

# The impact of Local language Dialect toward the Teacher's Language Attitude in EFL Class Room in South Sulawesi, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The behavior that shows a misunderstanding of Standard English becomes an indicator of dialect prejudice (Devi & Kariko, 2017). This issue attracted the writer to observe the language attitude that arises due to the influence of local dialects on the use of English in speaking. In this case, the dialect prejudice of the English teachers toward English spoken by the students. Regarding the observation, the researcher investigated English teachers in some schools, a university and a course institution in South Sulawesi, to find out whether there is a language prejudice toward local dialect in EFL class. South Sulawesi is considered such a right location to conduct the investigation because there are many local dialects that still spoken by the society (including teachers and students) such as local dialects of Bugis, Toraja, Makassar, Mandar, and etc. There were 10 participants from a different area, and the teaching place had responded to nine items of questionnaire and two interview questions regarding the aims of the study. The data analysis shows that the English teachers misunderstand the standard English should be, and the dialect prejudice happens in the EFL classroom.

**Keywords:** Dialect Prejudice, Standard English, language attitude, English as a foreign language

## 1. Introduction

As part of the international community, Indonesian people should a lot opportunities to learn and acquire English as the most spoken language whole over the world; it has become intercultural communication in the current contextually (Sharifian, 2017). Even though in Indonesia, English still play role as a foreign language, it is necessary to be mastered by Indonesian nowadays (Marlina, 2012). Teaching English in Indonesia is needed to communicate on an international scale, both written and oral communication (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006). These needs encourage an effort to make English is easy to understand and use by everyone in the world.

No wonder in the Education curriculum of Indonesia, English is one of the subjects taught at all levels of education, starting from the elementary school level, secondary school, even university level (Agustin, 2015). In addition to schools, many course institutions provide English language learning services to meet the needs of the English language in Indonesia (Ruhamak & Rahayu, 2017).

The position of English, which is still a foreign language, especially in Indonesia, becomes a challenge for English teachers in teaching it (Mumary & Songbatumis, 2017) (Abrar et al., 2018). That is because in Indonesia, in addition to the use of Indonesian as a national language (Rosdiana, 2014), there are more than 742 regional languages that are still heavily used by speakers of each region, including students (Farisiyah & Zamzani, 2018). Not infrequently, the local language becomes the daily spoken language used in even in a formal situation such as in the educational environment; thus, it dramatically influences the teaching of English in schools or other course institutions (Falahuddin, Saleh, & Fitriati, 2019).

Some of the most influential things are the grammar equalizer between Indonesian and English (Novianti, 2015), then, confusion in using the correct tenses because this does not work in Indonesian (Fauziati, 2017), looking for appropriate words in the translation and the most influential is the way of speaking of local dialect. Then triggers a misunderstanding in English teachers about which English standards are needed (Devi & Kariko, 2017).

Standard English is a variety of English that is used in a formal situation and international communication (Knapp, 2015). There are various types of standard English in the world, such as North American English, Australian English, and British (Smith, 2015). Although these standard varieties differ in their pronunciation, they have the same common in grammar and spelling. The behavior that shows a misunderstanding of Standard English becomes an indicator of dialect prejudice. This issue attracted the writer to observe the language attitude that arises due to the influence of local dialects on the use of English in speaking. In this case, the dialect prejudice of the English teachers toward English spoken by the students. Regarding the observation, the researcher investigated English teachers in some schools, a university and a course institution in South Sulawesi, to find out whether there is a language prejudice toward local dialect in EFL class. South Sulawesi is considered such a right location to conduct the investigation because there are many local dialects that still spoken by the society (including teachers and students) such as local dialects of Bugis, Toraja, Makassar, Mandar, and etc.

## 2. Literature Review

People who live in a multilingual speech community, including children and students, experience an imbalance between the language spoken at home and language used at school (Gorter, Zenotz, & Cenoz, 2014). Even though students learn English as a foreign language (Novianti, 2015), the Standard English is needed as a regulation of English to be mastered professionally, because it can affect the way students use written and spoken English in the real context.

### 2.1 Standard English

The use of English with any distinctive local dialect or accent has become a concern of several types of research for a long time ago. With those attached dialects resulting in creating English variety. Particularly in Indonesia, Standard English is understood by the teachers affects learning results and material delivery to the students (Devi & Kariko, 2017).

Language is a much more complicated circumstance than attitude norm: it is also the central aspect of human experience and knowledge. Thus, the English speakers (either the native speakers or non-native speakers) may have their perspective as to "which one is a correct or incorrect of the language that they use (Milroy & Milroy, 2012).

