

**English in Indonesia:  
Its Position Among Other Languages in Indonesia**

**Abstract:**

Indonesia is a multilingual country with various local languages and language courses on various foreign languages. Among the foreign languages, English and Chinese are the prominent ones. This article aims at portraying the position of English in Indonesia among the languages spoken and used in Indonesia, especially Chinese. The discussion focuses on English in business, education, and pop culture. In the context of Englishes, this article also discusses which English is popular in Indonesia among Indonesian learners of English.

**Key words:** English, position, multilingual, Chinese

## Introduction

With regards to many languages that live in Indonesia, it is interesting to see the position of these languages, i.e. Indonesian language or Bahasa Indonesia itself, vernacular languages, and foreign languages, such as Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Arabic, French, German, Dutch and of course, English, in Indonesia. Korean is relatively new; Japanese, French, and German are at the same position since last century. Dutch is spoken by the old generation and Arabic is used as far as religious activities are concerned. Chinese is now booming and English is "the old timer." It seems that the two foreign languages that are interesting enough to discuss, concerning their position in Indonesia, are English and Chinese. Before discussing the position of English among Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia, and vernacular languages, it is interesting to see the position of Bahasa Indonesia among the vernacular languages.

The prominent position of Bahasa Indonesia against the vernacular languages has been proved since the beginning of the selection of a national language. Based on the census and survey conducted in 1980, 1990, 2000 (Montolalu and Suryadinata, 2007, p. 48), there are seven main vernacular languages, namely: Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Batak, Minangkabau, Balinese, Buginese; with Javanese as the greatest number in terms of speakers. No single one of these vernacular languages won over the so-called-now Bahasa Indonesia, even the Javanese language which reached 47 per cent of speakers according to 1930 population census (p. 39). The reason given is because Javanese is a complicated and hierarchical language and it is only used by the Javanese (p. 39 and Suryadinata, 2000, p. 45). The chosen language was the Malay language which was later called Bahasa Indonesia for the first time at the second Indonesian youth congress (2007, p. 41), which, according to 1930 census (p. 40), only had 1.6 per cent speakers. Since that point of time, Bahasa Indonesia has been used as the official language. As Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 113-114) said, "... as one

particular language receives official status..., almost always becoming the sole language of public administration and instruction, the role of other languages is arrested." According to Budianta (2007, p. 42), it "has become the most important identity for the Indonesians of various ethnic groups.... At least within the years to come, Bahasa Indonesia will remain the most popular site for Indonesian writers to express their visions and creativity. The flourishing of Indonesian language newspapers and magazines is a strong basis for that direction." Now that Bahasa Indonesia is used in all official, administrative, government, business, and also education, against the vernacular languages, Bahasa Indonesia does and will still hold the prominent position.

This fact leads to the discussion of English against Bahasa Indonesia and Chinese. Since Chinese is relatively new compared to English, the following discussion will be about English and Bahasa Indonesia. Since independence, Indonesians "have been preoccupied with the search and maintenance of national identity" (Dardjowidjojo, 2003, p. 44). "The question is how to keep a balance between nationalism, on the one hand, and the use of a foreign language, namely, English, on the other." Dardjowidjojo (p. 57) emphasizes that English "has never been considered an official language coexisting with the national language... English is now officially called 'the first foreign language of the country.'" The reason for adopting English as the first foreign language is because science and technology are the world culture and the means to acquire and keep up with the development of science and technology in Indonesia is English (Dardjowidjojo, p. 44). Since Chinese is now booming, it is interesting, therefore, to see whether English will be just one of the foreign languages besides Chinese or stays as the prominent foreign language; if it does, which English—among Englishes and varieties—Indonesian learners should learn and how far English influences Bahasa Indonesia. Crystal (2003, p. 123) lists several possibilities that can affect the position of English in a country, namely: political, economic, technological, and

cultural power. Among these four, the latter two are far more important (2003, p. 86): the media—the press, radio, advertising, especially television (2003, p. 91), cinema, popular music, and education. The discussion concerning the competing Chinese and English will be based on the four points mentioned above with the emphasis on the latter two. This discussion will be put under the following subheadings: business, education, and pop culture.

### **Business**

As the first foreign language, English is learnt because of instrumental reasons. Job vacancies require English as one of the requirements. English is regarded important because by mastering English, people can have higher salary and have better opportunities. English is also used in advertisements to give the impression that the products can give a higher prestige. However, a number of reasons are worth paying attention to the fact that Chinese can be a competitor to English.

