



## Exploring students' attitudes towards their own English accent: insights from SMA Negeri 1 Stabat

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: October 5, 2024

Revised: January 29, 2025

Accepted: February 8, 2025

#### Keywords:

English accents

English learners

English varieties

Language attitude

Cultural accent

#### Conflict of interest:

None

#### Funding information:

None

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### ABSTRACT

The norms of linguistic correctness often stigmatize non-standard accents and varieties of English, reinforcing a perception of inadequacy among non-native speakers. This stigmatization is particularly evident among students learning English as a foreign language, many of whom may view native-like accents as the ideal, which can diminish their confidence in their own speech. This study investigates the attitudes of students towards their own English accents, aiming to uncover the underlying reasons for these attitudes and identify their preferred English accents. Utilizing a descriptive research design, a set of questionnaires was administered to 34 students at SMA Negeri 1 Stabat, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The findings reveal that most students have negative attitudes towards their own English accents, largely influenced by affective factors such as self-esteem, anxiety, and fear of judgment. In contrast, behavioral and cognitive factors contribute to more neutral stances. The majority of students express a preference for the American accent, a choice shaped by the global dominance of American media, the Indonesian education system's focus on American English, and the perceived career benefits tied to American English proficiency. Furthermore, students associate the American accent with prestige, higher social status, and enhanced employment prospects. These findings underscore the need for educational interventions that challenge the bias toward specific accents and promote a more inclusive appreciation of the diversity within the English language. The study's implications are critical for educators and policymakers in developing curricula that foster positive attitudes toward diverse English accents, ensuring that learners feel confident in their unique linguistic identities.



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**How to cite (APA Style):**

Effendi, F. E., Rangkuti, R., & Rosa, R. N. (2025). Exploring students' attitudes towards their own English accent: Insights from SMA Negeri 1 Stabat. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 10(1), 115–135. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v10i1.37329>

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## INTRODUCTION

English has achieved global prominence through a combination of historical, political, practical, and intellectual factors, establishing itself as a dominant language spoken by individuals from diverse backgrounds. The widespread use of English has led to the development of numerous accent variations, reflecting the diverse linguistic landscapes of its speakers. Jenkins (2009) illustrates this phenomenon by observing that the number of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) accent varieties parallels the number of groups of second-language English speakers. Kachru's (1991) concentric circle model further categorizes English-speaking regions into three circles: Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle, differentiating countries based on their usage of English as a native, second, or foreign language.

Within the Expanding Circle, Indonesia is a compelling case for studying the dynamic and evolving nature of global English usage. Its increasing engagement with English highlights how the language adapts to local cultural, social, and linguistic contexts. This evolution not only enriches the global diversity of English but also reveals how non-native English-speaking nations influence and are influenced by the language. In Indonesia, where English is a foreign language, understanding its development provides valuable insights into its roles in education, communication, and globalization, offering a deeper understanding of its impact on societal development and national identity.

Using English in the Outer and Expanding Circles results in diverse accents influenced by speakers' native languages. Lippi-Green (2012) defines an accent as the phonological and intonational impact of a native language on the pronunciation of a target language, leading to varieties like Singaporean English and Nigerian English. These varieties reflect unique linguistic and cultural histories, contributing to the rich tapestry of global English. In contrast, accents from Inner Circle countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, are often considered standard. This belief stems from historical dominance and colonial rule, which have established native-speaker pronunciations as norms.

The perceived authority of Inner Circle accents often leads to biases in social, educational, and professional contexts, where non-standard accents may be unfairly judged. For instance, a study by Mahboob and Golden (2013) found that job applicants with accents associated with Inner Circle countries, such as American or British English, were more likely to be hired in

international job markets than candidates with Outer or Expanding Circle accents. Similarly, discrimination against non-standard English accents is prevalent in the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession, where teachers with Inner Circle accents are often favored over equally qualified candidates from Outer or Expanding Circle contexts (Selvi et al., 2023). These biases underscore the systemic privileging of certain accents, perpetuating inequalities in professional opportunities and social perception.

However, Jenkins (2009) argues that it is impossible to encapsulate the global variability of English forms in a single term. She emphasizes that English, as a global lingua franca, exhibits many phonological, lexical, and grammatical variations that cannot be pinned down to a single standard. This perspective highlights the dynamic and evolving nature of English, driven by its speakers' diverse backgrounds and contexts. As English continues to spread and adapt across different regions, the traditional notions of standard accents are increasingly challenged. Recognizing and appreciating this linguistic diversity is essential for fostering inclusive communication and understanding in our interconnected world.

