

LECTURERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH VARIETY EXPOSURE IN INDONESIA

By:

Alfan Hariri¹⁾, Ahmad Munir²⁾, Syaiful Anam³⁾

¹⁾Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Surabaya ,
Email: alfan.17070835047@mhs.unesa.ac.id

²⁾Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Surabaya ,
Email: ahmadmunir@unesa.ac.id

³⁾Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Email: syaiful.anam@unesa.ac.id

Abstract

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kurangnya penelitian konsep varietas bahasa Inggris di Indonesia. Dalam penelitian ini pandangan dosen terhadap varietas bahasa Inggris dieksplorasi serta pendapat mereka tentang penggunaan varietas bahasa Inggris di kelas. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif untuk mengetahui sikap peserta terhadap varietas bahasa Inggris. Subjek penelitian ini adalah sepuluh dosen dari tiga perguruan tinggi di Surabaya. Untuk mengumpulkan data, prompt-produksi akan digunakan untuk mengeksplorasi sikap dosen yang mendalam. Salah satu temuan yang lebih signifikan yang muncul dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa perbedaan antara kuliah yang lulus internasional dan kuliah yang lulus nasional dalam hal sikap mereka terhadap varietas bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, sikap ini juga mempengaruhi persepsi mereka tentang pengajaran varietas di kelas pengajaran bahasa Inggris (ELT).

Kata Kunci: English Varieties, Attitude, English as international language (EIL).

1. INTRODUCTION

The wide spread of English around the world has triggered the emergence of new English varieties. As a result, in international context, English learners in the future will seem to interact mostly with non-native English speaker (Jenkins, 2012). From this phenomena, the question of whether the new English varieties is sociolinguistically acceptable as the traditional base of English (American or British) in international context and how English Language Teaching (ELT) will accommodate the new varieties in teaching learning process is still being discussed (Jenkins, 2012). One thing that is clear from this issue is that to equip student with the competence to communicate in international context by using English. They must be exposed with these new varieties in order they can understand the new variety and can be understood by these varieties.

In fact, along my experiences of teaching and learning in the Indonesian context, I witness that most of the lecturers rely on the superiority of two English varieties: American and British. Most of the lecturers assume that those two varieties are the only standard English while others such as Africa English, Singapore English, India English and other Englishes as non-standard (Farrell & Martin, 2009; Görlach, 1998; Hurtig, 2006; Nickerson, 2005). Thus, in teaching learning process lecturers do not use various English varieties neither teaching various Englishes to the student. As the consequence, student do not know that there are a lot of English varieties other than American and British.

However, while in international context there have been abundant research about the issue and practice of the English varieties by emergence of EIL and ELF, in Indonesian ELT context, it is very hard to find the research of English varieties both in perspective and practice since the Indonesian lecturers haven't moved on yet from the perception that English is belong to English speaking country. As a matter of fact, Zacharias (2010) found that the Indonesian lecturers believed that English speaking country as reference or standard of perfect English. As the consequence, the lecturers assumed that the best material to teach English is the material which is made by the native speaker publisher. As an example, in Indonesia some reputable or international schools still use native centered based curriculum such as Cambridge as their reference in teaching English. Similarly, Gandana & Parr (2013) discusses about the issue of English varieties applicability through EIL concept in Indonesia. It indicates that lecturers around Asia including Indonesia is still lack of awareness with the issue of English varieties. To this purpose, this study will focus on how lecturers' attitude toward English varieties in ELT.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

In accordance with the characteristic of the qualitative research design which need in depth exploration about an object, this research uses qualitative research design to seek and explore the lecturers' attitude. Besides, understanding the context of the participants in this research is very crucial since it will influence the participants'

attitude toward the issue. In short, this research is qualitative in its nature that looking for in depth understanding and respectively considering the context of the participants in revealing lecturers' attitude about English varieties as well as adopting English varieties as their future target in ELT context.

