The Dynamic Constructions of Subjectivity, Attitude, Investment and Identity towards English(es): A Case Study of Multilingual English Learners in Indonesia[1]

Nur Nabilah Fauziyah[2], Ribut Wahyudi[3], Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Malang, East Java, Indonesia

Abstract

This study examines the constructions of English learners' subjectivity, attitude, investment, and identity in World Englishes or Standard English in a multilingual country, Indonesia. The researchers interviewed four English learners exposed to the World Englishes paradigm in the Introduction to (Critical) Applied Linguistic course. The data were analysed through several analytical frameworks: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis as rewritten by Walshaw (2007), English learners' identity prototypes (Gao, 2014), and language investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2017; Norton, 2013). The findings of this study showcase the dynamic trend of Indonesian English learners' subjectivities, attitudes, investments, and identities while dealing with the issue of English(es). Their multiple subjectivities on World Englishes are likely shaped by several influences, including formal schooling, institutional practices, policy documents, courses, teacher's subjectivity, and everyday experience. Although the hegemonic power of Inner Circle Englishes still exists in most of English Language Teaching praxis in Indonesian education, the respondents' awareness of World Englishes, in this regard, has gradually reconstructed their subjectivities, which partly deconstructs the way they perceive and invest in Standard English or Localised Varieties of Englishes.

Resumen

Este estudio examina las construcciones de la subjetividad, actitud, inversión e identidad de los estudiantes de inglés en los ingleses mundiales o el inglés estándar en un país multilingüe, Indonesia. Los investigadores entrevistaron a cuatro estudiantes de inglés expuestos al paradigma de los ingleses mundiales en el curso de Introducción a la Lingüística Aplicada (Crítica). Los datos se analizaron a través de varios marcos analíticos: Análisis del Discurso Foucaultiano según la reescritura de Walshaw (2007), prototipos de identidad de los estudiantes de inglés (Gao, 2014) e inversión lingüística (Darvin y Norton, 2015, 2017; Norton, 2013). Los hallazgos de este estudio muestran la tendencia dinámica de las subjetividades, actitudes, inversiones e identidades de los estudiantes de inglés indonesios al abordar el tema del inglés(s). Sus múltiples subjetividades en los ingleses mundiales probablemente estén moldeadas por varias influencias, entre ellas la educación formal, las prácticas institucionales, los documentos de políticas, los cursos, la subjetividad de los docentes y la experiencia cotidiana. Aunque el poder hegemónico de los ingleses del círculo interno aún existe en la mayor parte de la práctica de la enseñanza del inglés en la educación indonesia, la conciencia de los encuestados sobre los ingleses del mundo, en este sentido, ha reconstruido gradualmente sus subjetividades, lo que deconstruye en parte la forma en que perciben e invierten en el inglés estándar o las variedades localizadas de ingleses.

Introduction and Review of the Literature

Over the past few decades, ideas such as World Englishes (Kachru et al., 2006), English as Lingua Franca (Jenkins, 2006), and Global Englishes (Galloway & Rose, 2018), three related concepts which promote the plural forms of Englishes, have grown to challenge the hegemony of 'standard' English in the discursive practices of English teaching. These pluralist perspectives seek to dismantle the traditional positioning of Localised Varieties of Englishes (LVE) as "deficiencies" (Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins, 2006). However, this theoretical shift seems to have not fully deconstructed learners' perceptions. Gao's (2014) study, for example, identifies the emergence of a faithful imitator identity, in which learners tend to valorise the native-speaker norms over other English varieties.

Numerous scholars also reported similar results regarding the continual dominance of native-speaker norms (Al-Ahdal & Al-Qunayeer, 2020; Anjanillah et al., 2021; Gao, 2014; Tamimi, 2018; Wang, 2015). Those studies have shown that most English teaching in Expanding circle countries (countries where English is positioned as a foreign language) still relies on Inner Circle English (varieties of English used in countries where English is the first language, such as e.g., British English and American English) as the legitimate standard (Wahyudi, 2018). Another research (Sung,2017) presented that most Hong Kong university students tend to construct dual identities, positioning themselves as competent English as a Lingua Franca

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[2] nabilahziyah@gmail.com
[3] ribut@bsi.uin-malang.ac.id, 0000-0001-7124-1678

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(ELF) users with non-native English speakers, but as learners with native English speakers. These results are not surprising considering that in most social institutions (e.g., schools and universities), like in Indonesia, they are subject to native speakerism domination that has been widely accepted as the norm (Wahyudi, 2021a).

