Indonesian High School Students’ Attitudes towards Varieties of English: A Survey Study

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Abstract
The present study was conducted to investigate Indonesian High School students’ attitudes towards World Englishes, a construct developed based on a three-circle model proposed by Kachru. The study used an online questionnaire consisting of 22 items. The number of high school students from various regions in Indonesia participating in the study was 121. It was found that there was a moderate level of acceptance towards varieties of English. The participants believed that they should learn and be taught English varieties from inner-circle countries. However, the participants seemed to have very strong beliefs towards and pride in their local accents, to have high respect towards various accents around the world, and to perceive English to belong to whoever speaks it. Based on the finding on the participants’ positive attitude towards their local accents, English instruction could focus on the eventual purpose of learning a language, which is communication and building positive students’ self-perception about themselves regarding English. Hence, instead of comparing themselves with native speakers of English, students could focus on sharpening their English skills regardless of accents to be a part of the global community. The limitations and contributions of the present study are also presented, along with possible directions for relevant future studies in the field.

Keywords: Accents, attitudes, Indonesian students, world Englishes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The popularity of World Englishes has spread worldwide due to globalisation. More varieties of English emerged by time as a result of the interaction between native and non-native English speakers (Bhowmik, 2015). This concept brings a diversity of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Rezaei et al., 2019). The canon work of Kachru (1990) proposed the three-circle model which can be used as a reference to understand the concept of the World Englishes. The model consisted of ‘inner circle’ countries where the majority of the people speak English as the first language (L1), ‘outer circle’ countries where English is spoken as a second language (ESL), and ‘expanding circle’ countries where English is spoken as a foreign language (EFL) (Kachru, 1990). The term ‘World Englishes’ uses a plural noun acknowledging varieties of English developed in both outer circle and expanding circle countries (Patria, 2021).

Though World Englishes has become more popular in the 21st century (Joshi, 2013), the acceptance of this concept is still vague (Rezaei et al., 2019). In many EFL contexts, parts of the expanding circle, ironically, English varieties spoken by non-native speakers seemed to be less acceptable among teachers and students (Al-Dosari, 2011; Almegren, 2018; Huong & Hiep, 2010; Muhalim, 2016; Pudyastuti & Atma, 2014). Thus, in practice, schools tend to refer to the ‘inner circle’ varieties as a model for providing classroom instruction, textbooks, and materials (Birkner, 2014). In the Asian EFL contexts, most of which are either outer and expanding circle countries, English varieties from the outer circle and expanding circle seemed to be considered less prestigious than the inner circle varieties (Choi, 2007; Galloway, 2013; Muhalim, 2016; Pudyastuti & Atma, 2014). For these reasons, conducting a study on World Englishes in the expanding circle countries such as Indonesia is important.

Furthermore, the plethora of research in the field has been overwhelmed by studies conducted in university contexts (e.g. Choomthong & Manowong, 2020; Galloway, 2013; Huong & Hiep, 2010; Jung, 2005; Lee, 2012; Rezaei et al., 2019). In comparison, studies conducted in high school contexts are limited. One of such studies is a study by Norman (2017) in the Swedish context. In Indonesia, specifically, quantitative studies involving 22 Indonesian teachers of English, and 46 university students by Pudyastuti and Atma (2014) and Waloyo and Jarum (2019), respectively, albeit the possible contributions, may not be sufficient to obtain more generalisable data as the number of participants in those two quantitative studies was barely adequate to obtain generalisable data, the forte of quantitative studies (Gray, 2014). Hence, a quantitative study through a survey involving more Indonesian high school students from various regions may offer generalisable data (Gray, 2014) in the relatively under-researched Indonesian high school context. Involving perhaps equally under-researched Indonesian junior high school students could also offer some merits. However, considering these students may just embark on their obligatory English classes at this level, involving senior high school students who have learned English formally at school for a longer duration may be more strategic as their attitudes towards English may have been formed more clearly. The findings of such studies can also possibly inform English teachers at the high school level about whether they can introduce varieties of English during instruction or the extent to which they can do that. Accordingly, based on the rationales, the present study seeks to investigate Indonesian senior high school students’ attitudes towards varieties of English.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 World Englishes

The concept of World Englishes represents different varieties of English used in ‘diverse linguistics’ and ‘cultural context’ (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). Kachru (1990) proposed a three-circle model regarding the varieties of English around the world. Each circle contains names of countries in terms of their English varieties, presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Three-circle model (Kachru, 1990).

