

EXPLORING Z GENERATION ATTITUDES TOWARD VARIETIES OF ENGLISH(ES)

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Abstract

English, one of the most dominant languages, has undergone transformations and divergences that have created a variety of variations in different parts of the world. The fact is that English has more than 160 acknowledged variations of accents across the globe. Each variation from standard English to a distinctive local reflects its unique culture and history. This study aims to investigate Generation Z's attitudes towards variations of Englishes of their English as foreign language communication experiences. This research adopted qualitative research benefiting from Saraceni's (2010) Space, Culture, Ideology and Psychology (SCIP) model to understand variety of English(es). Four English literature students were selected as respondents when they were still in their 7th semester and aged 21-22 at an Islamic university (under Ministry of Religious Affairs) in East Java, Indonesia. The results revealed that the dominance of American English is still the benchmark in most participants' preferences. A number of competing and interconnected factors such as habits, motivations, and practices with the influence of family, social, educational, and environmental factors shape their preferences on English(es) varieties. The participants showed positive, contradictory attitudes (positive and negative) to negative attitude towards the varieties of Englishes.

Keywords: *Attitude; SCIP Model; Varieties of Englishes; Z Generation*

1. Introduction

The evolution of the English language since the 20th century has made it an international language (Crystal, 2003). Retrieved, up to 2023, 400 million native speakers and over 1.5 billion non-native speakers have used this language as their first or second language (Prior, 2023). Extensive evidence supports the statement that English has become a lingua franca or is nearly used in every corner of the world, with its widespread use in technology, education, trade, politics, and medical practices (Gultom, 2015). Therefore, English has become a communication bridge connecting individuals from various backgrounds worldwide. Communication occurs among English bilingual or multilingual language users including Indonesians. However, English is not monolithic or homogeneous, it exhibits variations called World Englishes (Jenkins, 2009). The invention of English variations in various countries worldwide can be attributed to historical, cultural, identity, and communication context factors. As a result, speakers can recognize variations in English

through linguistic features such as grammar, accent, Pronunciation, and vocabulary (Han, 2019).

In his studies in 1985, Kachru classified English language speakers into three circles based on how English is acquired and used in a country. This model consists of Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1992). Inner circle is a form of English native speakers use in nations such as the United Kingdom, America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Outer circle encompasses the range of English spoken by non-native speakers who reside in former British Colonies where English serves as an official language or lingua franca, essentially in India, Singapore, Nigeria, and the Philippines. While, expanding circle refers to the variation of English spoken by non-native speakers in countries without historical connection to British colonialism. English is utilized as a foreign language in places such as Japan, China, and Indonesia (Kachru & Nelson, 2006).

The classification gives rise to a pattern of prevalent English variations spoken by speakers, specifically American and British English (Rezaei et al., 2019). These two variations are still regarded as the benchmark for linguistic accuracy, particularly in Indonesia (Wahyudi, 2018b).

Given the phenomenon of English language variations, this study's primary goal is to examine the attitudes and perceptions of Indonesian learners as multilingual speakers toward varieties of English, which is still a foreign language in Indonesia. One group that is interesting to research in terms of language attitudes is Z Generation. Z Generation comprises individuals born between 1995 up to 2010 (Seemiller & Grace, 2017). This generation grew up in an era of globalization, which allowed them to be exposed to variations of Englishes. Otherwise, According to Thienthong and Uthakorn (2023), attitudes are defined as actions or opinions towards something based on each individual's thoughts and feelings. Attitudes have a significant role in shaping perspectives on the surrounding environment, including in the context of language.

Many studies have been conducted in different countries to determine the attitudes of learners toward different varieties of English. First, the study from Dharni (2023) emphasized that participants are aware of global Englishes and can show their identities, which is reflected in the choice of vocabulary from the first language spoken in Nepal. The participants were 12 English teachers in a public high school in Nepal, and a thematic analysis developed by Braun & Clarke (2006) was adopted to analyze the data. This aligns with my research, which uses the thematic analysis of Braun & Clarke (2006) as a reference for data analysis. This study provides a detailed analysis of the research methods, theories, data collection techniques, and findings described by the author in the article's abstract so that it can make it easier for readers to get an outline of the findings of the study before reading the article more deeply.

Lu and Gao (2023) conducted a study to explore EFL learners' attitudes towards English accents in China. The researchers used a survey questionnaire to investigate the subjects' opinions, where there were 50 Chinese student participants and 30 international student participants. They found that participants with more knowledge about various English accents showed greater acceptance of them. This acceptance depended on whether the accent they heard or knew was clear. Meanwhile, some participants wanted to show their cultural identity by speaking English with a local accent. This study is similar to Getie (2020), which discusses the attitudes of learners and teachers towards English variations. Where the results of their research found a positive attitude and respect for existing language

variations, in this study, however, we, as a reader, did not find any theories used by the researcher either in the content of the article or in the abstract.

Furthermore, Wahyudi (2021) investigated the problematization of British and American Englishes (BAE) in The Jakarta Post newspaper. The researcher uses Faucauldian ideas as the primary tool to criticize and understand the existing problems, with Bakhtin's concept of dialogism as a complement to the main concept/idea. The results indicate that most Indonesians still consider the standard of truth of English variations referring to American and British accents. The dominance of BAE still feels strong, making them want to be/imitate native speakers. Thus, marginalizing or excluding the use of other variations, especially local accents. This starkly contrasts the opinions of Wahyudi, who problematizes the dominance of BAE as a legitimate reference standard. This article provides insight into the position of other accent varieties with the dominance of BAE in the Indonesian context.