Stevens (1981) claimed that there are specific contrary theories regard to what Standard English does not include such as, Standard English cannot be defined as "the best English" or "literary English," or "Oxford English," or "BBC English," that is not supposed as an arbitrary Standard English is not "upper-class English," only any particular speech community does not use it. The standard does not attempt to what is "the most often heard."

Standard English is not produced by planning the linguistic regulations or philosophy, or even conscious design. Moreover, he continued to define what Standard English is, as follows:

"Standard English is a particular dialect of English, being the only non-localized dialect, of global currency without significant variation, universally accepted as the appropriate educational target in teaching English, which may be spoken with an unrestricted choice of accent." (Stevens, 1981). Either way, however, Standard English, once defined as the dialect of the use of English in writing, is undeniable from the side of educational perspective. However, as the use of English as a spoken language, it can be concluded that the learning of English to non-native speakers is commendable, to avoid the discrimination which is already existed against non-standard dialect (Tony & Watts, 1999).

Davies (2010) argued that language English teaching need to lead properly if the students used their local dialect while speaking English is ignored; they may experience disaffection. Considering that every language or dialect has been given official status to be spoken in society. We cannot blame the non-native English speakers for sounding their dialect in speaking English as a foreign language as language defined as follows:

*Every language is equal*

The equivalent here means that all languages are not the same in some devices like grammar and vocabulary or even the chance of language to develop, but in a sociolinguistic viewpoint, that language is equal to be used or set to be used, including its dialect.

Political change favors dialect maintenance.

The revolution happened on behalf of minorities and discrimination. Therefore, the feeling of being respected becomes the strength and interest for the speech society to struggle toward their dialect as their identity.

### *The different language uses require different language code*

A linguistic character shows that it has more than one dialect code, e.g., to communicate at home, work, school, religion; it may need different codes based on their dialectal policy.

### *Speech societies have a unique membership*

The identity of language and dialects in real life are correct, but no one can be bilingual or bidialectal is just an unclear argument, in fact, as a member of the speech community. Most of us can be members of more than one speech community.

### *Language teachers seek chances to use authentic language*

Language teachers have the interest to set their students to use authentic language in learning the target language. The teachers want the use of their dialect just left at home; in the language classroom, the students are supposed to be native speakers of the target language. The teachers assumed that the "standard" must be used (Avies & Davies, 2010, pp. 184–186)

Further, even though English standard defined as the way natives learn to read and write, but most English speakers do not speak that way. Thus, English standard does not regard native dialect or more about the origin of English. It refers to the kinds whose grammar, which has been described in an English grammar book or even dictionaries that present the rules of spelling (Trudgill & Jean, 2013).

Finally, the recent statement claimed that Standard English has become spoken language in the way British, American; Canadian, Indian, Malaysian, Korean people used that language to communicate (Devi & Kariko, 2017). Thus, based on the theories above, there is nothing to do with the particular accent toward Standard English.

## **2.2 Language Attitude and Dialect Prejudice**

The effect of standardization may cause linguistic insecurity, the attitude of dialects, self-appointed authorities, and changing standards. It is recognized among the society that standard pronunciation was needed to measure others and become judgment for social advancement (Hickey, 2012).

Language attitude commonly affects professional scholars of language, and it seems it does not matter on the general public who keep looking at the grammar handbook or dictionaries (Milroy & Milroy, 2012). It seems to influence others to do what they want to do (Zeinivand, Azizifar, & Gowhary, 2015) and a positive language attitude can help learners succeed in their language learning and use process including dialect, speech style, speech communities (Ianos, Huguet, Janés, & Lapresta, 2015) (Khan, 2016).

The attitude that is shown to the students can affect their reaction either in a positive or negative way. The positive attitude toward English as a foreign language can be an essential aspect to learn English quickly; it also can increase the amount of input that students receive. The positiveness shown can motivate students to bring out their effort as EFL learners (Lubis, 2015). Moreover, a positive attitude helps learners cultivate their motivation to learn English beyond school hours (Gardner, Lalonde, & N, 1985). On the other hand, negative attitudes toward English, making students shy to speak English or practice their English (Lubis, 2015).

Some studies also had discussed this issue in Indonesia; since Indonesia has a multilingualism culture, it is necessary to find out the language attitude toward English and does dialect prejudice exists during the learning process of English as a foreign language. An attitude toward English differed between females and males (Wati, 2018). A study also reported that Sundanese dialect speakers have no problem with the accent of English; they show positive cognitive language attitude toward English (Wati & Zulaikha, 2019).