Figure 1 shows that the first circle, ‘inner circle’, consists of English-speaking countries such as the United States of America (US), United Kingdom (UK), Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, where English is mainly spoken as the first language (L1). The next circle is the ‘outer circle’, containing countries using English as their second language (ESL). The last circle is called as ‘expanding circle’, consisting of countries using English as a foreign language (EFL), Indonesia being one of them. Geographical labels are usually given to each variety, for example, ‘Singaporean English’, ‘Japanese English’, and the likes (Leimgruber, 2013).

The three-circle model by Kachru (1990) has been criticised in several subsequent works (e.g., Disney, 2010; Schmitz, 2014). For example, Disney (2010) argued that this model failed to capture the use of the language in locations mentioned by Kachru and the locations not formally recorded by its colonial history (Disney, 2010). The three-circle model also seemed to ignore the variation within the locals of each country (Bolton, 2005). Furthermore, Schmitz (2014) also argued that Kachru’s three-circle model could not meet the presence of English in this 21st century.

Despite these debates, Disney (2010) stated that although the model is somewhat limited, its status remains valid, and it provides a vivid notion of ‘standard’ varieties and ‘non-standard’ ones. Along the same lines, many studies have been conducted using the three-circle model in various contexts in the last two decades (Almegren, 2018; Choi, 2007; Norman, 2017).
2.2 Previous Related Studies

Although World Englishes concept may seemingly be acceptable among scholars, studies in this field are still popular since the acceptance of the concept of World Englishes among students and teachers is still ambiguous (Al-Dosari, 2011; Almegren, 2018; Choi, 2007; Jung, 2005; Muhalim, 2016; Rezaei et al., 2019; Schmitz, 2014; Waloyo & Jarum, 2019). In the European context, Norman (2017) conducted a study involving 80 Swedish high school students in a survey. The study reported students’ belief that having a native-like accent was overvalued and that most of them valued communication over native-like English accents (Norman, 2017).

There were also several studies in the Middle Eastern contexts. For example, Almegren (2018) conducted a study on Saudi Arabian young students’ attitudes towards World Englishes. The study found that the participants were reluctant to accept varieties of English besides L1 varieties such as British or American English (Almegren, 2018). Another study conducted in a Saudi Arabian university context by Al-Dosari (2011) reported relatively the same finding. In a similar vein, in Iran, Rezaei et al. (2019) found that their 140 participants perceived American and British accents to have ‘best’ quality with their Persian accent being at the bottom of the scale.

The results of studies in Korea showed relatively the same findings as those in the Middle East. Choi (2007), for example, conducted a survey study in the Korean university context. The questionnaire was distributed to two groups of students, the first having never been exposed to World Englishes, whilst the second having learned about the concept. Choi (2007) found that the first group perceived L1 varieties as the ‘standard’ English whilst the second group was more open towards other varieties. In line with that, Lee (2012) also found that Korean students could not accept the Korean variety of English. Furthermore, Japanese students seemed to prefer L1 varieties of English as well. Galloway (2013) conducted a study on the acceptance of the concept of the varieties of English at a university in Japan. She found that Japanese students were uncomfortable with their thick Japanese accent when speaking in English. Thus, they wanted to speak like native English speakers. Despite that, they also believed that they should learn the other varieties of English such as Indian English and Chinese English (Galloway, 2013), suggesting the Japanese students’ openness to expanding circle varieties.

Furthermore, several studies have also been conducted in the Southeast Asian context. A study in the Vietnamese university context by Huong and Hiep (2010) also reported that Vietnamese teachers and students had no belief in World Englishes. They viewed American or British Englishes as the standards of learning and teaching English. In line with that, a recent study by Choomthong and Manowong (2020) in a Thai university context also reported that their participants favoured accents spoken by native speakers. However, they also reported that several varieties of English from the expanding circle such as Thailand and Indonesia were easier to understand.