Meanwhile, a study by Tsang (2019) revealed students' perceptions of ten English accents in Hong Kong and the accents taught by teachers. Ninety-seven bilingual participants, aged 16 to 34, were sampled in this study. For data collection, the researchers asked the participants to listen to recordings of speakers with ten accents, including American, RP, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Scottish, South African, Indian, Chinese, and Hong Kong. Then, twenty were randomly selected for data collection through semi-structured interviews. There was support, beliefs, and positive attitudes that if the teacher spoke in an accent that the learner perceived as native (General American, Received Pronunciation and Canadian), it was considered easier to understand, and preferred, most learners were more focused on learning. Furthermore, learners do not want to pay attention to anything other than these accents. Therefore, the teacher's accent is still essential for learners at every level.

The subsequent study came from Olatoye (2022), which examined 102 attitudes towards variations of English from postgraduates and undergraduates aged 21 to 42 in Nigeria. The research was conducted through VGT (The Verbal Guise Technique) and online questionnaires to 15 respondents from outside Nigeria for three weeks. Results found that the British, American, and Acrolectal Nigerian varieties received more positive ratings regarding status, while greater solidarity was shown towards the American and Nigerian varieties. In contrast, accent familiarity and the speaker's accentuation level may increase the respondent's ability to make more apparent distinctions.

Siranush and Westphal Michael (2021) discussed the attitudes of Armenian and German university students toward Standard American English and Standard British English. Like the previous study above, questionnaires and VGT methods were used with 100 Armenian and 107 German students aged 20-21 as the sample subjects. The findings revealed that Armenian respondents rated American speakers most favorably in all variations, followed by British speakers. English as a foreign language tended to receive less positive ratings than English as native language speakers, with Armenian male speakers receiving non-positive ratings. For the assessment of German informants, it was explained that British and American speakers were rated much more positively than German and Armenian speakers. At the same time, the British female speakers got the top rating in the choice of language variation used. This research is very informative, with detailed explanations. However, the absence of an abstract makes the reader less aware of the outline of the article's content. In line with this, Ricohermoso et al. (2019) indicate a negative image for English language variations. The abundance of language variations leads

to a need for more comprehension and clarity in identifying and distinguishing between dialects.

Lee (2020) conducted a study on preparing Korean EFL Learners for English Communication with World English and EIL. The study's findings revealed a disparity between awareness and attitude concerning world English, which is why Korean EFL learners only recognize native English varieties. This research suggests three practical methods for integrating diverse forms of English, considering Korea's specific context.

Mcinerney (2020) examined students' attitudes towards four accents in the inner circle: Standard American English, African American English, Received Pronunciation, and Glaswegian English. A total of seven bilingual and multilingual students in Strasbourg were the respondents. Data were collected by distributing a survey in VGT Recordings and publishing gradient scales on a private website. This was followed by a qualitative interview for five days after completing the VGT survey. The data revealed that American English still dominates because it is considered a pleasant and understandable language in various aspects, including education, liking, and friendliness. In the interviews, most participants expressed the importance of speaking like a native speaker in order to be understood when speaking with L2 speakers.

However, negative attitudes were also shown by responses that said Glaswegian English is a lazy language. Here, the researcher mentions Received Pronunciation, which is included in the variety of English in the inner Circle of Englishes. Like the researcher, most people in the expanding circle need to become more familiar with the term. Payne (2023) defines Received Pronunciation (RP) as a variety of British and Southeast English spoken without recognizable regional dialects. RP is also known as British Received Pronunciation, BBC English, Queen's English, King's English, and Oxford English. RP is usually considered the accent of educated, powerful, and influential people in Britain or of the middle and upper classes.

In America by Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan (2022) examined Americans' attitudes toward standard American English (SAE) and nine non-Anglo foreign accents: Arabic, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Hispanic, Mandarin, Russian, and Vietnamese. This study reports that the participants showed all speakers with foreign accents were rated as more challenging to understand (unAmerican) and less socially competent. On the other hand, there was a class evaluation between foreign languages where French and German accents were rated most positively, while Arabic and Farsi accents were rated most negatively. The broader social and political context influences these attitudes towards foreign accents.

A study by Kim (2021) investigates postgraduate students' attitudes towards English accents of 107 multilingual postgraduate students representing 34 different nationalities who were enrolled in prominent research universities in Japan. The study finds that the participants preferred acquiring an English accent similar to native speakers. An indifferent attitude towards accents and world English varieties can be seen when they do not interpret accents with culture and national identity.

In Thailand, Wilang & Siripol (2021) used a survey questionnaire distributed online in the Facebook group "Let's move it move it.". This study concluded that Thai people have very positive attitudes towards some aspects of English, such as considerations like readability, employing English for communication with both native and non-native speakers, creating educational materials suitable for diverse culture setting and acknowledging various

forms of Englishes. Regardless of positive attitudes, the expanding circle group overwhelmingly supported the idea of teaching standard American and British English.

