

## Students' Perceptions and Attitudes toward World Englishes Paradigm

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### Abstract

The study aims to describe the pre-service English teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward World Englishes (WE) Paradigm from Kachru's theory within the Indonesian context. Limited studies have been undertaken relating to Indonesian pre-service teachers' perceptions and attitudes to the WE paradigm. The design of this study employed a qualitative case study focusing on the exploration of an individual pre-service English teacher's perceptions and attitudes toward the phenomenon of the WE paradigm. Twenty participants who are pre-service English teachers participated in this study. Initially, the participants were asked to take The Verbal Guise Test to for stimulating the participants' knowledge (cognitive) about varieties of English and introduce the WE paradigm. Afterward, the semi-structured interview was conducted with open-ended questions to explore how the students view different varieties of WE. The data were then transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis by coding, classifying themes, and interpreting. The findings of the study indicated that academically participants still have a preference of the inner circle (IC) English to support the learning process. But for non-academic context the majority of participants had the ability to understand and recognize English variations and showed interest in using and learning more about WE.

**Keywords:** Attitude, Perception, Pre-service English Teacher, World Englishes paradigm

### Introduction

The number of English speakers grew from more than five to seven million to possibly as much as two billion at the beginning of the 21st century (Kirk, 2018). In addition, Zhang Y (2019) highlights that the most widely used and influential model of the spread of English undoubtedly has been state by Kachru (1992). Therefore, Kachru

(1992) points out the study of World Englishes (WE) that requires multidisciplinary and integrative approaches. WE is a paradigm which focuses on the linguistic features of English varieties and sociolinguistic implications (Galloway, 2019). Imelwati (2022) maintains that paradigm shift involves a change in the target opponent's perspective, a shift in the language model, the liberation of non-native speakers from native speakers' expectations, and a change in the way that the English language is perceived as belonging to native speakers. There are Kachru's three concentric divisions of the English language, inner circle (IC), outer circle (OC), and expanding circle (EC) represent the diverse cultural context in which English is spread, acquired, and allocated in terms of its practical use. According to (Kachru, 1992), IC English consist of country where English is spoken as a first language and has become more widespread due immigration and colonization by English-speaking people, included the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United Stated. OC English has become an official second language alongside other national language, which English are typically postcolonial nations, includes Nigeria, Kenya, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Ghana, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Zambia and so on. EC English includes nations where English is taught in the educational institutions, English has constantly been labeled as a foreign language, the countries are China, Russia, Japan, Korea, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Nepal, Taiwan, and Indonesia.

A previous study by Lee (2016) investigated perceptions toward WE and factors that affect their perceptions and attitudes. The study indicated the participants still prefer and easily to recognize the inner circle (IC) English, subjects are interested in learning WE for less stressful, more interactive in communication and understandable contexts (Lee, 2016). Another study from (Jinghui, 2019) investigating Chinese English learners' acceptance, perceptions, and attitudes towards ENL, WE, and ELF-informed learning materials. These finding indicate language learners can cultivate attitudes toward the language that are compatible with the way that English is currently used. It is crucial to consider how WE and ELF are perceived in the Chinese context.

Researchers and teachers need to be more familiar about what materials needs to prepare to communicate in local and global contexts. (Silalahi, 2021) directed to find out the perceptions of English teachers in Indonesia regarding the WE phenomenon. He stated that Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEAFL) in Indonesia is still oriented to the native speakerism ideology, which holds that TEAFL

should be done by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST), they are believed to have better linguistic competence and contextual understanding than Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST). Zhang (2021) investigated how much Expanding Circle has been and will continue to be influenced by the WE paradigm. He found out The College English Test (CET), a localized LSLPT in China, illustrates the implicit of the WE paradigm from various angles and significantly contributes to the discussions of WE and LT. Another study from (Zain, 2022) identified pre-service English teachers' attitudes towards the use of WE in international English proficiency tests. The study reveal that the participants generally acknowledged the use of WE (accents and varieties) in international English proficiency tests, but they tended to disapprove of deviations from standard English grammar and vocabulary.