However, language attitude also shows regarding dialect prejudice particularly in Solo; it has been researched that English teachers in Solo show dialect prejudice because the lack of understanding about the Standard English should be, and it can affect the English teaching and learning curriculum in Indonesia (Devi & Kariko, 2017). Dialect Prejudice is a kind of discrimination to the person's vernacular dialect (Nordquist, 2018). In fact that people in society have the freedom to express their ideas using dialect (Litt, Martin, & Place, 2015). Regarding previous researches above, the research intended to find out whether or not the dialect prejudice exists in South Sulawesi, especially in the education field.

People who live in a multilingual speech community, including children and students, experience an imbalance between the language spoken at home and language used at school (Gorter, Zenotz, & Cenoz, 2014). Even though students learn English as a foreign language (Novianti, 2015), the English standard is needed as a regulation of English to be mastered professionally, because it can affect the way students use written and spoken English in the real context.

### 2.3 English Standard

The use of English with any distinctive local dialect or accent has become a concern of several types of research for a long time ago. With those attached dialects resulting in creating English variety. Particularly in Indonesia, Standard English is understood by the teachers affects learning results and material delivery to the students (Devi & Kariko, 2017). Language is a much more complicated circumstance than attitude norm: it is also the central aspect of human experience and knowledge. Thus, the English speakers (either the native speakers or non-native speakers) may have their perspective as to "which one is a correct or incorrect of the language that they use (Milroy & Milroy, 2012). Strevens (1981) claimed that there are specific contrary theories regard to what Standard English does not include such as:

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### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Participants

This study was conducted in some schools from elementary to senior high school, a university, and an English course institution in South Sulawesi. Excluding Bahasa Indonesia, the most spoken language by the students is their vernacular dialects, such as Bugis, Makassar, Toraja dialects.

In order to representative every kind of vernacular dialect, the researcher spread the observation some areas in South Sulawesi. That is why the participants needed should be deliberately (Chaklader, 2019). Along this line, the researcher found the English teachers who were corporate purposely to be observed and asked as follows:

Table: 1 Participants List

Code	Teaching in:	EFL Teachers' Local Dialect	Most Spoken Local Dialect of the Students
(A)	MTsN 1 Jeneponto	Makassar-Jeneponto	Makassar-Jeneponto
(B)	MTsN 1 Jeneponto	Jawa-Malang	Makassar-Jeneponto
(C)	SMAN 9 Wajo	Bugis-Sengkang	Bugis-Sengkang Bugis-Pammana
(D)	Univeristas Muhammadiyah Parepare	Bugis-Parepare	Bugis Enrekang Toraja / Mamasa
(E)	MTsN 3 Enrekang	Maspul-Marolangin	Maspul (Marolangin; Tanete; Pariwang)
(F)	SMP IT Wahdah Islamiyah Bantaeng	Makassar-Jeneponto	Makassar-Bantaeng Bugis-Bulukumba Bugis-Sinjai
(G)	SMPN 4 Mattiro Sompe, Pinrang	Bugis-Pinrang	Bugis-Pinrang
(H)	SMAN 6 Pinrang	Bugis-Pinrang	Bugis-Pinrang
(I)	IPEKA Christian Elementary School Makassar	Makassar	Makassar
(J)	The International English Center, Makassar	Bugis-Barru	Makassar Bugis

#### 3.2 Instruments

The participants asked questions regarding their perspective and their language attitudes toward students' local dialect. There are two types of instruments. The first part is presented in a questionnaire form, both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Considering the questionnaire is an effective and efficient method to do observation (Gahng, 1990). Closed-ended

questions talked about the English teachers' assumptions about the Standard English categorizations; it consisted of six items. Further, mixed closed-ended and opened-ended questions to examine teachers' language attitudes toward local dialect in speaking English. In addition, the questionnaire is provided in Google form; thus, the participants should have an e-mail account to access the form, and the questions are adopted from Devi & Kariko's instruments.

The second part is doing an interview. In this session, the researcher did it in some ways, such as using a Voice Note feature in WhatsApp application and doing a direct interview with the teachers. The interview questions consist of two questions: (1) Standard English, what does it mean according to you? (2) What will you do if your students have thick local dialect when they speak English? Question number 2 is also adapted from Devi & Kariko's instrument.