In addition, Baratta and Halenko (2022) investigated students' and teachers' attitudes towards British regional accents in EFL teaching. The researchers used Creswell and Poth's (2018) phenomenological approach with semi-structured interviews. Twenty EFL teacher participants from Ireland were taken based on a purposeful sampling by the researcher. This study reported that there is a positive attitude among teachers and students toward the regional accent. EFL students still need help understanding the British regional accent, but students still appreciate the differences between the accents used and the British regional accent. On the other hand, the teacher expressed pride in the accent she/he used.

The previous studies show similarities in objects and subjects, namely the views of learners and teachers towards English variations. In this study, the focus obtained from the subject becomes a differentiator between previous studies, namely students with Generation Z characteristics and theories used. This research is worth conducting Z's Generation language attitudes toward English varieties in Indonesia is still limited.

Therefore, this research aims to address the gap. This study will serve as a touchstone for the discussion of the potential varieties of English based on the perceptions of university English literature students. This study aims to address the following inquiries:

1. Which varieties of Englishes are Gen Z interested in?
2. Why do they favor certain varieties of Englishes?
3. What are Gen Z's attitudes toward varieties of Englishes?

2. Literature Review

The theory used to analyze is Saraceni's (2010, p. 142) because it can provide a solid foundation for understanding Generation Z's attitude in responding to different varieties of Englishes in the current context of globalization and multiculturalism. According to Thienthong and Uthakorn (2023), attitudes are defined as actions or opinions towards something based on each individual's thoughts and feelings.

Attitudes have a significant role in shaping perspectives on the surrounding environment, including in the context of language. This perspective (Saraceni, 2010, 2015) offers a new take on the idea of English relocation as an alternative to responding to and understanding varieties of English.

English relocation is the shift of English from a position as a language tied to the country of native speakers to a global language used by various people worldwide in different ways (Saraceni, 2011). This shows that English is no longer a single center or standard but has become pluralistic and heterogeneous. This aligns with his opinion of rejecting the traditional view of English as a single and uniform language. It is outdated and crucial to recognize the diversity of varieties of English spoken worldwide (Saraceni, 2010, p. 142). Saraceni's theoretical model is called the SCIP model, which proposes four dimensions of a new paradigm or an alternative to the previous standardization of English varieties, which tends to focus on the inner circle. The four dimensions are:

Space

“The English language was re-rooted from the Anglophone West to the rest of the world. English has spread from the West to the rest of the world” (Saraceni, 2010, p. 142).

An example of this relocation is conceptualized in Al Jazeera, a global media network based in Qatar (Saraceni, 2010, pp. 138–140). Al Jazeera uses English as its primary language but does not follow the standardized English norms set by native speakers. Instead, Al Jazeera adapts English to the Middle Eastern context.

Culture

“English is used to express local non-Western cultures”(Saraceni, 2010, p. 142).

English has become a medium for creating and innovating with local culture, creating new expressions through local variations of English.

Ideology

“English the vehicle of ideological rebalance: Western worldviews challenged and alternatives offered”(Saraceni, 2010, p. 142).

English became a tool to reconstitute the ideology of the Western worldview that made British and American English the standard of truth by providing an alternative in thought and ideology to propose a different view and oppose the traditional Western view.

Psychology

“English is no longer the language of the foreign Other but one of the languages of the self”(Saraceni, 2010, p. 142).

English has significant implications for how one sees him/herself with those considered to be the legitimate owners of that language.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employs qualitative research (Creswell, 2014) where SCIP (Space, Culture, Ideology, and Psychology) model of variety of English(es) is used to guide research questions and data analysis. Additionally, we chose this method because the research questions need to be more profound, the findings need to be described and explained in more detail, and the complexity related to Gen Z's attitudes toward English(es) variations from the participants' perspectives needs to be presented.

3.2 Participants of the Study

This study's participants are four students in the seventh semester in 2023 at an Islamic University, East Java, Indonesia. All the participants are female: Lila, Eva, Bella, and Maya. All names are pseudonyms with a background in English literature. They are 21 to 22 years old. To collect research subjects, we used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique used when the researcher already has a target individual with characteristics that match the object of research (Isaac, 2023). The reason for adopting a purposive strategy is based on the assumption that each person has a different view of the topic or issue to be asked. The participants were deliberately chosen because of their knowledge (Etikan et al., 2016).

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection techniques were conducted using semi-structured interviews which was held on December, 4th to 8th 2023, and a follow-up interview was conducted on January, 13 up to 15, 2024. A follow up interview is conducted to ensure a comprehensive understanding and clarify for deepening certain aspects that may have been missed during the initial interview (Wahyudi, 2018a). The first author (Aisy) used open questions in semi-structured interviews to obtain more detailed answers, almost all using Indonesian. Aisy did this deliberately to avoid miscommunication with the participants and to create a sense of intimacy that allowed the participants to express their experiences and views more freely as recommended by Wahyudi & Chusna (2019).

The interview process began after the respondents agreed to participate in this research. Before the interview began, participants were given a consent form as a sign of availability to become informants in the research. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder on a mobile phone.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is a crucial research stage because the results will answer existing questions. Data analysis is based on Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, which is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns in data. Furthermore, thematic analysis can be an experiential method to explore participants' experiences, views, meanings, and realities that affect various societal discourses. With this method, the data collected from experiences and thoughts that underlie the interviewees' acts can be understood in a social context by focusing on existing materials and realities.