Alptekin in Fitriyah (2019) stated that drawing from previous studies, many English speakers still believe that native speakers are the ones who use English properly, this has become an emergency situation that English learners still do not know the varieties of English. In WE, the target culture does not necessarily need to be American, British, or another it is used in order to adapt one's speech to the many variations and be able to understand the speaker, it is important that WE study the nature of this various language.

Indonesia is one of those countries that uses English as the primary foreign language (Kachru, 1992). Due to the fact that English using in educational activities in Indonesia, where it is instead considered a foreign language, most of the time English is taught and learned in a classroom setting (Yoshinta, 2020). Some English language learners in Indonesia still have poor levels of agreement with English diversity (Imelwati S. , 2014). The researcher states that students' knowledge of the varieties of English still low, it still has lack of data related to student's perception and attitudes, especially from pre-service English students in the Indonesian context. Perception is the process by which we identify and assess sensor information. It includes the responses to the information. When we consider perception, we may envision a procedure how we take in sensory information from our surroundings and use it to communicate with it (Robbins, 2017). An attitude can be positive or negative, which makes it possible to recognize it as a "disposition", as a cognitive, attitudes can define as a belief to the world and the relationship between objects and social function (Garrett in Dragojevic et al, 2021). In the world of education, especially English education where they will be young teachers, and they would train a new educated generation, an awareness of

the importance of understanding WE is essential. Hence, this research wants to investigate students' perceptions and attitudes especially from pre-service English student toward varieties of English that could be manifested in IC, OC and EC drawing from Kachru's theory.

As it is mentioned in the background of the study, the study focuses on the attitude and perception of students who used English as a Foreign Language toward WE paradigm. Consequently, it is conducted to address the consequent research questions: (1) How do the participants perceive a variety of WE? (2) What are the participants' attitudes towards WE?

This study is expected to give a contribution to pre-service English teacher, teachers, and educational policymakers in Indonesia. Empirically, this study anticipates pre-service English teachers obtaining various information about WE in context for understanding the development of local English variations. Theoretically, this study expects to give a bit of knowledge with regard to learners' perception of WE, particularly in the Indonesian higher education context.

### **Research Methodology**

In this study, qualitative case study methodology provides tools for researcher to study about the topic. Case study is used when analyzing and describing multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of specific individuals, such as each person's activities, special needs, environment, a team of people, a specific institution, a problem (or issues), processes, phenomena, events, in certain institutions in depth with a variety of data source (Bein, 2018; Budiyanto, 2019; Simons in Santoso, 2019; Starman, 2013; Yin, 2014). The phenomenon that was discussed on this research is WE paradigm. The research participants were 20 (3 males and 17 females) pre-service English teachers who enrolled in TEFL (Teaching English for Foreign Language) course. They are individuals who will become English teachers. The participants were guided to express their worldviews through their stories, which helps the researchers to better comprehend the participants' behavior (Van Aken, 2018). Multiple data sources were used to increase the reliability of the data (Yin, 2014).

The data was collected for three weeks from May 9th, 2023 to May 23rd, 2023 which one meeting for audio material, and two meetings for interviews. The first stage to collect the data was audio materials, this method uses to help participants

understand the central phenomenon under study. Researcher played audio recording at least in 12 minutes, in each two minutes that is representative English speaker from different countries. The audio recording came from website called Global Englishes (<http://www.globalenglishes.com>) (IDEA, 2023; Rose, 2016) that developed by Dr. Heath Rose from University of Oxford. It was two audios for countries in The Inner Circle (UK and Australian), two audios for The Outer Circle (India and Malaysia), and two audios for Expanding circle (Indonesia and Korea). The recorded speakers were selected because they had recordings of similar length and language difficulty and the recorded were represented of speakers from all three Kachru's circles. Participants listened the recording and make a guess what nationality of each speaker and wrote on their answer sheet, in case of participants could not identify the nationality of the speakers, participants are request to wrote the part of world region or continent the speaker from. This test called Verbal Guise Test which is adopted from previous research (Lee, 2016). The aims of this test are to look at and stimulate participants' knowledge (cognitive) about varieties of English and to introduce WE paradigm to the participants.