First, as Crystal (2003, p. 10) says, "It may take a military powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it." China is prepared in both military and economic area. In terms of politics and economy, China should be counted as the emerging super power besides the US (Pattiradjawane, 2001, p. 164) as it can be seen in the following quotation.

Dalam berbagai isu dan aktifitas politik dan ekonomi, mulai dari Washington sampai Moskwa, maupun dari Tokyo ke New Delhi, semuanya menunjukkan sebuah Cina yang berbenah diri tidak lagi menjadi sebuah kekuatan yang selama ini dikategorikan sebagai setengah-setengah (*middle power*), tetapi benar-benar sebuah Cina yang memproyeksikan diri menjadi sebuah kekuatan adidaya (*super power*) dalam kurun waktu yang lebih cepat dari perkiraan para pengamat selama ini.

In various political issues and activities, from Washington to Moscow, or from Tokyo to New Delhi, all of them show an improving China, becoming not as what has been so far categorized as a middle power, but a real China that

projects itself to be a super power at a time faster than what has been predicted so far by observers.

Pattiradjawane (p. 165) continues with supplying the budget allocated by China to enlarge the military power, which is as much as US\$70 billion. He explains further that even the US and Japan are seen as the potential competitors and that Chinese army tests its power, preparing itself to face any potential open conflict. It seems that China is really aware that being a super power cannot be far from enlarging the military power.

In terms of economy, China is the emerging economic superpower (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p. 183). China has become the world seventh largest economy and third largest trade nation (Yin, 2006). According to Pattiradjawane (2001, p. 167), China enters both bilateral and multilateral cooperation with countries in Asia. It becomes the main trade partner for the US, Japan, European and South East Asian countries; if purchasing power parity (comparison of national economy) is used, the economy of China is almost as big as the US and bigger than that of Japan (p. 168). In the trade between the US and China, the value reaches as much as US\$70 billion, with more profit on Chinese because US' import from China is five times bigger than its export to China (p. 168). In short, China's economy is growing. Furthermore, the growth in trade with other countries also occurs in its trade with Indonesia. Since the normalization of the diplomatic relationship between China and Indonesia, China has become Indonesia's fourth largest trade partner; the two-way trade volume in 1990 was only US\$1 billion, but in 2004 it increased to US\$13.48 billion and at the end of 2005 it reached up to US\$16 billion (Yin, 2006).

The Chinese in Indonesia form the majority among the foreign groups—Chinese, Arabs, and Indians (Suryadinata, 2000, p. 39), are "economically strong, form the commercial middle class of Indonesia and are part of the economic elite" (p. 60). With the change of policy towards China and the Chinese since Abdurrahman Wahid administration,

Chinese language has the opportunity to rise gradually to an important position, despite its suppression during Soeharto's.

Second, according to Phillipson (1999, p. 147), Chinese is seen as one the alternative lingua francas, besides Hindi and Arabic, that becomes "a threat to English." If it is seen as a threat in the world, and the fact that it is one of the five official languages of the UN, then it is no doubt that Chinese language should be counted as a competitor to English in Indonesia. According to Suryadinata (2000, p. 62-63), during the rule of Soeharto, there was only one Chinese newspaper run by the military in Jakarta—*Yindunixiya Ribao (Harian Indonesia)* and now there are at least three dailies, *Yindunixiya Shangbao*, *Heping Ribao*, and *Longyang Ribao*. In Indonesia the importance of Chinese language in business and the fact that it is one of the requirements in a lot of job vacancy, besides English, increases its chance to be a more important foreign language in Indonesia than before and, therefore, a competitor to English. If Chinese is seen as a threat in the world because it is one of the alternative lingua francas, besides Hindi and Arabic, that becomes "a threat to English" and the fact that it is one of the five official languages of the UN, then it is no doubt that Chinese language should be counted as a competitor to English in Indonesia.