While the dominance of native-speakerism is undeniable, Inner Circle English (rooted in native speaker concept) cannot be assumed to apply in all contexts in Indonesia. Nabilla & Wahyudi's (2021) research found that even though Indonesian university students favour Inner Circle English, half of them have developed local and "glocal" identities (a combination between local and global identity) by valuing their local English accents. In a different study, two female students enrolling in an Introduction to (Critical) Applied Linguistics (ICAL) class also took relatively similar critical positionings (Wahyudi, 2022) after they had read some critical materials with post-colonial orientations such as the non-native speaker fallacy (Canagarajah, 1999) or translanguaging (Wei, 2017). Extending these somewhat different positioning taken up by the students, the current study investigates the subjectivity, attitude, investment, and identity toward Standard English or World Englishes.

Issues of subjectivity, attitude, and investment are particularly addressed as in Indonesian contexts, Localised Varieties of English are often overlooked in pedagogical approaches, curriculum, and English language teaching (ELT) materials (Gandana, 2014; Irham, 2022; Wahyudi, 2018). This situation reflects Danaher et al.'s (2000) argument that discourses, ideologies, and institutional practices can construct someone's subjectivity. Moreover, Irham's (2022) study also emphasised how the hegemony of Inner Circle English is intertwined with the capital accumulation of the UK/America. This study is hence necessary to figure out the complex case of Indonesian multilingual English learners' subjectivity, investment, attitudes and identity, particularly for students who have been exposed to the ICAL course.

The construction of Indonesian EFL learners' attitudes and investment

Indonesia, as an archipelagic state with 3000 inhabited islands and 706 living languages (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Lewis et al., 2014), is home to predominantly multilingual speakers. This has resulted in several critical studies, including those that discuss the subject position, identity, or attitude of Indonesian EFL learners toward English(es) (Anjanillah et al., 2021; Irham, 2022; Wahyudi, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2024).

Anjanillah et al.'s (2021) work, among others, revealed that Indonesian English learners' attitudes are often fashioned in multiple and contradicting ways. There are students who appreciate Localised Varieties of Englishes but they are still trapped in 'linguistic hierarchy' (Phillipson & Skuttnab-Kangas, 2013) positioning British and American English at the top and other varieties as lower. This ambivalent attitude seems to be created by the attitudinal negotiation of multilingual learners in various contexts (Liu et al., 2021) , where most Indonesian ELT practices continue to institutionalize Inner Circle English as what Foucault called a regime of truth (Foucault, 1977). Similar practices have been found in the studies of dominant varieties of English (Irham et al., 2021; Wahyudi, 2018;2024). These findings demonstrate an ambivalent attitude of Indonesian English learners towards Inner Circle English.

To further explore the construction of these attitudes, Darvin & Norton's (2015) model of language investment offers a viable framework to interpret Indonesian learners' conflicting attitudes towards Englishes. The concept of language investment delves into language learners' identity and commitment towards the target language. Positioned at the intersection between ideology, capital, and identity, language investment exhibits the impact of prevailing ideologies on language learners' desires for capital, including their identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2017). Anjanillah et al.'s, (2021) study exemplifies this, demonstrating how the hegemony of Inner Circle English —legitimated partly by the use of the *Longman Dictionary of American English* and neoliberal educational practices —drives EFL learners' desire to improve their linguistic and economic capital. This highlights complex relationship between language investment, identity, and ideology.

The enactment of Inner Circle English discourse in most ELT practices of Indonesian schools also seems to have led the students of non-English major backgrounds to refuse LVE implementation in their English class as they find it 'strange' (Irham, 2022). This reaction shows the relation between capital, identity, and ideology within the discursive construction of language investment. The language investment framework also points out the power of systemic control patterns to put language learners in a circumscribed situation as they cannot acquire the capital they covet (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2017). This complex situation has been experienced by many multilingual English learners considering that, in some cases, they still face a

linguistic hierarchy. To further illuminate the intricate relationship between subjectivity, attitude, and investment, Gao's (2014) identity prototypes serve as a theoretical framework.

