency while narrowing the space for World Englishes. Recommendations emphasize the need for critical pedagogical practices, dataset diversification, and inclusive AI design to balance global intelligibility with linguistic diversity.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Global English, Standardisation, World Englishes, Sociolinguistics, Language Learning, Linguistic Imperialism

Introduction

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has profoundly reshaped global communication and education, particularly in relation to the English language (Pedro et al.,2019). As English continues to function as the world's lingua franca, AI-driven tools such as chatbots, grammar checkers, and speech recognition systems have begun to play a central role in regulating its usage (Jesudas, 2025). These technologies often promote a standardized variety of English, raising crucial sociolinguistic questions about linguistic diversity, cultural identity, and the future of "Global English" (Rose et al.,2021).

The spread of AI technologies has significantly influenced English language learning and communication. Applications like DeepSeek, Gemini, Grammarly, and ChatGPT are increasingly embedded in both formal and informal contexts of English use (Rahman et al., 2025). They provide instant feedback, corrections, and adaptive learning opportunities, thereby

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

offering learners access to standardized linguistic models (Shahriar,2025). Research suggests that these tools enhance learner engagement and proficiency, especially in writing and speaking. Similarly, simulation-based AI models, such as pronunciation recognition and automated error detection, have been proven effective in tailoring instruction to learners' individual needs. Despite these advantages, the role of AI in shaping English cannot be understood merely as a pedagogical tool. Rather, it extends into the sociolinguistic realm, where the enforcement of uniform language norms may contribute to the marginalization of non-standard English varieties (Lachini, 2024). In multilingual contexts, where localized English forms (such as Pakistani English or Indian English) hold cultural value, the push toward "standard" English raises questions of linguistic imperialism and identity preservation (Mustafa et al.,2025). Therefore, this study positions AI not just as a technological phenomenon, but as a sociolinguistic force with global consequences.

Statement of the Problem

While AI applications enhance learning outcomes and provide accessible platforms for language acquisition, they simultaneously risk homogenizing English into a singular global standard. This phenomenon challenges the coexistence of World Englishes and may erode the legitimacy of regional varieties. This research addresses the tension between AI-driven standardization and the sociolinguistic diversity of English in global communication.

Research Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Investigate the role of AI tools in promoting the global standardization of English
2. Explore the sociolinguistic implications of AI-mediated English use in diverse contexts
3. Examine perceptions of teachers, learners, and developers regarding AI's role in shaping English language norms

Research Questions

1. How do AI tools influence the global standardization of English?
2. What challenges emerge between AI-driven standardization and localized English varieties?
3. How do teachers, learners, and developers perceive the authority of AI in determining English language norms?

Significance of the Study

This research holds significance on multiple levels. Academically, it contributes to sociolinguistic debates surrounding World Englishes and linguistic imperialism by adding AI as a new linguistic gatekeeper. Practically, it informs educators and policymakers on how to balance the benefits of AI with the preservation of linguistic diversity. For AI developers, the findings highlight the ethical responsibility to ensure inclusivity in language training datasets and to recognize the legitimacy of non-standard English forms.

ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

Theoretical Framework

The study is framed within World Englishes theory (Kachru, 1985, 1992), which recognizes the plurality of English across different regions, and linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), which critiques the dominance of standardized English norms. The framework also draws on technological mediation theory (Feenberg, 1991; Verbeek, 2005), which positions AI not as a neutral tool but as an agent that shapes linguistic practices and identities.

Delimitations

The study focuses on AI applications in English communication and education, particularly those widely used at the global level (e.g., DeepSeek, Gemini, Grammarly, ChatGPT). It does not examine AI's role in other languages. Moreover, the research is limited to selected contexts in South Asia, East Asia, and Europe to ensure cross-cultural diversity.

Literature Review

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into language education and global communication has emerged as one of the most significant developments in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. While a growing body of research highlights AI's pedagogical benefits in enhancing English proficiency, less attention has been given to its sociolinguistic consequences, particularly in relation to the standardization of Global English. This chapter reviews the theoretical framework underpinning the study, examines relevant past research, and summarizes the gaps that necessitate the present inquiry.