There are several steps used in data analysis. The first step is to understand the data. As the data was taken from the participants' perspectives, the recordings and transcripts and translation of the data from the Indonesian language to English became an essential asset in the early stages of analysis. The first author (Aisy) read and re-read the interview transcripts and listened to the interview recordings again. In addition, Aisy made notes to mark important points that served to understand the data that appeared on the surface or that contained meaning in the data. Second, Aisy organized and translated the data from Indonesian to English. The code was made with simple descriptive words. Aisy reviewed all the codes that had been classified and ensured that the codes in the classification had the same meaning. Third, looking for themes, the most dominant themes were selected and presented in the findings. During data analysis, the first author always was under the second author's guidance.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study are presented in four themes: awareness of varieties of Englishes, a reflection of Indonesian culture through English, the problem of varieties, and attitude towards varieties of Englishes.

4.1. Awareness of Varieties of Englishes

The following table summarizes the themes of awareness of varieties of English and the problem of varieties identified from the data.

No	Participant	Preferred	Awareness of Learning Varieties of Englishes
1	Lila	American	Unimportant

2	Eva	American	Important
3	Bella	American	Not Particularly important
4	Maya	Indonesian/Local	Important and unimportant

Table 1. View of Preferences Varieties of English and Learning Perception

This section presents the result of identifying the four participants, reflecting their recognition and awareness of the varieties of Englishes. The interview started with the first question, asking respondents about their definition of English variation. The respondents interpreted English variation in terms of accent identity in communication. For instance:

The variation of English is an accent. So, the accent is an identity; for example, when we speak English but have a Javanese accent, it is clear that this person's identity is Javanese or local. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

Eva's statement shows that their variety of English can reflect their identity. For her, an accent is not just a linguistic element but also a cultural differentiator that reflects a person's geographical origin or background (Hall, 2019). A Javanese accent, for example, is regarded as clearly signaling a Javanese or local identity of Indonesia. This is also supported by Boonsuk's (2022) study which notes that most accents are seen as the speaker's identity, culture, language understanding, and language fluency.

In line with her understanding of subjectivity through the meaning of English variation, knowledge related to its spread also seems to be built when the respondent was asked about where the spread of Englishes came from, as explained in the following data;

Of course, the first time it spread was through colonization, but with the development of the times, it spread through the internet through sites such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. (Eva, follow up interview on 13/01/24)

The statement "colonization" here represents Saraceni's (2010) concept of space where English originated in the Western Anglophone and spread to the rest of the world (Saraceni, 2015); Indonesia was no exception through the teaching of the Dutch when it was colonized (Nabilla & Wahyudi, 2021). The concept of space in this context refers not only to the geographical dimension but also to the social and technological dimensions, which indirectly influence the changing dynamics of the spread of the English language through modern media (see also Wahyudi, 2024).

Similar questions were also asked to Maya to find out if they had the same knowledge or not about the concept of the spread of English variations. The interview revealed that Maya had limited knowledge about the origin of the spread of English variations;

In my opinion, if we refer to where the variations originated, it is from their history, but I do not know how the history is. I think the English variation spreads through teachers. So, I know these variations from my English teacher. (Maya, initial interview on 08/12/23)

From Saraceni's (2010) lens, the statement above is included in the concept of space because it includes an individual's understanding of language variation gained from personal

experience, specifically from teaching by English teachers, which can be considered as a form of experience within the scope of education or language learning. Interestingly, despite Maya's limitations in understanding the origin of the spread of English variation, she provided a personal perspective, that is the role of teachers in spreading English(es). This is similar to Rao's (2019) argument that teachers of English, especially at the global level, can play an essential role in transmitting language varieties and norms to learners (Rao, 2019)

As expressed in the last quote, the concept of English variations should reflect the general attitude of various parties, including teachers and students. These educational actors should unquestioningly adhere to existing ideas and be willing to question and develop the variations (Saraceni, 2015, p. 185). Thus, formal education provides knowledge of English variations and forms a critical and innovative attitude towards language, presenting variations other than standard as a form of language that evolves along with evolving thoughts and views.

On the other hand, to understand if the respondents acknowledge the varieties of Englishes, Aisy asked Lila questions about the varieties of Englishes they know besides standard English. As a result, she was aware of varieties of English with background knowledge obtained from educational contexts, native speakers, and friends-to-family relationships, as noted in the data below;

The variety of English I know besides American and British includes Singapore, Malaysia, Australian, and Indian Englishes. Eumm, if British and America are definitely from films, like for British, I know it from the Harry Potter movie, if America is from funny content. For Australia, it is because I have friends who study there or information about scholarships. Then, the English is good for Malaysian English, although the accent is less familiar. Then, I heard the Singapore accent from an activity in the faculty yesterday. There was someone from Singapore, and there were also alumni who worked there. (Lila, initial interview on 04/12/23)

The concept of space from Saraceni (2010) here is reflected through dissemination of English(es) through digital media. Lila's responses to this statement indicate that she is aware of the diverse varieties of English that exist globally. Her resounding acknowledgment of these English variations reflects that the spread of English today is not only through colonization but also the influence of media and entertainment in shaping one's familiarity with language varieties. This finding is similar to research conducted in Japan by Galloway & Rose (2014), where awareness of the existence of varieties of English develops their understanding of the varieties of English spoken by native speakers.