Schneider (2007) highlights three problems with the standard English ideology: the concept of nativeness, norms of correctness, and the biased portrayal of English spread in literature. The belief in nativeness, norms of correctness, and the biased portrayal of English in literature significantly influence non-native speakers' self-perception and identity within English-speaking communities. These factors often create a sense of linguistic inferiority or inadequacy among non-native speakers, as they may feel their accents, vocabulary, or grammar deviate from an idealized "standard" English. The concept of nativeness suggests that only native speakers can possess true proficiency in English, which inherently undervalues the linguistic capabilities of non-native speakers. Non-native English speakers often use different accents, leading to debates on acceptable features in teaching standard English. This creates a dilemma in educational settings where communities must decide between adopting native-speaker norms or incorporating local cultural adjustments.

In addition, the norms of correctness, as dictated by native speaker standards, often ignore the functional and communicative efficacy of diverse English forms used globally. These norms can stigmatize non-standard accents and varieties, fostering a sense of inadequacy among non-native speakers. Schneider (2007) points out that literature often portrays the Inner Circle as norm providers, marginalizing the Outer and Expanding Circles. This perception affects students who learn English as a foreign language, who may view native-like accents as superior, potentially undermining their confidence in their accents. Such biased portrayals contribute to a hierarchical

view of English proficiency that privileges native speakers and diminishes the legitimacy of other English varieties.

Students' attitudes toward accents, shaped by social, psychological, and linguistic factors, are pivotal in language acquisition. Garrett (2010) defines accent attitudes as a combination of beliefs, emotions, and evaluations that influence behavior, shaping how students perceive and engage with different varieties of English. Jenkins (2009) and Sifakis (2019) underscore the role of perception in shaping these attitudes, highlighting how students' social contexts and individual experiences inform their views on accents. Matsuda (2017) advocates empowering students to embrace their unique English accents as reflections of their cultural identity. This perspective aligns with the growing recognition of World Englishes, which promotes the legitimacy of diverse English varieties. Such an approach emphasizes that language learning is not merely about achieving linguistic proficiency but also about fostering self-expression and identity. Encouraging students to take pride in their accents can enhance their confidence and self-esteem. Moreover, exposing students to a wide range of English accents broadens their communicative competence, equipping them to effectively navigate multilingual and multicultural interactions.

Learners' attitudes toward accents, shaped by a combination of social, psychological, and linguistic influences, are critical aspects of language acquisition. According to Garrett (2010), accent attitudes encompass beliefs, emotions, and evaluations that influence behavior, ultimately affecting how learners interact with and perceive different varieties of English. Jenkins (2007) and Sifakis (2019) highlight the role of perception in forming these attitudes, emphasizing the impact of learners' experiences and social environments on their views of accents. Matsuda (2017) advocates for encouraging learners to develop distinctive English accents that reflect their cultural backgrounds. This perspective reinforces the notion that language learning goes beyond achieving fluency—it is also about expressing one's identity authentically. By taking ownership of their English accents, learners can cultivate confidence and pride in their language skills. Furthermore, exposure to diverse accents strengthens communication abilities, making learners more flexible and capable of navigating interactions in multicultural and multilingual settings.

Understanding students' attitudes towards their own English accents is vital for fostering a positive learning environment. Teachers can use this knowledge to create inclusive and supportive classrooms where all accents are valued. This can involve addressing biases and stereotypes related to accents and promoting the idea that there is no single "correct" way to speak English. By validating students' linguistic backgrounds and encouraging acceptance of different accents, educators can help students develop a more

positive self-concept and reduce anxiety related to language use. Moreover, recognizing the diverse factors that influence accent attitudes can inform teaching practices. For example, incorporating sociolinguistic education into the curriculum can raise awareness about the rich variety of English accents worldwide and the historical and social dynamics that shape them. This can help students appreciate the legitimacy of their accents and those of others, fostering a more inclusive view of English.