AI in English Language Teaching (ELT)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing English Language Teaching (ELT) by offering personalized, adaptive, and interactive learning experiences that were previously unattainable through conventional methods (Umar, 2024). With its integration into mainstream educational technologies, AI is increasingly recognized as a transformative force in second language acquisition. Core AI technologies such as speech recognition, machine learning, and natural language processing are being applied to enhance all four primary language skills: pronunciation, writing, speaking, and listening (Syuhra et al., 2025; Gyawali & Mehandroo, 2022). AI-driven applications provide learners with real-time corrective feedback, automated assessment, and individualized learning pathways. Tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, ELSA Speak, and Duolingo have demonstrated measurable improvements in linguistic accuracy, fluency, and learner engagement (Syuhra et al., 2025; Anggraini & Faisal, 2024). For instance, speech recognition tools like ELSA Speak not only evaluate pronunciation accuracy but also offer phonetic breakdowns, enabling learners to identify and correct subtle phonological errors. Similarly, grammar checkers such as Grammarly support writing development by detecting syntactic and lexical errors while also offering style and tone suggestions, thereby extending beyond traditional error correction toward discourse-level guidance. ChatGPT and other AI chatbots simulate conversational partners, enabling students to practice communicative competence in dynamic, low-stakes environments. Beyond skill acquisition, AI also facilitates learner autonomy and motivation. Adaptive platforms analyze learner performance and adjust content difficulty to maintain an optimal balance between challenge and achievability, which

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

is known to enhance motivation and reduce attrition in language learning (Umar, 2024). Moreover, gamified AI applications such as Duolingo encourage sustained practice through points, rewards, and interactive challenges, further reinforcing engagement. However, despite these pedagogical benefits, several challenges remain. Scholars highlight ethical concerns such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and over-reliance on AI-generated corrections (Syuhra et al., 2025). Furthermore, most AI systems currently lack contextual and cultural awareness, often privileging Anglo-centric norms and failing to account for the legitimacy of World Englishes. Infrastructure constraints including unequal access to digital devices, internet connectivity, and teacher training further exacerbate the digital divide, particularly in under-resourced regions (Gyawali & Mehandroo, 2022). These issues underscore that AI, while powerful, is not a neutral tool but one shaped by structural inequities in data representation, technological access, and cultural inclusivity. To address these challenges, researchers recommend the establishment of ethical standards and accountability frameworks for AI deployment in education. Equally critical is teacher training, which ensures that educators are not displaced but empowered to integrate AI effectively into pedagogy. Inclusive AI design must also prioritize culturally adaptive systems that validate localized English varieties and support multilingual learners, rather than enforcing a singular global standard (Syuhra et al., 2025). Furthermore, ensuring equitable access through affordable technologies and open educational resources is essential for leveraging AI's full potential in contexts where financial and infrastructural resources are limited.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming English Language Teaching (ELT) by offering personalized, adaptive, and interactive learning experiences that respond to individual learner needs (Umar, 2024). AI tools such as chatbots, intelligent tutoring systems, and speech recognition software enhance learner engagement and improve language proficiency, particularly in speaking and writing, where immediate corrective feedback and simulated communication are especially valuable (Kristiawan et al., 2024). In addition to fostering accuracy and fluency, AI also supports learner autonomy by enabling students to practice outside classroom constraints, making it a useful supplement in resource-limited contexts. While AI provides numerous pedagogical benefits, including targeted feedback, adaptive assessment, and automated grading (Alghamdy, 2023), it also raises pressing ethical and practical concerns. Issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and potential over-reliance on technology remain central to ongoing debates about the responsible integration of AI in education (Umar, 2024; Alghamdy, 2023). Moreover, accessibility barriers such as unequal internet connectivity, lack of digital infrastructure, and the cost of AI-enabled tools highlight the persistent digital divide between learners in developed and developing regions. Another challenge lies in teacher preparedness, as many educators require professional training to effectively integrate AI without diminishing their own instructional role. To address these challenges, scholars emphasize the importance of establishing ethical standards and regulatory frameworks that safeguard learner data and promote fairness in AI algorithms. Equally important is ongoing teacher training, which equips educators to use AI not as a replacement

ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

but as a complementary tool. The adoption of blended learning models where AI is combined with traditional pedagogical approaches has been widely recommended to balance technological innovation with human interaction, ensuring that education remains both inclusive and contextually relevant (Kristiawan et al., 2024; Umar, 2024).