In the Indonesian context, there have also been several studies in the field. Pudyastuti and Atma (2014) conducted a limited quantitative study involving 22 English teachers. Their teacher participants believed that it was useful for both teachers and students to know varieties of English. However, in common teaching practice, they preferred to teach the L1 varieties, especially British and American ones. In line with that, a survey study by Muhalim (2016) involving 51 university students found that these students were unfamiliar with World Englishes. Most of the students did not
know about other varieties of English besides American and British Englishes. In comparison, Waloyo and Jarum (2019) reported their participants’ confidence in speaking English with their accents.

Regarding the results of those studies, though not specifically in World Englishes literature, Yule (2014) proposed that accent is a part of identity. Therefore, expanding circle students’ generally low perception towards local accents in speaking in English has been an irony and thus, an issue (Schmitz, 2014). Jung (2005) argued that repeated exposure to certain materials during instruction could affect students’ perceptions. For example, repeated exposure to the inner circle varieties leads students to positive perceptions towards these varieties (Choi, 2007; Faris, 2014; Jung, 2005; Rini, 2014). In comparison, English instructions embracing learners’ accents may potentially facilitate learners not only to learn the language but also to have a sense of belonging towards the language in the framework of international posture (Yashima, 2009) where students speak English ‘differently’ from one to another as a part of the global community.

3. METHODS

The present study used a survey as the method of data collection. The survey was conducted by distributing a Google Form questionnaire consisting of 22 statements regarding attitudes towards varieties of English. Though World Englishes could include varieties of grammar and vocabulary, several items of the present study’s questionnaire were dedicated to varieties of accents. A number of 19 of the 22 items were adapted from a study by Choi (2007) and three items (item numbers 5, 10, and 17) were from that by Rousseau (2012) in the Korean university context, the same expanding circle country as Indonesia. Statements in the original questionnaire were revised to facilitate relevance to Indonesian participants. The possible Likert-scale responses were also modified. For example, the possible neutral response in the original questionnaires was omitted. In the adapted questionnaire, there were four possible responses in each of the questionnaire statements, ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’, and ‘Strongly Disagree’. The questionnaire consisted of 11 negative items in which ‘Strongly Agree’ indicated a low attitude towards World Englishes, and 11 positive statements in which ‘Strongly Agree’ suggested a high attitude towards World Englishes. In the positive statements, ‘Strongly Agree’ was equal to 4 points, ‘Agree’ was equal to 3 points, ‘Disagree’ was equal to 2 points, and ‘Strongly Disagree’ was equal to 1 point. The responses of the eleven negative items were reverse scored.

The questionnaire items were translated from English to Indonesian to allow the target participants’ comprehension and more valid responses. Back translation into English was conducted to avoid changes in meaning during the translation process. Before being distributed, the questionnaire was piloted to several university students majoring in English based on whose feedback minor revisions were made.

The Google Form questionnaire link was distributed to senior high school students in Indonesia for six months, from September 2020 to February 2021 through various social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter as well as messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. The total number of senior high school students who completed the questionnaire was 121. Of these 121 students, 58 (47.9%) were males and 63 (52.1%) were females. They were 15 to 19 years old. These
participants were from various islands or regions in Indonesia namely, Sumatera (30.6%), Papua (15.7%), Java (11.6%), Sulawesi (4.1%), Kalimantan (0.8%), and other regions (37.2%).

The present study applied the research ethic principles. An informed consent form, detailing the objectives of the study as well as the participants’ rights, was used in this study. It was to ensure the participants’ voluntary participation, respecting their autonomy whether to participate in the present study (Vilma, 2018) as well as to ensure they understood the study before deciding to participate, minimising possible harms. Besides, this study maximised the benefits for the student participants as they obtained a monetary appreciation for their participation.

Furthermore, the data obtained from the Google Form questionnaire were processed in SPSS 25. To achieve the present study objective, the descriptive formula was used to calculate the means and percentages of the data. The sequence of data collection and analysis can be seen in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. The sequence and data collection and analysis.](image)

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of the present study’s questionnaire on the high school students’ attitudes towards World Englishes was .63, suggesting an acceptable level of reliability in terms of internal consistency. The mean score of the participants’ responses on all the questionnaire items was 2.59 on a scale of 1 to 4, generally indicating a moderate level of acceptance to World Englishes. The findings could be categorised into three themes, the participants’ views on preferred English varieties, their views on accepted pronunciation and accents, and their views on the ownership of English.