### **Education**

Besides English, Chinese has entered school curriculum and Chinese courses are flourishing. Regarding the ability of speaking Chinese, the majority of Chinese children, even among the *totoks* (the Chinese who still hold fast to their tradition), have gradually lost active command of the Chinese language, because "since 1965 coup all ethnic Chinese children, regardless of their nationality, have had to go to Indonesian national schools (2000, p. 62). Now that learning Chinese is not prohibited by the government, Chinese courses are everywhere as Budianta (2007, has p. 69) says "Chinese language courses in Indonesia are now flourishing as people realize the configuration of economic powers from the West to

China." The Chinese do not really have problems financially to send their children to learn Chinese in Chinese courses as well as to learn English in English courses. Moreover, besides English, Chinese is also one of the subjects learnt at schools, at least private schools.

English courses can be found in many places in Indonesia, in big cities, small towns and even villages. People are willing to pay a lot of money so that they can join the course and can speak English. English has given them a new identity. As Dardjowidjojo (2003, p. 57) said, English in Indonesia "has never been considered an official language coexisting with the national language," and English is "the first foreign language." As many varieties of English are the hot issue now, this part of the article tries to discuss the learning of English from the learners' point of view.

### **Which English among Englishes?**

With regards to the role of English in the world, Crystal (2003) predicts that there is a great probability that English will have a secured position, although people will try to be reoriented in terms of which English they are going to use, the British, the US or their own variety of English. There will be some sort of 'competition' between the inner circle varieties and the outer or the expanding circle varieties of English. However, probably this kind of competition does not occur in Indonesia. Linguists, or perhaps some teachers of English, know and discuss Englishes, but common people are not aware that there is such an issue as Englishes. For common people English is English, although they know that Americans speak English, Singaporeans speak English, and Australians also speak English and that each of them speak a little bit different from one another. In Indonesia the issue among common people in general is not really which variety of English they speak, but rather one speaks English or not.

The question of which English they learn depends on the exposure they get. People will imitate the kind of English they hear the most often. The most often heard and the



cheapest source of English in Indonesia is television and radio. These two media reach every part of Indonesia. Since American films and songs are abundant in television and radio programs, it is this English that people try to imitate. Had British films and British songs been more abundant than American ones, people would have learnt British than American. Formerly British English was more popular in the sense that what was considered good English was British English. Now it is different. The cultural domination has made people look at the US more than to England.

Concerning the conflict of mutual intelligibility and the need for identity concerning varieties of English, as it is stated in Crystal (2003, p. 178), in Indonesia there is no conflict between mutual intelligibility—trying to sound like native speakers—and the need of identity—preserving the Indonesian accent. First, people are probably more proud of being able to sound more like a native speaker than like an Indonesian. Sounding like a native speaker increase their prestige and the ability to speak English gives them the new identity. Those who speak English belong to a different group than those who do not. This is the identity they want to show. In Indonesia mutual intelligibility and the need for identity go hand-in-hand; the difference in the need for identity is not on showing Indonesian accent, but on showing the ability to speak English.

Second, there is still no community of English speakers in Indonesia. A lot of people speak English in Indonesia, but English stays as a foreign language. English is the issue of urban dwellers, in big cities or capital cities only in Java. In smaller cities, English does not really play an important role. As cited by Kirkpatrick (2007, p. 31), English in Indonesia is like the first phase, out of the three phases Kachru has suggested, through which non-native institutionalized varieties of English seem to pass.

The first phase is characterized by 'non-recognition' of the local variety. At this stage the speakers of the local variety are prejudiced against it and believe that

some imported native speaker in variety is superior and should be the model for language learning in schools. They themselves will strive to speak the imported, exonormative variety and sound like native speakers, while looking down upon those who speak only the local variety.

For common people sounding like a native speaker is better as they have the opinion that foreigners can teach English better than Indonesian teachers. What they call an ability to speak English is being able to communicate with other people using English language; which variety that they use is not a big issue for them. They regard the variety they hear most often as the model.

Third, the motivation of learning English is instrumental (Phillipson, 1993, p. 162; Dardjowidjojo, 2003, p. 50). Young learners join English courses because their parents realize that English is very important nowadays. If they do not have the intention to study abroad, then they study English partly because they want to have a good score at school and that their parents make them realize that English is important later in life. If they have the intention to study abroad, then their goal in Indonesia is passing the test required to enter universities, either TOEFL or IELTS.

Which English people learn also depends on who has the biggest promotion. "The first English teaching projects that Americans were involved in were in countries like Indonesia" (p. 162). Besides, the promotion is done in many ways as quoted by Phillipson (p. 150) from Lord Fulton "... about countries which are unable or unwilling to buy foreign books (Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Turkey, Israel, and Pakistan) and which receive large quantities of American books." Books used by learners means exposure to certain variety of English; American books means exposure to American English and language learning is closely related to exposure to the language learned.