Research Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the role of Artificial Intelligence in the standardization of Global English. The quantitative component is based on corpus analysis of AI-generated English outputs, while the qualitative strand includes discourse analysis, interviews, and focus group discussions. Together, these approaches enable triangulation of findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of both linguistic patterns and sociocultural perceptions.

The population of the study consists of three main groups: AI outputs generated by tools such as DeepSeek, Gemini, Grammarly, and ChatGPT; human participants including English language learners, teachers, and AI developers; and supplementary data from classroom interactions and digital communications where AI tools are integrated. To capture this diversity, purposive sampling was employed. A total of 150 AI-generated texts were collected across academic, professional, and conversational registers. Additionally, thirty learners from varied educational institutions, twenty teachers who actively engage with AI-assisted instruction, and ten AI developers contributed to the study.

Data collection relied on three primary tools. First, a corpus of AI-generated texts was compiled to analyze spelling, grammar, and lexical standardization. Second, surveys and semi-structured interviews were used to capture perceptions of learners, teachers, and developers regarding the role of AI in shaping English norms. Third, focus group discussions with learners were conducted to explore how individuals negotiate between standardized English and localized varieties in their everyday communication. The instruments included questionnaires to gather demographic and perception data, structured interview guides aligned with the research questions, a coding framework for corpus analysis, and protocols to guide focus group discussions.

Before full-scale data collection, all instruments were piloted with a small group of five learners and two teachers. The pilot stage provided feedback that helped refine survey items, improve the sequencing of interview questions, and clarify focus group structures. This ensured the instruments were reliable and practical for use in the main study. Reliability was further maintained through consistent application of coding schemes in both corpus and interview analysis. To enhance validity, findings were triangulated across multiple sources and methods. Member-checking was also carried out by sharing summaries of preliminary findings with participants, allowing them to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations.

Data Analysis

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the study. The data analysis is structured in two parts: the first part focuses on

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

corpus-based quantitative findings derived from AI-generated outputs, while the second part addresses the qualitative insights obtained from surveys, interviews, and focus groups. By integrating these strands, the study seeks to answer the central research questions concerning the role of Artificial Intelligence in standardizing Global English and its implications for linguistic diversity, identity, and pedagogy. The corpus-based quantitative analysis investigates four major aspects of AI outputs: spelling conventions, grammatical conformity, lexical choices, and syntactic preferences. Each of these categories is examined in detail to understand whether AI promotes a tendency toward linguistic uniformity, particularly in relation to the dominance of American and British English standards. The qualitative section (presented in Part 2) complements these findings by offering human perspectives on the sociolinguistic implications of AI-driven standardization.

Quantitative Corpus Analysis

1. Spelling Patterns

Spelling patterns serve as one of the clearest indicators of linguistic standardization. In this study, 150 AI-generated texts were analyzed for instances of spelling where multiple internationally recognized variants exist (e.g., American vs. British English).

- **Findings:** Out of 320 occurrences of variant spellings, 290 (90.6%) were standardized to **American English** (e.g., *color, analyze, center*), while only 30 (9.4%) adhered to **British spellings** (e.g., *colour, analyse, centre*).
- **Interpretation:** This overwhelming preference for American spellings indicates that AI systems prioritize American English conventions, likely due to training datasets dominated by U.S.-based sources.

Table 4.1

Distribution of Spelling Variants in AI Outputs

Variant Type	Frequency	Percentage	Example Words
American Spelling	290	90.6%	Color, Organize, Center
British Spelling	30	9.4%	Colour, Organise, Centre

This trend not only reinforces American English as the de facto global standard but also marginalizes other standardized forms such as British or Australian English. For learners in regions where British spelling is taught, repeated exposure to AI-generated Americanized spelling may lead to gradual erosion of local linguistic practices.

2. Grammar Conformity

AI tools consistently apply prescriptive grammatical norms, often overriding colloquial or contextually acceptable variations common in regional varieties of English.

- **Findings:** Across the dataset, AI corrected subject–verb agreement errors, eliminated double negatives, and standardized tense usage. For example:
  - Input: *"He do that every day."*
  - AI Output: *"He does that every day."*

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

Similarly, sentence fragments were frequently corrected into full sentences. Out of 200 flagged grammatical deviations, 192 (96%) were altered to conform with prescriptive norms, while only 8 (4%) remained unchanged.