4.1 Views on Preferred English Varieties

Eight questionnaire items, numbers 1, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 19, and 20, were about the participants’ views on preferred English varieties, which seemed to be ambivalent. They strongly preferred the inner circle varieties in four items, whilst strongly preferred the outer and expanding circle varieties in three other items. The mean scores and the detailed responses can be observed in Table 1.
Table 1. Views on preferred English varieties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>It is important for me to use American, British, and Australian English.</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>If the use of English is not corresponding to American or British English, it is incorrect.</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The kind of English that is taught in schools must have American or British standards.</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>The school exercises should use the standard of British or American English.</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I prefer to use British or American English either in speaking or writing.</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I am more comfortable speaking in English with the non-English natives (Thais, Indonesian, Korean, etc.).</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>The other variations of English from all over the world should be taught in schools.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>The exercises in schools can use non-standard English variations.</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In several items (numbers 1, 8, 9, 11), more than 70% of the participants indicated their preference for the inner circle varieties of English. In this case, they might see these countries as the countries where English was the native language of the majority of the people. There were two possible reasons behind this finding. The first reason was related to the limited exposure of the participants to other varieties of English. This limited exposure could lead the students to consider the inner circle Englishes as the ‘right’ and ‘legitimate’ ones (Choi, 2007; Rini, 2014). Secondly, the participants may want to sound like native speakers as doing so could make them look intelligent as speaking like native speakers was seen as prestigious (Almegren, 2018; Rini, 2014). Several previous studies in various expanding circle contexts also found relatively similar findings (Almegren, 2018; Choi, 2007; Rezaei et al. 2019). In Saudi Arabia, for instance, Almegren (2018) and Rezaei et al. (2019) found that their student participants preferred to sound like English native speakers as they would be seen as intelligent.

However, apart from item number 7 which suggested relatively balanced responses between preference on the inner circle varieties and on those of the others, item numbers 17, 19, and 20 suggested that more than 70% of participants’ inclination towards outer and expanding circle varieties, for example, by endorsing the inclusion on the outer and expanding circle varieties in instruction at school. This finding may suggest the participants’ ‘curiosity’ to the potentials of learning ‘non-standard’ varieties of English. Though findings of several previous studies suggested students’ perceived importance of being taught the inner circle English varieties studies (Choi, 2007; Galloway, 2013; Jung, 2005), the present study’s particular finding could be quite encouraging for English teachers. They could provide some materials...
accommodating World Englishes, for example, conversation videos or audios of non-native speakers of English. Using the term ‘Standard English’ to refer to the inner circle English varieties, Jung (2005) argued that if the classroom setting orients lessons towards Standard English, there will be a great potential that students have a Standard English view (Jung, 2005). Likewise, if classroom instructional design orients towards World Englishes, students can have a World Englishes view. Moreover, as inner-circle varieties especially those of American and British have dominated English lesson materials in Indonesia (Faris, 2014), a step-by-step inclusion of other English varieties in the class instruction may offer students more learning choices and opportunities.

4.2 Views on Accepted Accents and Pronunciation

Eight questionnaire items, numbers 3, 5, 6, 10, 14, 15, 21, and 22, were related to the participants’ perceptions on accepted pronunciation and accents. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Views on accepted accents and pronunciation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Only American, British, and Australian Englishes are the standard Englishes.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I am ashamed of the Indonesian accent that I have when I speak English.</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I always try to get rid of my Indonesian accent when I speak in English.</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The correct pronunciation should be the same as British or American pronunciation.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I am proud of the local accent that I have.</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Other English speakers should know the local accent that I have.</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Some mistakes in pronouncing English words are not a problem.</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>It is important for me to know and respect the various English accents from all over the world.</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the participants’ views on preferred accents and pronunciation were seemingly indecisive. Whilst the findings on item numbers 5, 14, 15, 21, and 22 suggested their preference towards outer and expanding circle English varieties especially in terms of pronunciation and accents, item numbers 3, 6, and 10 suggested their preference on the inner circle ones. More than 70% of the participants considered only the inner circle varieties the ‘standard’ ones as seen in the responses to items 3 and 10. In addition, 69% of these Indonesian student participants believed that their Indonesian accent should not be noticeable when speaking English.