### 3.2 Data Analysis Procedures

The data was collected by counting the total number of responses in every question. Each participant was given the google form link to distribute the questionnaire, and they were given two interviewed questions and had to answer by recording their voice. The researcher eventually collected the data from 10th to 16th of February, 2020. Even though the method of this study used a descriptive qualitative approach, but data collected analyzed both quantitative and qualitative presentations. The quantitative data presented in the form of percentage by implementing this following formula:

$$Percentage = \frac{\text{total number of "yes" answers}}{\text{total number of participants}} \times 100\%$$

Farther, the qualitative data were transcribed from the Voice Note. The messages repeatedly read (Bohman & Borglin, 2014) to avoid the missing idea of what the participants had explained through their voice. Repetition of listening to the voice note or teachers' explanation helps the researcher to categorize the answers in which one of the explanations has the same meaning.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

### 4.1. English Teachers' Assumptions and Perspectives of Standard English

In order to investigate the EFL teachers' perspective about Standard English categorizations and definitions, the researcher distributed questionnaires (Devi & Kariko, 2017) and interviewed the participants who are teaching English in different educational levels and local dialects around South Sulawesi. The data consisted of two parts, the first is presented in the form of the table below, and the interview question about the definition of standard English explained narratively.

Table: 2 EFL Teachers' Assumptions of Standard English Categorizations

No	Statements	Total	Percentage
1	Grammatical Correct Sentence	7	70%
2	Sounds like native-speakers	4	40%
3	Having American accent	6	60%
4	Correct spelling in written English	9	90%
5	Correct use of tenses	6	60%
6	Having British accent	5	50%

Table 2 shows that 90% participants agree that correct spelling in written English is the part of Standard English, following with 70% agreement of the respondents who have the same assumption that grammatical correct in sentence categorized in standard English, and 60% EFL teachers believe that the use of correct of tenses is part of the standard English either. Based on <http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.10.03.2020.p9990>

the data presented, most of the respondents stand with the same assumptions about Standard English in English written categorization. The result indicated that grammar, vocabulary mastery, spelling, and punctuation are part of the linguistic features of English (Crystal, 1994). Farther, some of the participants agree that Standard English means the speakers should not have an American accent (40%) and a British accent (50%). Thus, they assume that the EFL speakers do not need to sound like native-speakers (60%). The American and British dialects do exist, but they statistically meaningless (Strevens, 1981). On the other hand, there still numbers of the respondents who believe that sounds like native-speakers with having American (60%) or British English accent (50%) are part of Standard English categorization. As a result, there is not a plenty number of respondents who think that sounds like native-speakers (40%) are needed in spoken English as a foreign language. Related EFL teachers' assumption above, the following table shows the teachers' perspective about the definition of Standard English.

Table: 3 EFL Teachers' Perspective of Standard English Definitions

Code	Statements (Standard English is..)
(A)	How we use English sentences to explain particular situations, and of course, the sentence should be correct according to English grammar and how we pronounce the words correctly and adequately.
(B)	The language spoken can be understood by anyone. It does not matter where they come from as long as they can understand what speakers say. It means they already use standard English.
(C)	The standard language that used generally and acceptable either in written or spoken usage. This kind of English language is usually in English handbooks, newspapers, or any public service facilities.
(D)	When we try to use general English toward our students. We should only use one accent so that it can be easier to be understood. Because if we use many accents or even combine different accent, let say American and British accent, our students could be confused. It is better if you just use one accent along with the lesson.
(E)	The English with any kind of rules or regulations, and it is taught in an educational environment, e.g., using properly and politely English, the correct tenses and grammar.
(F)	The standard that has been arranged in the curriculum to be reached for each level of education.
(G)	The standard that have been arranged in curriculum to be reached for each level of education
(H)	Something that related to correct tenses, grammar, and spelling, particularly in written form, those standards are essential. However, to speak English, the grammar and else does not matter even also sometimes the speakers affect their particular accent (non-native accent).
(I)	Standard English should follow the rules of British and American English.
(J)	The usual English or the standard English

The statements above collected by interviewing the participants, nine of them were interviewed via voice note feature, and one was interviewed by meeting the teacher directly. Based on table 3, it can be concluded that most of the participants have a similar definition of Standard English; they believe that standard English is related to the proper written and spoken English that should be reached in education target.

There are four participants (A, C, E, G) stated that Standard English has a big deal with the rules of correct grammar, tenses, and spelling both in written and spoken English as foreign. There are two of them (D, I) believe that American and British English have become Standard English; they involve both of the English styles toward standard accent of spoken English. Finally, the

participants (B, F, H, J), who state both ideas believe that is not only grammar, or written correct rules of English matter, the way they pronounce the words in communication are matter either. They express their idea by writing down standard English is something to do with the English origin itself or Standard English.

In this case, most of the participants argued that the British and American accent is the English standard that the students need to master in order to reach what curriculum arranged and defined in learning English as a foreign language. They assume that Standard English is linked with the British and American accent (Devi & Kariko, 2017). The statement of participant this misconception of Standard English can lead EFL teachers to commit dialect prejudice.