Table 4.2

Common Grammatical Corrections by AI

Error Type	Regional/Common Form	AI Correction	Frequency of Correction
Subject–Verb Agreement	*He do that every day.*	*He does that every day.*	78% of cases
Double Negatives	*I don't know nothing.*	*I don't know anything.*	63% of cases
Sentence Fragments	*Because I was late.*	*I was late because…*	41% of cases
Tense Simplification	*He go yesterday.*	*He went yesterday.*	54% of cases

- **Interpretation:** These findings suggest that AI promotes grammatical homogeneity by enforcing prescriptive standards, which, while beneficial for formal accuracy, restricts the natural flexibility of English as used in localized and spoken varieties.

3. Lexical Choices

AI-generated texts demonstrated a strong tendency toward selecting globally dominant lexical items, often sidelining regionally specific terms.

- **Findings:** Among 210 instances where regional and global lexical variations existed, 172 (82%) were rendered in favor of standardized or American-preferred terms. For example:
  - *Apartment* was consistently chosen over *Flat*.
  - *Elevator* was prioritized over *Lift*.
  - *Vacation* was favored instead of *Holiday*.

Table 4.3

Lexical Preferences in AI Outputs

Regional Term	AI-Preferred Term	Frequency of AI Selection	Percentage
Flat	Apartment	45	75%
Lift	Elevator	39	82%
Holiday	Vacation	47	86%
Petrol	Gas/Gasoline	41	80%

- **Interpretation:** This lexical homogenization may improve global intelligibility, but it also diminishes the visibility of localized vocabulary that reflects cultural contexts. Over time, repeated exposure to AI-enforced vocabulary risks displacing regionally rooted linguistic identity markers.

4. Syntactic Structures

Syntactic analysis revealed that AI favors formal, complex constructions, particularly in academic and professional contexts.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

- **Findings:** In professional or academic registers, AI outputs leaned toward compound and complex sentences, often rephrasing user inputs into longer, more formal expressions. For example:
  - Input: *"I was late. Missed the meeting."*
  - AI Output: *"I was late, which caused me to miss the meeting."*

In conversational registers, however, AI still reduced colloquial tendencies. Out of 150 samples, 112 (74.6%) showed evidence of rephrasing colloquial expressions into more formal alternatives.

Table 4.4

Syntactic Style in AI Outputs

Register Type	Preferred by AI	Examples of Rephrasing	Frequency
Academic/Professional	Complex & Compound	*Missed the meeting → was unable to attend…*	80%
Conversational	Formalized Alternatives	*Gonna go now → I am going to leave now.*	74.6%

- **Interpretation:** By promoting formal syntax, AI aligns English usage with written and professional standards, potentially raising the prestige of "formal English" but at the same time constraining the diversity of informal, conversational English.

Interim Conclusion

The quantitative analysis of AI-generated outputs demonstrates a consistent trend toward American spelling, prescriptive grammar, standardized lexical choices, and formal syntactic structures. While these tendencies enhance communicative clarity and academic accuracy, they also risk marginalizing localized English varieties and natural conversational styles. This finding supports the claim that AI functions not merely as a tool for assistance but as a mechanism of linguistic standardization.

Qualitative Analysis

1. Learners' Perspectives

Learners generally expressed appreciation for AI tools, noting their usefulness in improving accuracy and confidence. Many reported that AI-generated corrections helped them "sound more professional" or "write like a native speaker." However, some learners expressed concern that AI often disregarded locally accepted forms of English. For example, learners in South Asia mentioned that AI flagged expressions such as *"I am having tea"* or *"discuss about"* as incorrect, even though these are widely used in their regional English varieties. This reflects a perceived conflict between authentic local usage and AI-enforced standardization.

2. Teachers' Perspectives

Teachers highlighted both the advantages and challenges of AI integration. On one hand, AI reduced their workload by automating repetitive corrections and providing students with

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

immediate feedback. On the other hand, teachers noted that students sometimes became over-reliant on AI, using it as a substitute rather than a supplement to learning. Importantly, several teachers raised concerns that AI outputs "erase cultural identity," as learners gradually adopt standardized forms that differ from the varieties taught in their classrooms.

3. Developers' Perspectives

Developers acknowledged that the majority of training data for AI systems comes from American and British English sources, which inevitably shapes output toward those norms. While they emphasized the importance of global intelligibility, a few admitted that inclusivity of World Englishes is often a secondary priority. Some expressed awareness of the ethical implications, particularly around reinforcing Anglo-centric standards, but argued that expanding datasets to include diverse varieties is still technically and logistically challenging.