Accents have emerged as an integral area of interest in the field of language acquisition in recent decades (Jenkins, 2015). Within this context, the definition of an accent refers to the intonation and phonology of a native language influencing the pronunciation of the target language (Lippi-Green, 2012), which in this study is English. While studies in China have shown a preference for native over non-native English accents among students (Evans, 2010; Hu, 2004; Kunschak & Fang, 2008), there is a notable gap in research concerning high school students' attitudes toward their own English accents in Indonesia.

Although Yuwita and Ambarwati (2023) revealed negative attitudes among English literature students at a university in Bandung towards their English accents, limited research exists on high school students' perceptions in this context. Addressing this gap is crucial because high school students represent a formative stage in language learning where attitudes can significantly influence their confidence, motivation, and willingness to communicate in English. Negative perceptions of their accents may lead to linguistic insecurities, which could hinder language acquisition and self-expression. Beyond the classroom, understanding these attitudes has broader implications. Insights into students' perceptions of English accents can promote greater cultural awareness and appreciation for linguistic diversity, challenging the dominance of Inner Circle norms and fostering a more inclusive perspective on global Englishes. Furthermore, such findings can inform language policy development by encouraging curricula that validate and celebrate local English accents, empowering students to view their accents as legitimate and valuable rather than deficient.

This present study aims to address this gap by exploring (i) Indonesian high school students' attitudes towards their own English accents, (ii) the reasons behind these attitudes, and (iii) their opinions on what constitutes a proper English accent. Understanding these aspects can provide insights into whether students perceive certain accents as superior. By focusing on high school students, this study seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of accent attitudes in Indonesia and inform educational practices promoting linguistic inclusivity and confidence among young learners.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

The study design outlines the type and form of the research. This descriptive research, which, according to Cresswell & Cresswell (2022), aims to answer questions about who, what, where, when, and how. It is akin to painting a detailed portrait of a specific group or situation, capturing its characteristics and complexities. Descriptive research is not limited to fact-finding; it also involves interpreting and understanding participants' experiences and perspectives, as Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlighted. This perspective guided the researchers to engage critically with the data, seeking deeper insights into the studied phenomena.

In this study, a descriptive research design was employed to explore students' attitudes toward their own English accents. A questionnaire was the sole instrument to collect the data, ensuring a focused and systematic approach to addressing the three research questions. By relying exclusively on the questionnaire, the study ensured consistency in data collection and allowed for a comprehensive analysis of students' attitudes, motivations, and perceptions within the descriptive research framework.

### **Instruments and Procedures**

This study involved 34 students from the tenth-grade Science 1 class at SMA Negeri 1 Stabat as respondents. They were chosen because they were encouraged to use English in classroom interactions. The students completed the questionnaires designed to capture their attitudes towards their English accents, the factors influencing these attitudes, and their views on what constitutes a proper English accent (see Appendix). The questionnaire items were developed by adapting the instrument used by Rangkuti et al. (2023), who did a study on students' language attitudes in learning English. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to examine the students' attitudes towards their accents. The questionnaire items in this part were adapted from those listed in Rangkuti et al. (2023), with a specific focus on students' attitude of accents. The second part focused on identifying factors that might influence their attitudes, including affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects. Finally, the last part was developed to determine their opinions on which accent constitutes a proper English accent.

### **Data Collection Method**

The data were collected using a Likert scale, a widely used measurement tool named after its inventor, Rensis Likert (Dörnyei, 2003), which allowed respondents to express their opinions across a range of degrees. Respondents rated their agreement or disagreement with statements on a symmetrical scale, ranging from 5 for "strongly agree" to 1 for "strongly disagree" (Dörnyei,

2003). Positive statements indicated a favorable attitude, while negative statements reflected a less favorable view (Merleau-Ponty, 2002).

### Data Analysis Procedures

For data analysis, statistical techniques were applied to interpret the responses gathered through the Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores, were used to summarize trends in participants' attitudes, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. The interpretation of a mean score**

Mean Score	Name	Predicate	Interpretation
4,1 – 5,0	SA	Strongly Agree	Positive
3,1 – 4,0	A	Agree	Positive
2,1 – 3,0	N	Neutral	Neutral
1,1 – 2,0	DA	Disagree	Negative
0,0 – 1,0	SDA	Strongly Disagree	Negative

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results concerning the students' attitudes towards their English accents are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Students' attitudes towards their English accents**