#### 4.2. Teachers' Language Attitude toward Local Dialect of Spoken English in EFL Classroom

It cannot be denied that dialect prejudice is widespread nowadays, even in the speech society that multilingual spoken varieties (Litt et al., 2015). This issue has been observed for years. In Indonesia itself, local dialect exists too (Devi & Kariko, 2017). The researcher had set questions regarding language attitude toward the local dialect by adapting Devi & Kariko's instruments. The data shows that as follow.

Table: 4 EFL Teachers' Language Attitude toward Local Dialect of Spoken English

Items	Answers	Reason
Do you think accent (Native-like accent) is important in teaching English as Foreign Language?	Yes (8)	a. Because it's one of Standard English, students need to be introduced to sounds or real pronunciation of the English origin (4) b. In order to make students get used to speaking English like native and can be understood easily by a native when they talk someday (4)
	No (2)	a. I think that's not really important, because we have our own accent (1) b. As long as the students can pronounce the sentences well, I think their accent is not a big deal (1)
Do you expect your students to have native like accent?	Yes (9)	a. In order to make listeners easy to understand what they're talking about by using authentic English accent (5) b. So that they will be able to learn and understand the English better (2) c. I do not expect much, but hope they will speak like native is a good thing (2)
	No (1)	a. They just need to speak English in correct pronunciation, no matter if they sound like the used to (1)
Do you try to sound like native speaker when you are teaching?	Yes (9)	a. To become a good speaker in English (1) b. I am trying my best, so that students be able to imitate and get used to sound like-native accent (7) c. Sometimes (1)
	No (1)	a. I am not really good at native English accent



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What will you do if your students have thick vernacular accent when they speak English?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. I try as much as possible to sound like native, because I myself have problem in producing English in native way, so will listen to YouTube native video, and teach the students the way native talking in the classroom. (2)</li><li>b. Actually, it is OK if our students have thick accent when they speak English, they are still learning, it doesn't matter for now as long as we can get what they mean to say and they say, <i>but it is my job as their teacher to lead them in order to reduce their thick accent.</i> Because if we force them, they will lose interested in learning English (3)</li><li>c. I will fix their thick accent to sound more like native English (3)</li><li>d. It's OK as long as they speak correct pronunciation and their speech are understandable (2)</li></ol>
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Based on the collected data in table 4, native English accent is stated as standard in learning English, 80% respondents believe that native-like accent is essential in order to achieve what education target demand in learning English, it can also be said that local dialect is given negative attitude toward spoken English. They said that in order to make students get used to speaking English like natives and can be understood easily by a native when they talk someday. On the other hand, two of them think that the native English accent is not essential.

In question number two, a significant number (9) that shows EFL teachers expect their students to sound like a native, they considered that if their students have a native accent, they will be able to speak correctly with the native and be easier to understand English spoken either. Moreover, there are nine of the participants to speak like native speakers in the classroom in order to get their students used to listen the proper English should be spoken, again they highly assumed that having English native speakers accent is standard in education target which English taught as a foreign language. It is their responsibility to teach it to their students.

The summary of the three questions above is the language attitude of the EFL teachers toward the local dialect of their students when they speak English. Based on table 4, it can be said that dialect prejudice happens in teaching and learning English process, the teachers possess to sound like native, they will fix their students accent, even in the first place they stated that it is ok to not sound like native, they compromised at first, but then they intend to change the local dialect to more sound like native, however. Thus, the researcher claimed there is a negative evaluation of the local accent that clearly explained in the table above.

## 5. Conclusion

Dialect prejudice can be found in as such a way to use English in vernacular dialect; some people think that should be confronted openly by people in education that still mismatch between standard English and local dialect (Milroy & Milroy, 2012).

Related to that, this study had conducted an observation regarding language attitude toward local dialect of spoken English in some schools, a university, and an English course institution in South Sulawesi.

Based on the analysis above, it is found that most of the EFL teachers in South Sulawesi assumed that Standard English is not only the standard of proper grammar, tenses or spelling used in written English but also native-like accent is part of Standard English. This assumption makes the teachers work hard to sound like a native while teaching English as international students in the classroom. In the same line, they expect their student to be able to sound like natives either.

This attitude of language caused the dialect prejudice of spoken English. Even though they think that using, local dialects when speaking English is not a problem, but they still make an effort to make their students sound more like a native. In this case, in South Sulawesi, dialect prejudice happens in some areas where the researcher conducted the study.

The researcher assumed that having a suitable comprehension toward what Standard English could help curriculum in arranging the demand of which rules of English should be taught at school in order to increase the dialect awareness and reduce the dialect prejudice that can affect students' confidence in speaking English.

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