In addition to different varieties of English that focus on accents, one of the respondents has looked at the different varieties of English in phonology, often describing them as "clear, subtle, absent, invisible." This section conveyed the relevant data obtained from the interview with Eva.

India and Australia are evident in my ears, as are America and France. French, when they say R, it is very subtle, like a croissant; they read it as kwasong. The R is remarkably absent and invisible. And then, in Puerto Rican English, the R is obvious. I know some accents, mainly from YouTube and TikTok sometimes. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

Other respondents also shared similar responses in that they acknowledged the existence of varieties of English that referred to the inner circle and pointed out the family's role in introducing certain varieties.

I know there are four varieties: American, British, Welsh, and Cockney. Welsh and Cockney are American and British accents, so I know that from my uncle. My aunt married an Australian who used to live in the UK. (Bella, initial interview on 07/12/23)

Bella's source of knowledge, her uncle, who is connected to Australians through marriage with her aunt, suggests a rich linguistic exchange within the family, resulting in exposure to diverse varieties of English(es). These family relationships underscore the role of personal relationships and experiences in shaping a person's understanding of language variation (Fahad & Saud, 2021).

Other respondent, Maya, showed little awareness of any variations other than standard English. This is emphasized in comments such as "I do not really follow" during interview.

What I know is just the general ones like American and British. There are many outside, but I do not really follow how people speak English because when I practice English with my friends, who could be said to have the Javanese and surrounding areas. So, it is not that standard accent. It is more like a local accent. (Maya, initial interview on 08/12/23)

The above response contains two concepts from Saraceni (2010). First, the space where the claim is shown by the sentence, "I practice English with my friends who can be said to have Javanese and surrounding areas." The claim implies that the spread and introduction of English can be influenced by its speakers' physical and social environment, which can be reflected in vocabulary, ideas, and interests (Sapir, 1912). Secondly, the concept of culture, evidenced by the last sentence, implies it is normal and unavoidable for her as an Indonesian to have an Indonesian accent when speaking in English. Maya believes that the cultural differences, pronunciation systems, and norms of Indonesia are different from America, the UK, and other countries. So, the lack of familiarity with non-standard varieties of English is still a minority for some people because these are not used in the surrounding community (Ballinger, et al., 2020).

Furthermore, in terms of preference, Bella was asked about which variety she prefers and uses when communicating in English. She favored the American variety due to its familiarity. This insight can be seen in the data extracted below:

The accent that I like and use is American because from childhood, elementary school, junior high school, and high school, I have been surrounded by people who speak American. My teachers also used the American accent. (Bella, initial interview on 07/12/23)

As already stated, American English remains the primary reference point in addition to British English (Wahyudi, 2021b). The statement may not directly contradict Saraceni's concept of ideology because her preference for American English does not automatically negate the possibility of her using English to express her local culture. Bella's preference may be influenced by people's tendency to choose the most familiar or dominant language

model as British and American Englishes remain a regime of truth in Indonesian context (Wahyudi, 2018a). This finding contradicts (Mckenzie, 2008) study in Japan with students showed solidarity attitude toward English with local accents. Nonetheless, this result aligns with the findings (Siranush & Westphal, 2021), with some respondents prefer American English as a model.

Meanwhile, when asked the same question, Eva's behavioral tendencies and preferences toward English variations have significant similarities. She preferred variations with utterances that they found easy to understand.

Right now, I am trying to speak like a native speaker in America. So I am trying my best to speak like an American, but sometimes I want to speak like a British person, but I can't; it is too hard. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

The above argument is in line with the concept of Saraceni psychology; the sentence, "I am trying to speak like an American" can be interpreted as a form of expanding and shaping the identity between individuals and the relationship with the owner of the language. Eva identifies English as a part of herself in the statement's context. She tries to adapt to different language variations to engage better and connect with different communities.

The findings presented above show that British and American varieties of English still play an essential role in students' social beliefs and attitudes. This finding is similar to the research by Kaur (2014) where respondents position native speaker as a model.

4.2 Reflecting Indonesian Cultures through English

Most Z Generations often use English in conversations and in the digital world. For some, English is a communication tool and a means to express culture and personality. However, amidst the complexity of linguistic diversity and culture, Indonesian society is experiencing a cultural transformations reflected through English. This can be seen from the Eva's answer below:

Language like a South Jakarta kids, music taste, dress style, films. The American and British culture is modern. So, for example, I take one example from fashion, like a sweater. We wear a headscarf and long jeans; if it is a sweater, I think it is a Western culture, whereas if we wear it with a hijab, it's just our Indonesian culture because Arabs do not use colorful hijabs either. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

Talking about sweaters, I asked Eva about the reasons why sweaters belong to Western culture:

Because sweaters are thick, westerners usually wear them more often and are suitable for wearing in winter, like abroad. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, people rarely wear thick clothes if it is not raining, even if it rains. Most Indonesians are also used to clothes that tend to be made of thin material. (Eva, follow up interview on 13/01/24)

In the context of fashion, the above statement highlights that clothes such as sweaters, which are recognized as part of modern British culture, are relevant to the concept

of culture by (Saraceni, 2010) assimilated in Indonesian culture. For example, a sweater with a *jilbab* and long jeans gives a local feel and illustrates creativity in combining foreign cultural elements with Indonesian identity. This idea is supported by Alshammari (2018), who concluded that culture can be shown by various works such as music, fashion, the invention of this study, and literature, and even leading to the way of life of an individual/group (cf, Wahyudi, 2021a).