However, as in the responses to item numbers 5, 14, 15, 21, and 22, the majority of the participants seemed to ‘switch sides’ to the outer and expanding circle varieties when responding to questionnaire statements about local accents and mistakes in
pronunciation. More than 69% of the participants endorsed respect and acknowledgement towards local accents and considered some pronunciation mistakes not a problem. This finding was in line with the findings of several previous studies (Norman, 2017; Waloyo & Jarum, 2019). Eighty Swedish students in a study by Norman (2017) also considered that having a native-like accent in speaking English was not highly crucial. In a similar vein, in the Indonesian university context, for example, Waloyo and Jarum (2019) reported that their 46 student participants were not ashamed of their L1-accented English. In comparison, this finding contrasted with the findings in the Middle Eastern context, where students did not have a positive perception towards their local accents in speaking in English (Almegren, 2018; Rezaei et al., 2019). According to Schmitz (2014), outer's or expanding circle students’ insufficient respect towards local accents in speaking in English has become a concern.

Hence, the finding of the present study on the participants’ respect to various English accents could be an oasis indicating openness that people all over the world speak English differently influenced by their local accents. Some exposures of various accents on the internet could be the factor of the participants having positive attitudes towards accents even though they still considered that American, British, and Australian English the standard ones, as seen in items numbers 3 and 10 explained earlier. Another factor that may play a part was the participants’ background as Indonesians speaking various regional languages as L1 and thus having various accents that could be different from one to another. As accent is a part of identity (Yule, 2014), the participants expressed confidence in and respect towards their local accents and ‘accented’ Englishes. The finding may inform English teachers from Indonesia that their students have positive beliefs about their local accents and this could be facilitated in their English class instruction. Rather than trying to mirror native speakers’ pronunciation and accents, they could be facilitated to realise a more reasonable goal of achieving intelligible pronunciation with their respective local accents.

4.3 Views on the Ownership of English

Six questionnaire items, numbers 2, 4, 12, 13, 16, 18, and 21 were about the participants’ views on the ownership of English. The results are presented in Table 3.

As seen from Table 3, only item number 2 indicated the student participants’ endorsement towards the inner circle varieties, in this case, the US and Great Britain. This finding suggests that the participants saw these two countries as the countries where English ‘was born’. This finding was in line with the findings in the Korean context (Choi, 2007; Jung, 2005) where the Korean participants also considered the US and Great Britain as the ‘origin’ of English. Interestingly, the same finding of these two different contexts could stem from different reasons. In Korea, where English native speakers widely held English teaching positions at universities or private courses, students could easily see the countries where these teachers were from as the ‘origin’ of English. In comparison, in the present study, the high regard for the American and British English varieties could be from the very limited use of English in real communications in Indonesia. As argued by Yule (2014), most schools merely focus on delivering the knowledge about the language than facilitating students to use the language for social communication (Yule, 2014). This could lead expanding circle
students, such as those of the present study, to see that English was not ‘one of their languages.’