No	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%	Sample	Total	Mean Score
1.	0	0%	2	6%	5	15%	16	47%	11	32%	34	100%	1,94
2.	0	0%	0	0%	9	27%	10	29%	15	44%	34	100%	1,82
3.	0	0%	2	6%	3	9%	13	38%	16	47%	34	100%	1,74
4.	0	0%	1	3%	5	15%	20	59%	8	24%	34	100%	1,97
5.	0	0%	3	9%	12	35%	17	50%	2	6%	34	100%	2,53
<b>Total Mean Score</b>													1,99

As displayed in Table 2, the results reveal a predominantly negative sentiment among the respondents towards their English accents. For the first statement of the questionnaire, "I like my accent when I speak English", none of them strongly agreed with the statement, and only a small percentage, 6%, agreed, indicating that very few students hold a positive view of their English accent. This contrasts sharply with the larger proportion of respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with their accents. A significant portion of the respondents, 47%, disagreed with the statement, while 32% strongly disagreed. Together, these groups account for 79% of the participants, highlighting a strong trend of discontent regarding their English accents. Additionally, 15% of respondents were neutral, neither expressing positive nor negative feelings about their accent.

The same negative sentiment was evident in the responses to the second through fifth statements of the questionnaire, further highlighting the respondents' dissatisfaction with their English accents. For instance, the results for the third item in the questionnaire, which assessed their comfort with their English accent, reveal a predominant sense of discomfort among the respondents. None of the participants strongly agreed with feeling comfortable, and only a small percentage, 6%, agreed with the statement. A slightly larger portion, 9%, remained neutral. The majority of respondents expressed discomfort with their accent, with 38% disagreeing and 47% strongly disagreeing with the statement. This substantial proportion indicates a significant overall dissatisfaction with their English accent.

This negative sentiment may stem from the perceived standardization of Inner Circle accents as the benchmark for proper English. As a result, the students might feel insecure about their accents and less favorable towards speaking English in their native accent. Given that all the aforementioned statements were positive and the students consistently disagreed with them, it is evident that they hold negative attitudes towards their English accent.

The results of this study, which reveal students' negative attitudes towards their English accents, align with findings from previous research conducted in contexts where English is spoken as a foreign language (Evans, 2010; Fang, 2020; Hu, 2004; Kunschak & Fang, 2008; Yuwita & Ambarwati, 2023). These studies consistently show that learners prefer native English accents over local ones. This preference suggests a perceived higher status or prestige associated with native accents, which can influence students' self-perception and language practices. For instance, native accents, particularly those from Inner Circle countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, are often associated with social mobility, global opportunities, and cultural dominance in media and education. This perceived superiority can shape learners' attitudes, leading them to view native accents as more "authentic" or desirable, thereby influencing their self-perception and language practices. Understanding these underlying factors is crucial for fostering greater appreciation for local accents and promoting linguistic diversity.

Furthermore, this trend may reflect broader societal attitudes towards English accents, where native accents are often viewed as the standard or ideal form of the language. The preference for native accents can also impact students' language learning goals, potentially leading them to focus more on acquiring a native-like pronunciation rather than embracing their accent. To counteract this, educators can implement concrete strategies that foster an appreciation for linguistic diversity while supporting students' pronunciation development. For instance, teachers can design classroom activities that celebrate various English accents through exposure to diverse audio



materials, storytelling, or discussions about the cultural significance of different dialects. Additionally, providing positive feedback on students' intelligibility rather than focusing solely on "native-like" pronunciation can help build their confidence in their accents. Creating a classroom environment where multiple accents are acknowledged and valued can also encourage students to see their linguistic identity as an asset. These strategies address the psychological and cultural factors affecting students' language learning experiences and promote a more inclusive perspective on English as a global language. As Seidlhofer (2001) and Jenkins (2000) have argued, the growing role of English as a lingua franca necessitates a shift in focus from native-speaker norms to the practical intelligibility and cultural diversity that define modern English usage. By adopting such approaches, educators can empower students to develop their linguistic abilities while fostering a sense of pride in their linguistic heritage.