The use of *hijab* in such combinations shows a unique and personalized adaptation to global trends, adding a new dimension to the use of foreign fashion. This analysis also touches on issues of cultural diversity and local interpretations that merge into the concept of culture concerning the differences in headscarf use across cultures, including Arabs who do not use colorful headscarves. As Dhami (2023) also noted in his findings, identity and culture have a strong connection due to the relationship between representation and culture.

In addition, Eva had different opinions when asked about her experiences of difficulties in understanding variations that differed from her own.

I do not find it difficult to speak or recognize the British accent because it is very thick with the letter "r" that is not read. In contrast, I find the variations from other countries challenging because the accent is sometimes almost the same. Nevertheless, I learned more about listening if I chose American variations, with much practice, listening, and reading to overcome that. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

In this context, familiarity with the British accent helped participants to understand and communicate. This partly extends the previous research (Mcinerney, 2020; Siranush & Westphal Michael, 2021; Wilang & Siripol, 2021), in which one participant had positive and negative perceptions of English varieties. This right is evidenced by the word "do not find it difficult," which leads to a positive attitude, and "difficulty because the accent is sometimes almost the same," which signals a negative perception. However, Eva's difficulty can be solved through continued learning of other varieties. This can be proven when Eva continued the statement:

There was a struggle, but over time, I understood. Because my hobby is watching, the solution when it is difficult to understand people with different English is to keep watching. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

Eva's follow-up statement does not fall under the concept offered by Saraceni, as the argument reflects the internalization process of understanding different Englishes and the effort to continue learning and strengthening language skills with the recognition of English as part of oneself.

As for another respondent, using social media or the internet is an effective solution to becoming more familiar with various variations of English.

I find difficulties in lectures; several lecturers use British accents. When COVID-19 hit, we autonomously met via Zoom and automatically spoke English using a British accent without being accompanied by Indonesian in specific explanations. Finally, I need clarification on what he is talking about, so the context is if the lecturer must have a PowerPoint/note in learning. Well, that is my solution. I look at the notes more than I listen. If

brought to the context of communication, I will ask them to repeat what was said. (Maya, initial interview on 08/12/23)

In the learning context, Maya shows creativity in handling challenges with her actions, which may reflect the culture of some Indonesian learners' form of idea/thought (Saraceni, 2010).

In sum, the statement "met at Zoom and automatically spoke English using an English accent with no Indonesian in certain explanations," recognizes that English is not the first language, reflects the desire to stay connected in cultural identity (Anjanillah et al., 2021). In addition, the difficulty in using certain accents, such as British, suggests that English used in non-western contexts requires adaptation. In academic context settings, where lecturers use specific cases, using more notes can be a practical approach. This statement supports the idea that English can be expressed in non-western local expressions through localizing global English to students' local needs (Wahyudi, 2021a).

4.3 The problem of Varieties Englishes

In this section, participants were asked whether it is important to learn variations of English other than the ones they like, such as British and American English. One participant named Lila answered:

The important thing for me is just to know because learning a language is not easy. (Lila, initial interview on 04/12/23)

The phrase "the important thing for me is just to know," expressed by Lila, creates ambiguity, which leads to the midpoint of hesitation in expression. This can be seen in the facial expression when I asked a follow-up question to confirm whether Lila was on the critical or unimportant side; the participant was silent for a while, then answered carefully:

Well... It's unimportant because, like I said before, I want to focus on the American variety of English I am studying. If I had learned many variations, I would not have become an expert in one English language. (Lila, follow up interview on 04/12/23)

This surprising finding was also experienced by the previous researcher (Nabilla & Wahyudi, 2021), who argued that there were contradictions in the participants' positions toward English(es). Lila's argument contradicts the notion of Saraceni's (2010) ideology, reflecting a limited view and perhaps influenced by the hegemony of Western ideology that has been instilled in the perception that only Western standards are worth pursuing in English language learning. By prioritizing experience in one variety of English, Lila may need to be more mindful of enforcing this hegemony and ignore the value of a broader understanding of English variety. Meanwhile, a contradictory answer came from Eva, who said:

It is essential to learn other varieties of English because then we can know their identities without asking them. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

In this context, understanding English varieties from different cultures and countries can be an alternative form of thinking and ideology (Saraceni, 2010), allowing us to see the

world from different perspectives. By learning and appreciating different varieties of English, we can acknowledge and empower diverse cultural identities while challenging the hegemony of established Western ideologies. The results of the previous study by Kang & Ahn (2019) showed positive beliefs towards learning English as a tool for cross-cultural communication and support for diverse varieties of English, including non-standard ones, as learning models.