The second stage was the interviews that were conducted for 10 days from May 15th, 2023 to May 23rd, 2023 with 10 participants who have high scores in Verbal Guise Test. The researchers applied semi-structured interviews and make the questions open-ended, in case the participants can freely talk about their experience and to elicit a wider variety of responses. To conducted the answers, researcher recorded participants' responses to make sure of the great results and make it easy to collect the data. (Cresswell, 2012). All of the interviews were conducted at one of the universities in West Sumatra, Indonesia. The length of audio for the interviews were around 10 minutes to 20 minutes. Finally, totaling 2 hours and 43 minutes of audio data was gotten from 10 interviews, and all the data were recorded.

This research used thematic analysis to examine the data in order to create a rich thematic description of an understudied area. Clarke and Braun in Maguere et al (2017) state that thematic analysis is a technique for finding, examining, and reporting themes in data. The first step to analyzing data was to organize the data, after organizing and transcribing the data, the researchers created a list of ideas and extracted initial codes. In this study, the information was coded applying Saldanas' model with three dimensions of coding; lexical coding, thematic coding, and

discursive coding (Saldaña, 2021). The researchers begin to consider how codes, themes, and various levels of them are related to one another.

## **Findings and Discussion,**

### **Findings**

#### **Participant's perceptions of World Englishes**

Referring to the verbal guise test findings and the participants' responses, they indicated the participants' ability to perceive a variation of WE. The verbal guise test was given to those students to encourage their critical thinking about WE. However, the findings also revealed some general information regarding their ability to identify the varieties of English.

Overall, the verbal guise test have maximum of 12 points available. The average score of the 20 participants who participated this test was 6.9 of the 12 possible points. It means a half of them have ability to recognized and differentiated the variety of WE. The scores ranged 2 to 12. One participant scored 2, six participants scored 4, three participants scored 6, four participants scored 8, two participants scored 9, three participants scored 10 and one participant scored 12. The most recognizable variety of English was from Indonesia with 38 points, India which receive 32 points. Following that were UK with 30 points. The most difficult nationalities to recognized were Korea with 17 points, Malaysia receive a total 11 points and Australia with 10 points.

#### **Positive perception of Varieties of English**

From the interviews, the positive perception of the pre-service students was revealed. It was found that the most of the participants claim that it was easy for them to recognize or comprehend the varieties of English. This insight can be seen in the extracted data below:

##### Extract 3

"In my opinion, the easiest one is British because the pronunciation is easier to recognize. I often watch movies that use British English, for example, the Harry Potter's movie." (Source: Transcript 1, question 1, participant 3).

##### Extract 4

"In my junior high school and senior high school, I was learned about American-English and British-English" (Source: Transcript 1, question 1, line 4-5, participant 4).

It seems that the participant have an awareness of Inner Circle (IC) English such as American-English and British-English. This awareness came from participant experiences of learning English at school and exposure by digital media such as movies or films. Since the beginning of learning English, they have been introduced to American-English and British-English, it was easy for them to recognize and understand because they are used to and familiar with it.

Most of the participants have ability to recognize varieties of English from Outer Circle English (OEC) especially Indian-English. From the interview findings, the high majority of participants 60% (6 of 10) respond that the easiest forms of Outer Circle (OC) English for them to recognize was from Indian-English. The participants awareness of OC English because they have been exposed through social media such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram.

#### Extract 1

"The English that easy for me to understand was Indian English." (Source: Transcript 1, question 1, line 1, participant 1).

"At the event, there were lots of Indians who used English to asked questions, so that was easy for me to understand. I often watch it on YouTube." (Source: Transcript 1, question 1, line 12-15, participant 1).