Nevertheless, emerging trends suggest a gradual shift towards more positive attitudes in certain contexts. Although the study's sample predominantly displayed negative attitudes, other research highlights a growing appreciation for local accents (Franssisca, 2023; Rangkuti et al., 2023). For instance, Franssisca (2023) observed this gradual change, noting that some students increasingly value their local accents more positively. This shift, while not fully captured in the current study, points to an evolving perception of English accents, where local variations are gradually gaining acceptance and recognition. The increasing appreciation of local accents may reflect a broader cultural movement toward valuing linguistic diversity and authenticity. As this trend continues, it could lead to a more inclusive attitude towards different English accents, ultimately contributing to a richer and more diverse understanding of language use in global contexts.

In terms of the factors influencing the students' attitudes toward their own English, this study found that the affective aspect is the main factor affecting the students' attitudes, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Affective aspect**

No	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%	Sample	Total	Mean Score
1.	14	41%	12	35%	5	15%	3	9%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>1,91</b>
2.	18	53%	11	32%	3	9%	2	6%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>1,72</b>
3.	9	26%	14	41%	6	18%	5	15%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>2,21</b>
4.	0	0%	2	6%	1	3%	16	47%	15	44%	34	100%	<b>1,71</b>
5.	0	0%	6	18%	8	24%	14	41%	16	47%	34	100%	<b>2,44</b>

As displayed in Table 3, a significant proportion of respondents reported fear about speaking English with their accents (see item 1 in the questionnaire). Specifically, 41% strongly agreed with the statement, while an

additional 35% agreed, resulting in 76% of respondents experiencing some level of fear or anxiety about speaking English because of their accent. This high percentage highlights a prevalent concern among participants regarding their accents and how others might perceive them. In contrast, only a small fraction of respondents disagreed with the statement—9% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. This indicates that very few participants feel confident speaking English despite their accents. Additionally, 15% of respondents were neutral, showing neither strong fear nor confidence regarding their accent when speaking English. Overall, the data reveals widespread apprehension among the surveyed students about speaking English due to their accents.

A substantial majority of respondents expressed concern about how their accent would be perceived (see item 2 in the questionnaire). Specifically, 53% of participants strongly agreed with the statement, and an additional 32% agreed, resulting in a combined total of 85%. This high percentage indicates that a significant portion of respondents are worried about how their accent is received when speaking English, highlighting a prevalent anxiety regarding accent perception among the participants. Conversely, only a small number of respondents disagreed with the statement—6% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed—suggesting that very few participants are unconcerned about how their accent is perceived. Additionally, 9% of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. This distribution emphasizes the widespread concern about accent perception, with the majority of respondents feeling apprehensive about how their accent might be judged by others.

Furthermore, the results reveal that a significant majority of respondents are unhappy with their English accent (see item 4 of the questionnaire). Specifically, 44% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement, and an additional 47% disagreed, resulting in a combined total of 91%. This high percentage indicates widespread dissatisfaction among respondents regarding their English accent. The lack of strong agreement and minimal positive responses suggest that very few individuals feel positively about their accents. In contrast, only 6% of respondents agreed with the statement, reflecting a small fraction of participants who are content with their accents when speaking English. Additionally, 3% were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. This small percentage of neutrality suggests that a minimal segment of the population is indifferent or ambivalent about their accent.

The results also found that the behavioral aspect is the factor influencing the students' attitude toward their English accent, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Behavioral aspect**

No	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%	Sample	Total	Mean Score
1.	0	0%	2	6%	3	9%	9	26%	20	59%	34	100%	<b>1,61</b>
2.	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%	2	6%	30	88%	34	100%	<b>1,35</b>
3.	10	29%	12	36%	10	29%	2	6%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>3,88</b>
4.	5	15%	15	44%	10	29%	4	12%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>3,61</b>
5.	1	3%	7	21%	10	29%	15	44%	1	3%	34	100%	<b>2,76</b>

The results displayed in Table 4, which detail responses to the statement of Item Number 1, "I often use my own English accent in my daily conversation," reveal a significant reluctance among respondents to use their English accent in daily interactions. Notably, 59% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement, and an additional 26% disagreed. This combined total of 85% suggests that the vast majority of respondents avoid using their English accent in everyday conversations, indicating a considerable level of discomfort or lack of confidence in their accent. In contrast, only a small fraction of respondents expressed their agreement with the statement. Specifically, 6% agreed, while none strongly agreed, showing that very few individuals frequently use their English accent in daily interactions. Additionally, 9% of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, indicating a small group of participants who might occasionally use their accent without strong feelings about it.