The subjects of the study of this research are ten lecturers of three higher educations in Surabaya; two privates and one state university with ten lecturers in total. To collect the data, the prompt-production will be used to explore in depth lecturers' attitude toward the issue. Afterward, the teacher response will be transcribed verbatim. Later, the researcher begins with open coding which is coding the data for its major categories of information. In this case, a category represents a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During this process the transcript will be classified into a unit based on similar event, examples, opinion, etc. The last step is selective coding where the researcher arranges the correlated categories from the open coding into a model and develops propositions that describes the interrelationship of categories in the model.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the prompt, the participant shown various response dealing with the standard or non-standard English of the speakers in the video. Most of the participant are familiar with the English of inner circle speakers in the video. As a matter of fact, said:

"I guess one of the actor are from UK, but I'm not sure for the other, probably Australian or American. In academic context, those are the English that we use, but of course with some adjustment dealing with vocabulary and speed" (participant five)

"I usually hear such of that accent in the movie both in American or Britain made movie, or in songs. I also teach with these kind of English to my student in the class" (participant one)

From the sample excerpt, the participants are familiar with the inner circle speakers since they usually watch movie or video with those accents. Similarly, Young and Walsh (2010) found that most of Asian teachers are familiar with American English since there are a lot of song and movies from USA. Furthermore, when they teach, they use the inner circle speaker as a model and reference. This is supported by Young and Walsh (2010) study which reveals that most of the lecturers uses American and British English in ELT classroom. As a result, students only have these two English varieties as the reference of "standard" English.

However, when they saw the outer and expanding circle speakers, they assumed that the speakers are not common and strange. As an example some of the participants said:

"I know that they speak English, but the English seems strange, there are some words that I'm missing" (participant seven)

"some accents and words are unclear for me, maybe it is different English" (participant eight)

"I can notify the accent of the speaker that he is an Indian (south Asia), because I used to watch Indian movie so I really familiar with the accent even he uses English" (Participant nine)

The participants easily recognize which one is the inner circle English and the outer and expanding circle English. since they are usually exposed and use the inner circle English in their teaching, listening to music, and teaching, so they simply notify the different English from which they usually listen and use. This is as what Jenkins (2012) states that the teachers or lecturers in Asia still strong adherence toward the inner circle English speaker. Furthermore, participant nine notifies the different English from the notable accent of the speaker who has a strong Indian accent in his English.

In addition, some of the participants stated that they were familiar with the outer and expanding circle speaker since they had studied abroad such as in UK or Australia.

"when I was in Australia, one of my friend is from India, so I used to interact with that accent. At first, it was difficult to understand, but finally I get used to speak with them" (participant three)

"in my rent house, there are various student from various country who stay next to my house. Some of them are from wales, china, Vietnam, and India. So I used to interact with those varieties" (participant two)

"UK is now very multicultural, there are a lot of people around the world who live there with different purpose of course. So I used to interact with varieties of speakers in almost all place I visit: classroom, market, mosque" (participant five)

The participant who had studied in abroad will be familiar with the different varieties of English since in the country they were studying were heterogeneous society around the world. As a result, they are more aware than the national university graduated participant dealing with the existence of varieties of English. Similarly, Dewi (2017) assumes that the lecturers who graduated from abroad university will have options of varieties to be used as the target English since they live with English speaker with different nationalities.

Furthermore, dealing with the participants' perspective of teaching those varieties in their classroom, they have different responses both national graduated and abroad graduated lecturers. As previously mentioned that the national graduated lecturers are not familiar with the varieties. Consequently, they perceive that the varieties other than inner-circle variety as non-

standard English. For example, some of the participants said:

“are you kidding me? Exposing students with those uncommon varieties is not academically accepted, I guess, because you will never find those varieties in TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS test or even in text book or learning material” (Participant eight)

“I never meet that kind of English (outer and expanding circle) in teaching learning material, so why we should teach students English which is not standard and widely used in international context” (participant nine)

“are we going to mislead our students? They (English outer and expanding circle speakers) speak ungrammatical English and inappropriate intonation and pronunciation. I think it will be better to teach students with American and British. With these two (American and British) main varieties, I do believe that students will be able to communicate with all English speakers around the world” (participant ten)

The national graduated lecturers assume that teaching English varieties is not urgent since the “standard” variety will be adequate to make student be able to communicate in international context. Furthermore, they assume that the varieties other than American and British were not found in teaching material and some English proficiency test such as TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS. In the same way, Young & Walsh (2010) study about lecturers attitude toward the exposure of English varieties in ELT revealed that some lecturers in Asia assumes that English varieties as broken and non-standard English. Similarly, Jenkin (2012) conducted a study about lecturers attitude to English varieties exposure in classroom. He found an interesting fact dealing with the preference of American and British English for the lecturers, where their confidence of English skill and mastery is relying on how good they can be American and British like speaker.