Table 3. Views on the ownership of English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Basically, English is from America or Britain.</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>It is only America or Britain who reserve the right to decide how the English language grows.</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>The local variation (Indonesian) of English should be legitimate and equal with American or British English.</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>There should be more teachers who know the other varieties of English (Excluding American/ British English).</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>English can be used differently from the English-natives (British/ American) uses.</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>English belongs to anyone who uses it.</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses on item numbers 4, 12, 13, 16, and 18 uniformly suggested the participants’ sense of belonging towards English. More than 75% of the participants viewed that local varieties should be treated as equal to the inner circle ones, that more teachers should know these varieties, that English could be used differently depending on the speakers, and that English belonged to anyone using it. Interestingly, this finding seemed to contradict the finding on item number 2 previously discussed on the ‘origin’ of English. In this case, the participants might realise that English was the native language of the American and British people. However, they also believed that English belonged to anyone speaking it, and English native speakers had nothing to do with how this language was used (Galloway, 2013). Al-Dosari (2011) mentioned that some non-native exposures on the internet may affect this perception (Al-Dosari, 2011). For instance, on the internet, the participants in the present study might have seen people from all over the world, including from Indonesia, speaking English, and this could affect their view towards to whom English belonged. The finding of the present study was also similar to that in Korea by Choi (2007) where the Korean participants disagreed with the idea of English belonging to American or British people. They also believed that the language belonged to people who used it for communication (Choi, 2007). The similarity could give some kind of indication that generally the expanding circle students, for example, Indonesians and Koreans, seemed to have a sense of belonging to the language they spoke, regardless of their proficiency. This, furthermore, could be attributed to the possible efforts they made in learning the language, which stimulated a certain degree of sense of belonging to the language.

In general, the participants in the present study reported ambivalent attitudes towards varieties of English. For instance, on one hand, the participants generally believed that they should aim to speak the way native speakers do. On the other hand,
they also reported their respect towards various accents when people spoke English, the pride of their local accents, as well as their beliefs that English belonged to everyone speaking it. These participants’ ambivalent attitudes could reflect the complex position of English in the expanding circle countries. The participants’ high regard for the inner circle varieties, albeit seemingly unpopular considering that the participants were students from an expanding circle country, should not be discouraged provided that it motivated them to learn English instead of making them stop learning out of the feeling of incompetence. Furthermore, the participants’ positive attitudes towards various accents could be capitalised in English instruction to raise their awareness that local accents were distinctive features of which they did not need to be ashamed. This awareness could potentially help students to be more confident in speaking in English. Even more, realising this, rather than trying to speak English as native speakers do, Indonesian students could speak English regardless of accents in the framework of international posture, relating oneself to the international community rather than to a specific group of people (Yashima, 2009), for example, those from the inner-circle countries.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary, the study found that the 121 high school participants generally had a moderate level of acceptance towards varieties of English. Though they believed that they should learn and be taught the English varieties of the inner-circle countries, they respected various accents around the world. They were proud of and had a strong belief towards their local accents and perceived English to belong to whoever speaks it.

Furthermore, the present study’s limitations should be addressed. First, the quantitative study was bound to produce superficial findings on the students’ attitudes obtained from the self-report close-ended questionnaire. Secondly, the students’ ambivalent responses on several questionnaire items could also be attributed to the formulation of the statements in the Indonesian language, despite the questionnaire being back-translated and piloted. Last but not least, the present study drew upon the concentric circle model of World Englishes by Kachru (1990) that may be viewed by several scholars to be oversimplifying the spread of English worldwide.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, the present study offered several possible contributions. First, considering the quite large number of participants from various places in Indonesia, the present study possibly provided generalisable data in the under-researched Indonesian senior high school context about the students’ views on their preferred English varieties, their views on accepted pronunciation and accents, and the ownership of English. The finding on the students’ pride in their local accents and respect for various accents of English speakers all over the world could also inform class instructions. For Indonesian students, as there are more non-native speakers than native speakers in the world, there is a higher possibility of encountering fellow non-native speakers in the international community in the future. Hence, rather than aiming for a native speaker’s ability, meaning speaking with native speakers’ accents, English instruction could instead focus on the intelligibility of communication regardless of the students’ various accents. English class instruction could be directed towards English as Lingua Franca (ELF) where English is seen as a way of communicating among people from various backgrounds and cultures, including accents. This could
boost the students’ sense of ownership to English, increase their confidence, and stimulate them to learn English more.

Last but not least, there are several recommendations for future studies. First, conducting qualitative studies where both students’ and teachers’ views on the varieties of English were compared could be worthwhile. Future studies could also investigate teachers’ views on the possible uses of English materials from the outer and expanding circle varieties of English. Furthermore, the same questionnaire used in the present study, with necessary adaptations, could also be distributed to Indonesian teachers of English or pre-service teachers of English to see their attitudes towards varieties of English, considering their strategic position in English instruction in Indonesia.

REFERENCES