In addition, the results displayed in Table 4, which presents the students' responses to the second item of the statement, "I often interact with people with different accents," show that a significant majority of respondents do not frequently interact with people who have different accents. Notably, 88% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement, and an additional 6% disagreed. This combined total of 94% suggests that the vast majority of respondents rarely, if ever, engage with individuals who have different accents, indicating limited exposure to accent diversity in their interactions. Conversely, only a small fraction of respondents agreed with the statement. Specifically, 3% agreed, and none strongly agreed, showing that very few individuals frequently interact with people who have different accents. Additionally, 3% of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, indicating a small group of participants who might occasionally interact with individuals with different accents but do not have strong feelings about it.

These findings highlight a significant lack of interaction with diverse accents among the respondents. Such limited exposure could contribute to the discomfort or lack of confidence in using their own English accent, as revealed in the previous item. The data underscores the importance of fostering more opportunities for students to engage with a variety of accents to build

familiarity and confidence in their own speech patterns. Moreover, it suggests a potential area for educational initiatives aimed at promoting accent diversity and inclusivity within the student community.

In addition to affective and behavioral aspects, the cognitive aspect was also found to have an influence on the students' attitude towards their English accents. The results are displayed in Table 5.

**Table 5. Cognitive aspect**

No	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%	Sample	Total	Mean Score
1.	0	0%	2	6%	2	6%	14	41%	16	47%	34	100%	<b>1,70</b>
2.	1	3%	5	15%	10	29%	10	29%	8	24%	34	100%	<b>2,44</b>
3.	9	26%	17	50%	8	24%	0	0%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>4,02</b>
4.	10	29%	15	44%	6	18%	3	9%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>3,94</b>
5.	0	0%	13	38%	9	26%	12	35%	0	0%	34	100%	<b>3,02</b>

As indicated by the results in Table 5, the students' negative attitude towards their English accents is also influenced by a cognitive aspect. The students' responses to the first item of the statement, "I have knowledge about various English accents and languages," aimed at measuring their self-assessed knowledge of different English accents and languages, indicate that they lack knowledge in this area. Specifically, 47% strongly disagreed with the statement, and an additional 41% disagreed. This combined total of 88% suggests that the vast majority of respondents do not feel knowledgeable about different English accents and languages, indicating a perceived gap in their linguistic awareness or education. Conversely, only a small fraction of respondents felt that they possessed this knowledge. Specifically, 6% agreed with the statement, while none strongly agreed, showing that very few participants consider themselves knowledgeable about various English accents and languages. Additionally, 6% of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement, indicating a small group of participants who might be uncertain about their level of knowledge.

These findings underscore a significant cognitive gap that may contribute to the students' negative attitudes towards their English accents. The lack of perceived knowledge about various accents and languages can lead to a lack of confidence and a negative self-perception regarding their accent. Addressing this cognitive gap through educational programs that enhance awareness and understanding of diverse English accents could help improve students' attitudes toward their speech patterns. Furthermore, this data highlights the importance of integrating accent diversity education into language learning curricula to foster a more inclusive and confident student community.

Nevertheless, most respondents believe that they can still learn English well regardless of their accents, as indicated by the third item of the statement, "I believe that everyone has the potential to learn English well regardless of their accents." Specifically, 26% of participants strongly agreed with the statement, and an additional 50% agreed. This combined total of 76% suggests that the majority of respondents are confident that accents do not hinder the ability to learn English effectively, reflecting an encouraging attitude towards language learning. In contrast, none of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that no participants believe accents are a barrier to learning English. This absence of disagreement underscores the overwhelmingly positive sentiment shared by the respondents about the potential for English language acquisition regardless of accent. Additionally, 24% of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. This neutrality suggests that while a significant portion of participants are unsure or indifferent, the majority still hold a positive view on the matter.

Overall, the data reflects a strong belief among the respondents in the ability to learn English well irrespective of one's accent, with a substantial majority expressing agreement and no opposition. This optimistic outlook highlights the respondents' confidence in language learning capabilities and suggests a supportive environment for embracing accent diversity in English education.