Additionally, the participants have a self-confidence of their proficiency to comprehend different varieties of English. It is proved by the participant's statements, most of the participants 80% (8 of 10) said that their role as pre-service English teacher had impact to their cognition of varieties of English. The participants are confident about their knowledge to identify different varieties of English, because it will help for teach students correctly.

#### **Negative perception of Varieties of English**

Meanwhile, it was also found that the participants also have negative perceptions on varieties of English. They admitted to have difficulties in comprehending them as they hardly listen to those varieties. This insight can be seen in the following data.

#### Extract 2

"In my opinion Australian-English is the most difficult to understand, because for me it sounds similar to American-English. (Source: Transcript 1, question 2, line 1-4, participant 2).



Extract 3

"For example, the word 'genuinely' or 'immediately, the audio spoke similar to the American style that I know" (Source: Transcript 1, question 2, line 10-13, participant 3).

For the statements above, the participants have negative perception of varieties of English. There are 80% (8 to 10) of them chose Australian-English because they lack of knowledge about it. They are not aware of Australian English and said that was similar to American style or British style. It proved by the participants statements that they still focus on American style or British style and have no idea about Australian-English. When they heard the Australian-English for the first time, these participants comparing two forms of English that the most familiar with them. In this case, they were compared it with American-English or British-English. Few of participants said that it was hard for them to identify varieties of English by listening to audio only. This difficulty occurs because they have a habit of using media visual to make it easier for them to understand the language. It proved by the participants statements, most of them said the presence of subtitled or texts can help them to better understand the language of the speaker use.

### **Participant's attitudes toward World Englishes**

Respecting to their attitudes, it was identified their acknowledgment to the varieties of English and the important to learn them.

Extract 1

"I think it is important, we should know that English has many varieties." (Source: Transcript 2, question 1, line 1, participant 1).

The majority of participants showed they concern of varieties of English. In all, 8 of 10 participants has interest and very concerned to understanding and using varieties of English. They claimed that it was great for them to have proficiency of varieties of English, because it will be easiest to express their communication skill.

Extract 6

"Native English as an international language, most of the people around the world used native English." (Source: Transcript 2, question 2, line 3-5, participant 6).

Even the participants showed their interest of varieties of English, the participants still indicated a preference for IC English. All of the participants said that it was important for them to have knowledge and communicate with IC English. The participants have a big concern of native English because native English was



commonly used by people and stated that it was an easy way of retrieving information from IC speaker.

#### Extract 10

"I think it was important, because it gives freedom to non-native English regarding how to speak by their own self. So, there is no discrimination about correct and incorrect English." (Source: Transcript 2, question 3, line 1-4, participant 10).

#### Extract 3

"in my opinion, it was not very important to understand non-native English form. For example, in Indonesia we still focus on American-English or British English. Like music, a lot of people used American-English" (Source: Transcript 2, question 3, line 1-3, participant 3).

From the data presented above, the participants showed their opinion that it was important and that it was not important to understand Outer and Expanding Circle (OEC). The participants indirectly stated that understand OEC has some benefits. It is proved by their statements on transcript above which stated that understand OEC will make them easy to communicate, and it was comfortable to speak with no worries about right and wrong Englishes. However, the participants still affectively engaged with IC English, this fact proved with participants statements that they were focused on IC English and more familiar with it. It because most of them used IC English various ways, like music, movies, or for learning process.

Furthermore, the participants agree that learning OEC in the classroom will give some impacts for them to improve their communication skills and reduce their anxiety about making mistakes. This could make them more confident in using English. This insight is revealed by 7 out of 10 participants indicating that it is easy for them to communicate in the classroom by using Indonesian-English as OEC country, and it also helps them to get used to speaking in English.

#### Extract 5

"lecturer or teacher used native English, so if we want to use OEC, it's good for us to interact with friends." (Source: Transcript 2, question 4, line 3-5, participant 5).