English learners' identity prototypes

Gao (2014) divided the identity of English learners into four types: a faithful imitator, a legitimate speaker, a playful communicator, and a dialogical communicator (p. 59). The condition of English has inspired these categorizations during the past 50 years, which has evolved from glorifying native English norms to claiming the equality of every language. For the first category, a faithful imitator, an English learner is portrayed as a small child who only copies native English speakers making them their primary models of learning English. The second identity, a legitimate speaker, disputes the hegemony of native English norms by arguing the equality of every language variety. For the third identity, a playful creator, English learners are recognized by their habit of mixing both native and second languages through the practice of linguistic hybridization. Lastly, a dialogical communicator is considered a mature adult who does not feel limited to a position of superiority or inferiority in learning English and are more concerned with the aspect of respect, integrity, and sensitivity towards every culture. Overall, these four identity categorizations might be shaped and reshaped by the socio-historical change, globalization, intercultural communication, or collapse of imperialism (Gao, 2014).

Neoliberalism in the ELT context

Holborow (2012) regards Neoliberalism as a part of an economic theory that emphasizes a minimum interference of the government state by voicing privatization features in the free market mechanism. Within the ELT context, neoliberal discourse is also deemed responsible for the uneven proportion of English endorsement in language teaching. The view that English skills can help individuals gain capital appreciation or even invigorate a country's economic competitiveness, for instance, signifies the existence of linguistic instrumentalism, as part of neoliberal ideology (Kubota, 2011) in educational settings.

The assumption that English is crucial for gaining economic success is also embedded in the Indonesian educational setting. Anjanillah et al.'s (2021) study uncovered neoliberal values in the classroom, which can urge some learners to invest their time and effort in translation activities. The neoliberal value has also penetrated the Indonesian educational system through the World Bank's role in Indonesian Higher Education (Wahyudi, 2018). The keywords found for these neoliberal discourses include "economic growth, the global economy, competition, and employment" (p. 111). These keywords reflect the power of neoliberalism to shape students' subjectivity regarding the significance of language skills, especially English, as desirable capital.

Methodology

Participants

This study involved four participants, Faiz, Mudip, Nana, and Bella (pseudonyms), who were all final-year university students of the English Literature Department. They were chosen based on several aspects, including their English proficiency level and professional experiences in formal or non-formal English education. The students were considered to be advanced English learners with a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score higher than 520 (Carson et al., 1990). This categorization could change in the official TOEFL, as the participants only took the local test from the institution. This test has similar sections to the official test, but it differs in difficulty level and its international recognition. Thus, this could be used as an early indicator of the participants' proficiency of English.

The researchers selected the participants based on their awareness of the World Englishes paradigm, which they gained in the ICAL class. As Wahyudi (2022) explained, the ICAL course, covering post-structural and post-colonial insights, has an agenda to shape the critical perspective of the students towards Inner Circle English (e.g., British English or American English). This program could possibly impact on the reconstruction of the respondents' subjectivity, attitude, investment, and identity toward Inner Circle English or LVE.

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Name (pseudonym)	Formal education	Non-Formal Education	English(es) exposed to	Curriculum Employed in Formal Education	Cultural Background	Languages
Bella	1. Primary (2011) 2. Secondary (2014) 3. High School (2017) Note: She did not study English in Primary School.	English Course in Pare (2 months)	British American Indian Filipina	KTSP (Secondary School) K13 (High School)	Bimanese	Indonesian English Mbojo Arabic
Mudip	1. Primary (2010) 2. Secondary (2013) 3. High School (2016)	English Course in Pare (3 months)	British American Australian	KTSP (Secondary School) K13 (High School)	Javanese	Indonesian English Javanese Arabic
Faiz	1. Primary (2010) 2. Secondary (2013) 3. High School (2016)	English Course in Pare 3 times: first for 4 months second and third for 1 each	British American Australian Indian Singaporean	KTSP (Secondary School) K13 (High School)	Javanese	Indonesian English Javanese
Nana	1. Primary (2010) 2. Secondary (2014) 3. High school (2017)	English Course in Malang (3 months)	Korean German Indian British American	KTSP (Secondary School) K13 (High School)	Javanese	Indonesian English Javanese

Table 1: Backgrounds of the research participants.

As shown in Table 1, all participants were multilingual and had already been exposed to English(es). Participants seem to have extensive experience of learning English both in school and after school learning. Hence, investigating the EFL learners' personal and professional experiences becomes significant as these experiences might shape particular subjectivities (Manathunga, 2015), whether they implemented, negotiated, or resisted the Western dominant discourses in the classroom (Wahyudi, 2018).