Hence, the results of this study underscore the significant influence of affective factors in shaping the students' negative attitudes towards their English accents. This finding aligns with previous research, such as Waloyo and Jarum (2019), which identified low confidence and negative perceptions of students' Indonesian English accents as key emotional influences. These negative feelings can considerably impact students' motivation and willingness to participate in English-speaking activities, thereby perpetuating their negative attitudes. Confidence and linguistic awareness play crucial roles in shaping students' attitudes. The current study links negative attitudes to low confidence, while Waloyo and Jarum (2019) emphasize the need for strategies to build confidence and promote linguistic diversity. This suggests that addressing emotional factors is essential for improving attitudes towards local accents.

This is in contrast with Getie (2020), who found that educational context factors, such as the role of English language teachers and the learning environment, influence the students' negative attitudes toward learning English. These factors often interact with affective elements, such as students' anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence, to shape their overall attitudes toward language learning. For instance, a supportive and engaging teacher can help alleviate language anxiety and foster positive attitudes, while an

unwelcoming classroom atmosphere might exacerbate feelings of inadequacy or disinterest. Similarly, a well-structured learning environment that encourages collaboration and recognizes individual achievements can enhance students' motivation, countering the negative impact of other contextual challenges.

To better understand and address these issues, further research is needed. Developing educational strategies that highlight the value of all accents and provide students with positive role models who speak with various accents could help build confidence and reshape negative attitudes. Additionally, incorporating a diverse range of accents into educational materials and classroom practices can enhance students' exposure to and appreciation of different accents. Such approaches are likely to foster a more balanced and positive view of one's own accent, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Moreover, the results of this study reveal that American English is considered the proper English accent among the students, as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. The proper English accent based on the students' opinion**

Question	Items	Percentages
Which accent do you think is the proper English accent?	British	24%
	American	70%
	Australian	6%
	Other accents (...)	0%

As shown in Table 6, a significant majority of respondents, 71%, consider the American accent the proper English accent. This predominant preference may be influenced by the global prevalence of American media, entertainment, and cultural exports, which often set a standard for English language usage internationally. The widespread exposure to American English likely shapes perceptions of it as the "proper" accent. In contrast, 24% of respondents view the British accent as the proper English accent. Although not the majority choice, this substantial minority reflects the enduring influence of British English, traditionally regarded as the original form of the language. The British accent's association with history, education, and certain formal contexts likely contributes to its perceived propriety. Meanwhile, only 6% of respondents selected the Australian accent as the proper English accent. This small percentage suggests that while the Australian accent is recognized, it is not widely considered the standard form of English. Its more regional usage and less frequent global representation compared to American and British accents may account for its limited perception as the "proper" accent.

This is a unique finding of this research, revealing that the respondents perceive the American accent as the proper English accent despite English

being the primary language of Great Britain. It is noteworthy that students in Indonesia, where English is not a native language, overwhelmingly prefer the American accent. This preference may be influenced by several factors, including the global dominance of American media and culture, which exposes students to various forms of content that subtly reinforce this perception. For instance, Hollywood movies and television shows, such as *The Avengers* or *Friends*, often portray characters with American accents as relatable, successful, or aspirational. Similarly, American music icons like Taylor Swift and Bruno Mars dominate international music charts, further embedding the accent in global popular culture. Additionally, social media influencers, such as those on YouTube and TikTok, who often communicate in American English, play a significant role in shaping students' linguistic preferences by normalizing and glamorizing the accent.

This extensive exposure aligns with the behavioral aspect of the study, which indicates that students are significantly influenced by the English-language media they consume. Relevant studies, such as those by Waloyo and Jarum (2020) and Yuwita and Ambarwati (2023), provide additional context, discussing how native accents, particularly American English, are often preferred due to their perceived prestige and professional advantages. These studies emphasize that media exposure and historical factors contribute to accent perceptions, reinforcing the notion that American English is associated with higher status and global success.

However, this preference must also be contextualized within the broader framework of World Englishes, which challenges the dominance of Inner Circle accents and recognizes the legitimacy of diverse English varieties, including those from Expanding Circle contexts like Indonesia. In the Indonesian context, where English functions as a foreign language, the preference for native accents often reflects global hierarchies of power and influence rather than an intrinsic linguistic superiority. Promoting awareness of World Englishes can help reshape these attitudes by encouraging students to see their own English accents as legitimate and effective tools for global communication. By embracing this inclusive perspective, Indonesian learners may feel more confident in their linguistic identity, rather than perceiving themselves as subordinate to native norms.