Three other students agreed that learning OEC in EFL classroom was not useable, they argued that the use of OEC does not lead to learning process but rather to apply as a tool to facilitate communication between classmate. The participants statements based on their experiences in using native English in classroom. It proves that lectures or teachers used native English forms for learning in the classroom.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study provide a new point of view of the research on WE by identifying pre-service English teachers' perceptions and attitudes. In particular, this research believed that provide significant impact for pre-service English teacher obtaining various information about WE in context for understanding the development of local English variations. Different from the previous study (Lee, 2016), where most of the participants chose IC as the English language they recognized easily. Participants chose Indian-English from Outer Circle English as a variety of English that it was easy for them to recognized. This happening reported that it was due to the quick of technological developments through social media environments. The popularity of social media such as YouTube, Instagram or Tiktok give big impact on the participants' knowledge of Englishes.

Although they could easily recognize Indian-English, the majority of the participants stated a preference for IC English in many cases. The participants were still got to used and very concern to IC English. It was based on the participants' experiences, because in the very beginning of learning English, teachers at school or university lecturers directly focused on native English especially for American-English and British-English. This finding related to previous study from Prabjandee (2020), state that in learning English as a foreign language many teachers received their education adopting Native English forms. As a result, the teacher would guide the students in the same way they were educated. This is also in line with the finding by Lortie (1975) in (Chana, 2020), she stated in teacher education this is called as the apprenticeship of observation, which means when the teachers entered the profession, they use the learning model as how they were taught in the teaching process, thus give a conservative pressure on the profession.

The participants consciously still compare English from other countries with IC English this is done to make it easier for participants to understand English from other countries. The finding related to English that it was losing the national cultural base in the era of globalization (Sung, 2014). This finding reinforces previous research, which said that it was not clear if the participants were purely comparing the forms of English that were most familiar with. Although the majority of participants chose IC English as their reference in using English, this study found that IC English was also the most difficult for participants to understand. One of the factors was the lack of information

they had about Australian-English. Based on this, the researcher concludes, without knowledge about something, someone will not be able to recognize and understand it. Whether it's from IC English, OC English or EC English. The findings of this study are consistent with earlier research, when 7 out of 10 participants, or 70%, supported using WE into their EFL classrooms. This indicates a great level of interest on the side of the participants.

### **Conclusion**

This study shows that the majority of participants have ability to understand and recognized variations of English. These result show that Indian-English is the easiest for participants to recognized, and Australian-English is the most difficult English for participants to understand. The findings indicate that the participants' knowledge of Indian-English is influenced by technological advances, namely social media. Most of the participants have exposures to varieties of English and, become familiar with some of them.

Awareness of English varieties is directly proportional to participants', that it was important for participants to understand the IC English forms. The participants perspective based on their learning process, which is during learning process most of the teacher or lecturer only focused on learning about IC English. As a pre-service English teacher, participants believed that they have ability to be able to understand and distinguish variations of English, they were expected that it will help student to use it in the classroom and respect English from other countries. The majority of the participants thought that the use of Indonesian-English would have a good impact on learning in the classroom. Especially in terms of communication with classmates. By using Indonesia-English, it makes easiest for participants to show their English skills, this will increase their self-confidence, and participants not be as concerned about making mistakes.

### **Limitation**

This study provides evidence that most participants are aware of this interpretation of WE and, for the most part, are interested in learning more about WE. Even tough this study also reveals a focus on IC English, which is still widely used in Indonesia, the findings should encourage educators and policymakers to make ways for WE into TEFL classrooms and start preparing students for the current global environment.

## Recomendation

The results are expected the teacher give a lot of attention of using Indonesian-English in academic process to increase students' awareness of various English. It is hope pre-service English teacher to get used of using Indonesian-English in learning process and non-academic process to create an awareness and self-confidence in communication, thus it can break the chain of English learning model that was depend on IC English. Educational police maker can create or develop learning method related to technology creativity that will leads to love and pride in the use of Indonesian-English. However, it is necessary to conduct next research related to perceptions and attitude to WE with various participants, in order to get a lot of information to readers about the importance of awareness of WE.

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