### **English learning in formal education**

The learning of English at schools and universities cannot be said successful. The first foreign language status makes English mandatory for all types of secondary education, however, English is put on a lower level priority" (Dardjowidjojo, 2003, p. 57).

Dardjowidjojo (p. 57) continues to explain that English is offered only four times a week; each time 45 minutes. In universities English may not be offered at all or once a week for two credits only. Dardjowidjojo (p.58) continues to explain that the teaching methodologies were kept on changing with the up to date methodologies, but success is not earned yet.

Although we seem to be always up to date as far as teaching methodologies are concerned, the same complaint has never disappeared: we have not been able to produce good English users.... Casual observation on Indonesian subtitles for English movies or sitcoms gives us a good clue as to how much the translators master this language.... Many graduate students, even in language, have to struggle in order to understand the textbooks they are using.

(Dardjowidjojo, 2003, p. 58-59)

The learning of English at schools and universities will not be much different from what has been going on these years. The changing of curriculum from 1984 to 1994 etc. did not really bring much difference in the real practice of teaching and learning, because both teachers and students are busy with one goal, namely passing the exam, now the national exam. Although now the schools themselves hold the conversation exam for the students, the national exam is what the teachers are worried about. What is stated in the curriculum is sometimes different from what is carried out in the classrooms.

Learners at schools and universities probably will not get the maximum result from school because of various reasons as detected by Dardjowidjojo (2003), from the size of the class to the teachers' ability and salary. However, the choice of learning materials should be well considered. It is better to use books published by credible publishers, because at least

learners are exposed to the right English in spite of the so many problems concerning methods, size of class, hours of learning, teachers' qualification, and learners' motivation. The choice of what books to use is easier to control than the other problems, although it brings its own problems, such as who will decide, whether or not the person who makes decisions really understand the matter etc.

If the aim of teaching of English in schools and universities in Indonesian is to make Indonesian students competitive internationally, then the books used should also refer to the English used in formal international occasions. It is this variety of English that learners should learn and that should be taught in the classrooms because it is this variety of English that creates mutual intelligibility and used by other nations in international occasions or the standard English. Honey (1997, p. 1) explains it as follows "By standard English I mean the language in which this book is written, which is essentially the same form of English used in books and newspapers all over the world." If the variety taught is different from the one used by most nations in the world, it is unlikely that Indonesian students can compete in international occasions.

People are now aware that English in formal education actually gives the chance to compete internationally. In India, according to Wang (2007, p. xiv), private colleges advertise by using the sentence "we teach in English." "To actually forsake the public system that teaches in your own language for the private one that teaches in English is an increasingly common phenomenon." In Indonesia the same phenomenon occurs. Schools include the use of English and the existence of English laboratory in their fliers and people choose schools applying bilingual education where English is used as an introductory language. In India the fees of the private colleges are "low compared to elsewhere" (ibid.), in Indonesia schools with bilingual education are expensive. Actually there is already the market; in Indonesia people are ready to pay more money provided that English is used in schools. In conclusion,

the variety of English that should be learnt by students in formal education is the one used by people in formal occasion. The other varieties are learnt from media and popular culture.

### **English learning outside formal education**

The Internet encourages people, especially the youth, to learn English. Nowadays internet supplies what people need, from information, education to entertainment. It is not new that now people can play on-line game in the Internet and they can earn money also from it. In order to play the game, they have to know English. This is a strong motivation to make them to learn English: besides, "the opportunities are unlimited even at the level of the individual: anyone with access to the medium can now present a personal diary-type statement to the world, of unlimited length, in the form of a *blog*..."(Crystal, 2006, p. 404). However, the English learnt in the Internet is not the formal one, because the kind of language used is different according to Crystal (ibid. p. 402): "Indeed, the extent of the difference is so great that it amounts to the arrival of a new medium, often called *computer-mediated communication*, which blends properties of traditional written and spoken language." Based on this quotation, it can be assumed that the variety of English used in the Internet can be any variety. This gives the chance for people to learn different varieties of English learnt at formal education. The chance to read and write in English is now greater than before and anyone that has access to the Internet can make use of it.