The educational system in Indonesia also contributes to this preference. English language curricula often prioritize American English, evident in the selection of textbooks, listening materials, and instructional approaches. Teachers and educational institutions may inadvertently reinforce the notion that American English is the ideal or 'proper' form of the language. Coupled with students' extensive exposure to American media, this educational emphasis further entrenches the American accent as the preferred standard. Addressing this requires a more balanced approach to language teaching, one

that incorporates the diversity of World Englishes and empowers learners to appreciate the value of their own linguistic contributions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Students exhibit negative attitudes towards their own accents, often feeling insecure about their English due to the perceived emphasis on "inner circle" accents, such as British English, as the standard. Affective factors, including emotions and feelings, have the strongest influence on these attitudes. Students experience negative emotions such as fear, embarrassment, and shame regarding their accents, which aligns with the overall negative sentiment. Behavioral factors present a more mixed picture. While students lack exposure to diverse accents and do not use English frequently, they are inspired by native speakers with various accents. This exposure creates a blend of positive and negative attitudes towards accents. Cognitive factors involving beliefs and knowledge are more neutral. Students recognize that accents are a part of their identity but generally lack detailed knowledge about different accents and languages. They do, however, acknowledge that everyone has the potential to learn English well regardless of their accent.

The majority of students perceive the American accent as the "proper" English accent, with some favoring British and Australian accents. This preference is likely influenced by extensive exposure to American media and culture, which dominates global entertainment, education, and digital platforms. Hollywood movies, popular television series, globally celebrated music artists, and influential social media figures often present the American accent as synonymous with success, modernity, and global relevance. Such extensive exposure reinforces the perception of the American accent as the standard, subtly positioning it as more familiar, aspirational, and accessible compared to other English varieties.

This study may be limited by the representativeness of its sample. If the respondents do not adequately represent the broader population of English learners or students in different regions, the findings may not be generalizable. The findings of this study are influenced by the respondents' exposure to American media and culture, which may skew perceptions of what is considered the "proper" accent. This bias may not fully capture the diversity of attitudes towards accents in contexts with different media influences. The strong influence of affective factors, including negative emotions like fear and embarrassment, may overshadow other aspects of students' attitudes. This focus on emotional responses might not fully account for the complexity of students' attitudes towards their accents. Addressing these limitations in future research could provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing attitudes toward English accents and help develop more effective educational strategies.



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## APPENDIX 1 (optional)

### A. Student’s Attitude

Choose an answer based on how much you agree with the statement given.

No.	Item/Statement	Response
1.	I love my accent when speaking English.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
2.	I believe that I have a good English accent.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

3.	I feel comfortable using the English accent that I have.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
4.	I am confident speaking using my English accent.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
5.	I appreciate the uniqueness of my English accent.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

B. Factors Affecting the Student's Attitude

1. Affective Factors

Choose an answer based on how much you agree with the statement given.

No.	Item/Statement	Response
1.	I feel afraid to speak English with the accent I have.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
2.	I was worried about how my English accent would be received by listeners.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
3.	I am ashamed of my English accent.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
4.	I am happy with the accent I use when speaking English.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

5.	I am proud of the unique accent that I have.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
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## 2. Behavioral Factors

Choose an answer based on how much you agree with the statement given.

No.	Item/Statement	Response
1.	I often use my English accent in everyday conversations.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
2.	I often interact with people who have different accents.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
3.	I often listen to media such as movies, music, and podcasts in various English accents.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
4.	I feel inspired by English speakers with different accents and want to learn from them.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
5.	I don't feel the need to change my accent when talking to other people.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

## 3. Cognitive Factors

Choose an answer based on how much you agree with the statement given.

No.	Item/Statement	Response
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1.	I have knowledge of various English accents and language diversity.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
2.	I understand that accents are a natural part of language and do not reflect a person's intelligence.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
3.	I believe that everyone has the potential to learn English well, regardless of their accent.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
4.	I believe that my accent is part of my identity.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree
5.	I study foreign speaker accents.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Neutral <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree

C. The Proper English Accent based on the Students' Opinion

Choose an answer based on your preference.

No.	Item/Question	Response
1.	Which country's English accent do you consider to be the correct English accent?	<input type="radio"/> British accent <input type="radio"/> American accent <input type="radio"/> Australian accent <input type="radio"/> Canadian accent <input type="radio"/> New Zealand accent <input type="radio"/> Other accents (.....)