On a different note, respondent Maya provided a perspective illustrating the comparative benefits of learning different English by pointing out why knowing and learning non-standard varieties of Englishes is not important. She said:

It is important for people who want to adapt to the area, city, or country. If we, as ordinary citizens, know enough, that is my opinion. Meanwhile, let me give you an example. I live in Indonesia. Varieties of Englishes are used less in daily life and learning. So, why can it not be important if we have not implemented it as a whole? So, we apply a local accent, which means that sometimes we are also confused about what to use when saying something because we cannot identify it and do not use English as the primary language. (Maya, follow up interview on 13/01/24)

The word 'important' in the above perception aligns with Saraceni's (2010) ideology, which challenges traditional Western ideologies by recognizing and incorporating diverse linguistic perspectives. It suggests that embracing accent variation promotes cultural inclusivity and challenges the dominance of British and American English as the standard of truth (Wahyudi, 2018b). Meanwhile, "unimportant" expresses views reflecting a more traditional adherence to Western ideology, where British and American English are considered the ultimate standard (Wahyudi, 2018a). This implies a hesitancy to deviate from these established norms, which may inhibit the exploration of alternative perspectives. Conversely, Aisy followed up interview by asking about their views on the variety of academic English taught by lecturers at the university.

I think it is not broad enough. Do you remember one of the lecturers he taught? His Javanese accent was visible. I like it even though the variety is arguably narrow, but when speaking, it is as if he is telling us it is okay to speak English with a *Medhok* accent. Then, even though the variety is limited, it is easy to understand. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23, emphasis added)

Here, Eva emphasizes the importance of understanding accent variation. The statement "It is okay to speak English with a medhok accent" indicates that she has a positive acceptance of the use of local accents, such as the Javanese accent (*medhok*) (Nabilla & Wahyudi, 2021). Although language variation may be limited, she appreciates the diversity of accents. She considers that lecturers who use such local accents provide a sense of comfort.

However, Eva's answer above contrasts with the statement expressed by Bella, that is:

Being introduced English variations is fine. Nevertheless, if you want to speak with the British, just use the British and vice versa, do not mix them. Maybe one lecturer used British, and the other lecturer used American; it confused me. (Bella, initial interview on 07/12/23)

"Being introduced is fine" implies an openness to variations of Englishes, showing a preference for each lecturer to use one particular language variation. Bella argues that this can be done to help students avoid confusion.

While this statement may not directly contradict the concept of (Saraceni, 2010) ideology, it reflects how the reality of using English in daily practice still reflects the dominance of existing English dominant ideology, contrary to efforts to offer alternative thoughts.

This shows that, in practice, there is a preference for one particular accent in English. Supposing we relate this statement to the mentioned concept of ideology, we can see how the use of English, especially in its British and American variants, has become a representation of the dominance of Western ideology. In this case, British and American English are portrayed as the standards of correctness, reflecting the dominance of the traditional Western worldview. This finding is partly similar to the findings by (Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan, 2022) where respondents regard Standard American English as easy to understand.

On one side, the participants also expressed the level of suitability of the material taught to their needs as English language learners.

It needs to be improved, and as a student, I need more information and knowledge about the varieties of English. (Eva, initial interview on 06/12/23)

Eva felt that the material needed to provide more information and knowledge about varieties of English. This feedback indicates motivation to understand more about varieties of English to demonstrate a deeper engagement with English as one of the languages of the Self (Takahashi, 2019). Eva's stance here strengthens the former students' critical positioning toward standard English (see Wahyudi, 2021a; Wahyudi, 2021c)

4.4 Attitude toward Varieties of Englishes

Participants	Traits	Word of Choices
Lila	Positive	Understand, joyful,
Eva	Positive and negative	Funny, dislike, too hard
Bella	Positive and negative	Easy, weird, confused
Maya	Negative	Difficult, cannot understand

Table 2. Students' thoughts on varieties of Englishes

Li and Wei (2022) claim that language attitudes typically refer to individuals' perceptions, sentiments, and inclinations regarding various forms or dialects of language. These attitudes encompass a spectrum of beliefs, emotions, and actions favorably or unfavorably towards different varieties of Englishes. When asked about their impressions of non-British and American English, Lila indicated their willingness to use varieties of Englishes.

I love hearing other variations of English, and I appreciate it, especially Indian English, which I think is funny, but I understand the accent. (Lila, initial interview on 04/12.23)

From Lila's perspective, she expressed positive feelings towards variations of Englishes outside standard English and a positive attitude towards Indian English. The answer is surprisingly paradoxical; when asked about the importance of learning variations of English, the respondent answered "not important," and then she countered with "Indian English is easy to understand," which implies that she has learned Indian English. This finding reflects (Wahyudi, 2018b, pp. 233–234) the need to be tolerant with the local accent when speaking English. Thus, this finding is similar to the ideology echoed by Saraceni (2010), which is the alternative use of English by being more inclusive.

Furthermore, when Maya was asked if she accepted when people used varieties other British and American, she expressed the following statements:

Maya: "It is okay...We just accept that you have a local accent". Aisy : "Why can't you accept that I have another accent?" Maya: "It could be a new insight and knowledge for me". (Maya, initial interview on 08/12/23)

The use of "It's okay" suggests a willingness to accept and accommodate different accents, indicating a non-judgmental perspective, similar to participants in (Cheung & Sung, 2014) study. The speaker highlights reciprocity in accepting linguistic differences, emphasizing that just as she accepts the presence of a local accent.