Another media, actually the cheapest, that can be used as a source to learn English is television. If films in Indonesian television channels are not dubbed, but well subtitled, television can be used as a media for English learning. Television actually provides exposure to English because a lot of films on TV are American films. Listening to the English dialogs and also reading the subtitle means listening to English utterances and understand the meaning of the utterances; this is a process in acquiring a language. In films, utterances heard by viewers are uttered in a context, namely the story in the film. Therefore, films give

examples to use utterances in a situation. Unfortunately, quite a number of films are dubbed, and the translation in the subtitle often has errors, even serious errors. For example, 'give me a hand' is literally translated as *berikan tanganmu* rather than *bantu aku* (help me).

In short, the learning of English in Indonesia, especially for the youth, will be like what Crystal (2006, p. 400) describes concerning the learning of English in Japan.

Young children cannot avoid being exposed to English in such domains as advertising, television, the Internet, and pop music, and inevitably develop a considerable passive knowledge of (some domains of) English. There is an increased awareness of English vocabulary through the assimilation of loanwords into Japanese. And the popularity of English motivates a degree of spontaneous active (albeit often non-standard) use, both in speech and writing, as when children (or adults) imitate discourse exchanges they have encountered in English-language films or make use of idiomatic expressions they have seen in Internet interactions.

With the development of technology, the chance of learning English outside formal education increases. It is up to the people whether they want to use it or not.

### **Pop Culture**

In terms of broadcasting and TV programs, nowadays there are news programs that are in Chinese and English, such as Metro TV. In terms of cinemas, actors and actresses, those of Americans and of Hong Kong, are not strange to Indonesian people. Hong Kong martial arts films are on Indonesian TV channels and cinemas. Hong Kong actors like Jacky Chan and Jet Li and actresses like Gong Li and Michelle Yeoh are in Hollywood films. However, in terms of popular music, the West still wins. English songs are more familiar to Indonesian ears than Chinese songs.

The development of technology means the birth of new concepts and new words. From the history of English language in the Renaissance period, it is known that the increased activity in almost every field and the translation of great works from Latin and Greek literature brought many new words into English.

English was undoubtedly inadequate, as compared to the classical languages, to express the thought which those languages embodied and which in England was now becoming part of a rapidly expanding civilization. The translations that appeared in such numbers convinced people of the truth of this fact. The very act of translation brings home to the translators the limitations of their medium and tempts them to borrow from other languages the terms whose lack they feel in their own. For writers to whom Latin was almost a second mother tongue the temptation to transfer and naturalize in English important Latin radicals was particularly great. This was so, too, with French and Italian. In this way many foreign words were introduced into English. (Baugh and Cable, 1997, p. 210-211)

Since the development in technology is associated with the West, and the technology is new to Indonesia, it means that Indonesian language does not have the words needed to convey the concept. Then new English words will enter Indonesian vocabulary. Although lots of English vocabulary enters Indonesian vocabulary, the language is still Indonesian, just like French permeated English vocabulary, but the language is still English (Baugh and Cable, p. 179).

Another area that will be influenced by English is songs and films. One film that can be mentioned is *Eiffel, I'm in love*. Although the dialogue in the film is in Bahasa Indonesia, the title is in English. Besides film, one Indonesian *sinetron* (soap opera) where Meriam Belina is one the actresses in the film, uses fillers like "you know" and mixes English words

in her Indonesian sentences. Another one is one episode in *Alisa*. The character who is a new rich person always uses code mixing, mixing English words within her Indonesian sentences. In another *sinetron* a character who is a villager, a girl friend of Kabayan (a character in Sundanese folklore) also does similar code mixing, because she wants to have the image of a modern upper class girl. English is portrayed as something that gives a new identity, modernity, and is associated with upper class society.

Not only films, but songs are also influenced. If Malay words can sneak into an English song like the one below in Malaysian context,

If I die tonight, what would I do on my last day

I know I'd wake early in the morn' for crack of dawn's last pray

Then probably go for breakfast like I used to do

Fried kuey teow FAM and roti canai at Ruja's with my boo' (Pennycook 2007:3)

then English words have also sneaked into Indonesian popular songs, for example these two songs. One is "*Cari Pacar Lagi*" (looking for a new girlfriend) by ST12 group band in the song

*Cintaku, cintaku padamu tak besar seperti dulu* (I don't really love you that much now)

*Temuku begitu, menilai cintaku, begitu rendah di matamu* (In my opinion, you don't appreciate my love for you)