In addition, Young & Walsh (2010) found that most of the teachers use only two English varieties (American and British). As the consequence, in teaching learning process lecturers do not use various English varieties neither teaching various Englishes to the student. As the consequence, student do not know that there are a lot of English varieties other than American and British.

As a result, students who are only exposed to one or two varieties may think that it is the only varieties that are correct and acceptable. This is supported by Alatis (1995), Ur (2010) and Bauer (2002) who reveal that with only one or two variety introduced to student, they may think that the speaker of different English varieties claimed as bad English. Similarly, some researchers assume that it is not necessary for L2 student to acquire native-speaker norms in order to be considered

capable of English (Alsagoff, Mckay, Hu, & Renandya, 2012; Jenkins, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2006).

Zacharias (2010) found that the Indonesian lecturers believed that English speaking country as reference or standard of perfect English. As the consequence, the lecturers assumed that the best material to teach English is the material which is made by the native speaker publisher. As an example, in Indonesia some reputable or international schools still use native centered based curriculum such as Cambridge as their reference in teaching English. Similarly, Gandana & Parr (2013) discusses about the issue of English varieties applicability through EIL concept in Indonesia. It indicates that lecturers around Asia including Indonesia is still lack of awareness with the issue of English varieties

On the other hand, the international graduated lectures are more aware of the English varieties around the world since they have experienced the interaction either directly or indirectly in their university with English varieties speakers.

“I have unique experience on how I am being aware of English varieties. When I make listening material in one of my course assignment, my lecturer told me that my listening material is not authentic since it contained only one variety of speaker. In fact, there are various speakers in UK and they have their own English variety. So, she suggested me to add the material” (participant four)

“by the fact that I experience and know the different English varieties, sometime I question myself which English I should use to teach my students. Recently, I have been reading the theory of world Englishes and I think it is very logic that non-native English speakers have greater amount of native speaker. For this reason, it is reasonable to prepare students with those varieties” (participant two)

“when I was in Australia, I had many friend from New Zealand, yes they speak English, but their English is a bit different, there are some word that might be you will not understand since they pronounce differently from the UK, British or even Australian English. For this reason, it is important to introduce the English varieties to the students” (participant four)

“I am really excited to teach the English varieties to my students because it is still uncommon issues and perspective in Indonesia. I really want to see how my students’ reaction dealing with this issue” (participant three)

The participants experience the English variety since they were living abroad with different varieties of speakers communicating with them. With these experiences the participants are aware about the importance of introducing English varieties around the world. Dewi(2017) confirmed that the lecturers who had studied in abroad have experienced the varieties of English since they

interact with the different nationalities with different varieties of English as well.

In addition, the participants feel it is important to teach students with English varieties to make them aware that English is not only American and British. This intention is because they experience as students when the lecturers only focus on one or two varieties. Similarly, Young & Walsh (2010) revealed that most of the teacher or lecturers in Asia use American English as the target language in their teaching. Being aware with the varieties of English Sung (2016) suggests that it is also important that lecturers help empower learners to make choices about the language they use so that they can become fully competent speakers of English who are capable of presenting themselves in whatever way they would like.

However, in spite of their positive attitude toward the English variety, studies have revealed that lecturers find difficult to implement the English varieties in teaching learning process. There two basic reasons underlie this condition; material availability and government rule in language education. As a matter of fact, Dewi (2017) revealed that the material which expose varieties of English is limited if any. Similarly, Young and Walsh (2010) stated that American based publisher has more domination in providing English learning material. This is supported by Anne (2005) study which reveal that the textbook used was not represent and accommodate the English varieties concept. In addition, the educational ministry in Asia still demand the teachers to use American and British as target English (Görlach, 1998). As a result, teacher has no power to choose the material and decide which varieties to expose in their ELT classroom.

4. CONCLUSION

The following points emerged from the present investigation: 1) the differences between the international graduated lectures and national graduated lecturers in term of their attitude toward the English varieties. the international graduated lecturers have awareness about the English varieties since they are exposed with those varieties when they stayed abroad. On the other hand, the national graduated lecturers tend to rely on the inner circle English as their reference in their teaching. 2) Furthermore, this attitude also influences their perception about teaching the varieties in English language teaching (ELT) classroom. The national graduated lecturers have strong adherence toward inner circle English varieties in ELT classroom. In the contrary, the international graduated lecturers are more open minded to accommodate the different varieties of English for their students.

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