The phrase "it could be a new insight and knowledge for me" demonstrates a positive and open-minded approach. The speaker views diverse accents as an opportunity for personal growth and learning, indicating curiosity and appreciation for the richness that different linguistic variations bring.

As explained earlier, in the context of American English, students' attitudes are influenced by their understanding of accents. It can be seen that neutral comments towards varieties of Englishes arise due to students' difficulties in understanding the accent, in contrast to American English, where the majority of positive comments stem from a better understanding of the variety. As the interview answers below show:

Honestly, I feel closer to the variations similar to myself, such as American. However, with variations that I do not use, the feel is less but not foreign. (Lila, initial interview on 04/12/23)

Despite feeling unfamiliar, Lila does not express discomfort. This foreign feeling is not interpreted as a negative attitude, but she opens herself up by combining alienation with feelings of joy. This statement supports the concept of psychology (Saraceni, 2010) because English is not only a foreign means of communication but also an integral part of personal identity (see also Dhami, 2023).

Contrary to Lila's answer, Maya indirectly expresses her discomfort and unfamiliarity with the different language variations especially British English.

Actually, I do not want to be like that [feeling alienated], but if there are people who always use different accents to me [American accent], in the end I feel more distant even though I had learned that accent [British accent] but I failed comprehend it, I prefer to talk with people with the same accent (Maya, initial interview on 08/12/23)

Maya's arguments reflect personal preferences based on understanding and difficulty with English variations. This is to maintain smooth communication skills and reduce miscommunication due to accent differences. So, Maya's statement is partly similar and different with (Saraceni, 2010) psychology component of SCIP which says that "English is no longer the language of foreign Other but one of the languages of the self" (p.142). The similarity is there because she American accent has become her language of the self but then the difference is also there because British English is considered as the foreign Other.

This shows that when respondents e.g. Maya finds an accent difficult to understand and feel, they choose a community with the same accent because they want to communicate effectively when communicating with people (Gelder, 2019, p. 48).

The following quote describes Maya's motivation regarding why she chooses a particular variety of English to communicate.

I want to be validated. I want to be recognized for speaking well with an American accent. We have been studying English literature, so we are not embarrassed. The fear is, how come English literature students talk like that? (Maya, follow up interview on 08/12/23)

Then, Aisy conducted a follow-up interview by asking why and what kind of validation Maya wanted. She answered:

Because I carry the title of a Bachelor of English Literature and validation from people who have lived and studied abroad or people whom I can recognize as excellent, for example, from education or work. More so from the natives directly. However, since I do not know any natives, recognition from people who are experts in the field is enough. (Maya, follow up interview on 13/01/24)

The motivation to gain validation of her university learning was evident in Maya, supported by the repetition of the word validation, as well as gestures and body expressions during the interview. Meanwhile, the emphasis on validation from individuals with overseas experience or expertise in the field indicates a desire to conform to a certain standard of English and external acceptance within a community that can reflect positive attitudes with an impact on achievement in learning and self-confidence (Takahashi, 2019). This finding is supported by previous research, which states that extrinsic motivation is one of the greatest motivations for learners to learn English variations (Santovac & Popovic, 2022).

5. Conclusion

The Z generations students in our research have differing attitudes toward standard English and Englishes, ranging from positive, contradictory and negative stance(s). This complexity appears to be unavoidable because different competing factors might have shaped their stances e.g. British and American English as a primary reference in Indonesia (Wahyudi, 2018a), the respondent's status as an English department student, the respondent's exposure with family (aunt married with Australian), student's preference of one dominant variety over the other, the use of social media or the Internet, lecturers' different use of English varieties, the modernity associated with British and American (see Bunce et al, 2016), student's recontextualization of variety of English(es) in terms of the

mixture of global and local cultures as shown in fashion etc. This shows that our analysis of Z generation attitude toward varieties of Englishes seen from Saraceni's (2010) SCIP model are entangled in different but interconnected factors as Pennycook (2020) has argued.

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Appendix

This question was adapted by (Wahyudi, 2018a) in questions 1 to 7. Meanwhile, questions 8 to 12 were adapted from (Tran et al., 2021), and questions 13 to 14 were adapted from (Kolay, 2022). In this research, interviews were conducted in Indonesian and English. Nevertheless, respondents were free to answer questions in Indonesian, Javanese, or English language so that respondents feel comfortable and are more able to express their feelings and opinions as suggested by (Wahyudi & Chusna, 2019)

1. How do you define the varieties of Englishes?
2. How do you think the variety of English spreads?
3. Are you familiar with variations of English other than British and American?
4. How do you know there are variations of English?
5. Do you have an accent/variety when speaking English? If so, what accent do you like and use?
6. What culture do you think is associated with the English language?
7. Have you ever experienced any difficulties or conflicts when communicating with different accents?
8. Do you think it is important to learn other varieties of English besides American English or British English? Why?
9. What was your perspective on the variety of English in academics taught by the lecturer?
10. Are the English standards used in the English curriculum, materials, and tests in learning appropriate to your needs and context as an English learner? Why?
11. How do you feel about people who use variations of English other than British and American?
12. Do you feel closer or further away from people who use the same or different varieties of English as you?
13. What supports you in using variations of English today?