*Sayangku, sayangku padamu* (my love for you)

*Tak indah seperti dulu* (is not as beautiful as before)

*Maumu begini maumu begitu* (you always want things differently)

*Tak pernah engkau hargai aku* (you never appreciate me)

*Ooh I am sorry, ku tak kan love you lagi* (I am sorry I will not love you anymore)

*Kupeluk, memeluk dirimu tak hangat seperti dulu* (My hug is not as warm as before)

*Kujadi selingkuh karna kau selingkuh* (I have another girl, because you have another man)

*Biar sama-sama kita selingkuh* (Both of us have another person)



*Ooh I am sorry, ku tak kan love you lagi* (I am sorry I do not love you anymore)

*Biar kuputuskan saja* (We broke up)

*Kutak mau batinku tersiksa* (I don't want my heart hurt)

*Jangan kau selalu merasa* (Don't always feel you are the only one)

*Wanita bukan dirimu saja* (You are not the only woman)

*Lebih baik kuputuskan saja* (It's enough)

*Cari pacar lagi* (I look for a new girl)

The mixing is longer in the following song by Cinta Laura.

### **Oh Baby**

*Kau bikin pusing tujuh keliling* (you give me a headache)

*Buat aku mabuk kepayang* (You make me in love)

*Gayamu cool dan seksi* (You are cool and sexy)

*Mentok aku kepada kamu* (Only you)

*Jadi semakin aku cinta* (I love you more)

*Kau sihir aku yang sedang kosong* (You enchant me who has no boyfriend)

*Di saat aku butuh cinta* (When I need love)

*Mantra-mantra dahsyatmu* (your words of love)

*Menarik aku yang sendiri* (Attract me who is single)

*Memang lagi putus cinta* (I broke up)

*Katakan kau sungguh-sungguh* (Tell me that you are serious)

*Hanya ada ku di dalam hatimu* (Only you in my heart)

*Katakan-katakan kau cinta aku* (Tell me that you love me)

*Untuk selamanya kau jadi milikku* (Forever you are mine)

I don't wanna lose you

Yes I wanna hold you

I don't wanna make you

Make you sad and make you cry

Oh baby baby baby (baby baby)

Oh baby baby baby (hu wuoo uoo uoo)

Oh baby baby baby (my baby)  
 Oh baby baby baby (baby oh yeeah)

In this song the code mixing is longer, not only words, but the whole stanza is in English. These two songs are not the only ones that have codemixing.

### **Conclusion**

Compared to English, Chinese language is not fortunate enough in two points, namely language attitude and the intrinsic factors of the language. Language attitude or attitudes, according to Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 120), are "subjective evaluations of both language varieties and their speakers, whether the attitudes are held by individuals or by groups." The fact that conflicts between the indigenous and Chinese in South East Asia occurs most often in Indonesia (Lestariana W., 2006) show that this group of people is not really liked by the majority and this influences the majority's evaluations to the language. The economic, military, and cultural factors that can boost its position as a new fast emerging foreign language can be much slowed down by this attitude.

Besides, the intrinsic factors of the Chinese language are also another factor that makes it unable to compete with English. If the reason given in choosing Malay as the national language, and not Javanese, is because Javanese is a complicated and hierarchical language (2007, p. 39 and Suryadinata, 2000, p. 45), then the writing system—the Chinese characters—and the fact that it is a tonal language will not make Chinese as popular as English in Indonesia. The Chinese in Indonesia is only three per cent of the population (Suryadinata 2000, p. 39), and probably only this small number of people who ignore the difficulties of learning Chinese, compared to more than ninety per cent who have the opinions that English is easier than Chinese. In Indonesia it is unlikely that Chinese will be as popular as English, and that means English will be the only foreign language as usual.

Although Chinese will be learnt by more people than before, it cannot compete with English in Indonesia. English will still be a more important foreign language than Chinese in Indonesia. However, English will stay as a foreign language and will not be able to win over Bahasa Indonesia, although it has permeated into films, songs, names of real estate housing, names of shops, cafes, restaurants, etc. and gives a new identity to Indonesians who are able to speak English. The English that Indonesian people would learn and speak is the one they hear the most. However, the English that Indonesian learners need to learn in schools and in universities is the standard variety, the one used in books and formal occasions, so that Indonesian students are able to compete internationally; other varieties will be learnt through the media and the Internet.

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