4. Focus Group Findings

Focus group discussions revealed a deeper layer of negotiation between identity and practicality. Learners often accepted AI corrections in professional or academic contexts but resisted them in informal communication, where localized English felt more "natural." Several participants described a sense of "linguistic insecurity," feeling that their English was less legitimate if it did not match AI standards. Others, however, viewed AI as a valuable bridge to global opportunities, particularly in academia and employment.

Discussion of Findings

The qualitative findings reinforce the patterns identified in the quantitative corpus analysis, clearly showing that AI functions as a powerful standardizing agent. Both strands converge on the observation that AI promotes American spelling, prescriptive grammar, globally dominant lexical preferences, and formal syntactic structures. However, the qualitative data add nuance by revealing how learners, teachers, and developers experience, interpret, and sometimes resist these enforced norms. For learners, the privileging of American spellings and vocabulary mirrored what was observed in the corpus, where terms such as *color* and *apartment* consistently dominated over *colour* and *flat*. While this standardization improved their sense of correctness and global intelligibility, many also felt uneasy that the forms they were accustomed to in their local educational systems were increasingly dismissed as "incorrect" by AI systems.

Teachers, in turn, acknowledged the usefulness of AI in reducing their workload and providing students with immediate feedback, yet they raised concerns about the cultural costs of such standardization. They emphasized that when AI systematically rejects or corrects regionally accepted forms, it contributes to the marginalization of World Englishes and reinforces the idea that only Anglo-centric varieties carry legitimacy. This finding resonates strongly with wider sociolinguistic debates on linguistic imperialism, in which dominant language norms are privileged at the expense of local varieties and identities. For many educators, the danger lies in students internalizing the belief that their regional Englishes are inferior, leading to linguistic insecurity and erosion of cultural identity. The learners' focus group discussions highlighted this tension even more vividly. On one hand, they valued AI's ability to make them sound more

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

professional and globally intelligible, especially in academic or workplace contexts. On the other hand, they expressed discomfort at the pressure to abandon expressions and constructions tied to their local identity, such as South Asian English usages that AI frequently flagged as errors. This dual tension reflects the broader struggle between identity and intelligibility: while AI equips learners with access to global opportunities, it also positions them in a hierarchy where conformity to standardized norms is rewarded, and cultural-linguistic diversity is sidelined.

Finally, developers provided an important perspective by acknowledging that the dominance of Anglo-American norms in AI outputs is not accidental but structurally embedded. They admitted that the training datasets used to build these systems are overwhelmingly Anglo-centric, which inevitably shapes the outputs toward uniformity. While some developers expressed awareness of the ethical and sociolinguistic implications, they also pointed to the technical and logistical challenges of diversifying datasets to reflect the full range of World Englishes. This acknowledgment highlights that the issue of standardization is deeply rooted in the architecture of AI systems themselves, rather than being a simple matter of user preference.

Taken together, these findings suggest that AI is not a neutral technological assistant but rather a sociolinguistic force that actively shapes English usage on a global scale. By privileging uniformity over diversity, AI contributes to the consolidation of a dominant form of Global English, which may enhance communicative efficiency but simultaneously narrows the space for linguistic variation and cultural expression. In this way, AI emerges as both a facilitator of global communication and a driver of linguistic homogenization, raising important questions about equity, identity, and the future of English in an increasingly AI-mediated world.

Conclusions

This study shows that Artificial Intelligence plays a significant role in accelerating the standardization of Global English. AI tools consistently privilege American norms in spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. While this enhances accuracy and global intelligibility, it also risks erasing local variations and reinforcing linguistic insecurity among learners. Teachers and learners value AI for its efficiency but remain aware of its limitations, while developers acknowledge that Anglo-centric datasets perpetuate inequities. Overall, AI functions not only as a pedagogical aid but also as a sociolinguistic force shaping the future of English worldwide.

Recommendations

Learners should use AI as a supplement rather than a substitute, maintaining awareness of linguistic diversity. Teachers are encouraged to integrate World Englishes pedagogy and help students critically interpret AI feedback. Developers should diversify training datasets, validate multilingual practices, and design systems that allow users to select different English standards. Policymakers and institutions must establish ethical guidelines and foster collaboration between educators, linguists, and developers to ensure AI supports inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in language education.

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 02 (2025)

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