Materials and analysis

This case study examines Indonesian English learners' subjectivity, attitudes, investment, and identity in World Englishes. A semi-structured and a follow-up interview were carried out from August until November 2021 with four EFL learners from one of the Islamic Universities (IU) in Jawa Timur, Indonesia (see the Appendix for the interview questions). The interviews were conducted in flexible time both for the researchers and participants. The participants were interviewed one by one and their responses were recorded for approximately 45 minutes per participant.

In the interview, we provided a consent form and used pseudonyms for all participants for ethical considerations. The participants were permitted to use Indonesian, English, or mixed languages during the interview, enabling them to express their perspectives without being constrained by language boundaries (Fallas Escobar, 2019; Wahyudi & Chusna, 2019). The recordings of the semi-structured interview were transcribed faithfully, with certain words, phrases, or sentences coded based on predominant themes. Participants' intonation and English accents during the interview were also carefully noted in early analysis.

The interview results were categorized by using several analytical frameworks, including Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Walshaw, 2007), Gao's (2014) English learners' identity prototypes, and Darvin and Norton's (2015, 2017) works on investment. Drawing on Walshaw's (2007) explanation of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, identities were viewed as shaped by prevailing discourses. Walshaw's (2007) work was adopted as this book uses reader-friendly language to explain Foucault's main concepts such as discourse, regime of truth, relations of power, technology of the self, along with examples of text analyses. This book was helpful for the researchers to understand how Indonesian EFL learners' identities were constructed in relation to complex power dynamics and historical events (Walshaw, 2007).

Other key conceptual frameworks, such as Gao's (2014) English learners' identity prototypes and Darvin and Norton's (2015, 2017) investment model were also used, given the available concepts in Walshaw's (2007) book were not sufficient to capture the complexity of some issues (e.g., learner's investment and identity prototypes). Gao's (2014) model of English learners' identity prototypes was employed to classify English learners' identity in relation to the spread of English. In addition, Darvin & Norton's (2015, 2017) investment model was utilised to understand the interconnection among identity, ideology, and capital of English learners' investment.

The model of investment was adopted as it offers valuable insights into how language can disseminate ideologies, including neoliberalism (Holborow, 2012). This model is particularly suitable for this current study

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as it allows for a rich and deep analysis of key aspects, such as the formation of English learners' subjectivities, how these subjectivities possibly affect attitudes, and the ways in which the formation of their investment on the issue of Standard English or World Englishes are constructed. To gain more nuanced perspectives, several critical studies on language policies were included since they focused on ELT curricula in Indonesian schools (Alwasilah, 2013; Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Mistar, 2005; Wahyudi, 2018). Understanding this issue was essential as language curricula might shape or not shape English learners' subjectivities (Anjanillah et al., 2021; Wahyudi, 2018; Walshaw, 2007) concerning English or English(es).

Results and Discussion

English learners' subjectivities and attitudes towards English(es)

In a multilingual context such as Indonesia, EFL learners' subjectivities and attitudes towards English(es) can be constituted in complex and multifaceted ways. Despite the constant change of English teaching methods (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Gandana, 2014; Mistar, 2005), in the current study it was found that most of the ELT practices in Indonesia partly fail to promote local values and remain trapped on the hegemony of native English speakers as the regime of truth (Wahyudi, 2018). This failure is shown among our research participants.

> *In Kampung Inggris[4]; one of my tutors, Mr. X, introduced me various accents that come from native speakers such as British (Liverpool), American, Austral an. Besides, he also considered Singlish, Indian English, and even Indonesian English as incorrect Englishes (Faiz, Follow-up interview, August 6, 2021)*

> *In my English course in Kampung Inggris, British English is a superpower; if you can speak like a native English speaker, you will be seen as a great person. Almost everyone competes to be able to speak English with a British accent. In my case, I always made an effort to imitate British English, including its intonation. Instead, if I could not implement the British accent in my English daily conversation, I would criticize myself because I could not implement British English spontaneously and only could speak English with the British accent if I have memorized the speech (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)*

Both statements above clearly illustrate how the hegemony of native English norms has been perpetuated by institutional practices such as English course. As an active agent, a teacher shapes the student's subjectivity (Devine, 2003) which perpetuates the practice of linguicism. (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013). Seen from Foucauldian framework, the students also practiced surveillance that "enforced" the students to follow the prevailing standard English (Grant, 1997) and construct a faithful imitator identity (Gao, 2014).

In a formal education context, the construction of Indonesian EFL learners' subjectivities and attitudes may also be influenced by their ELT Curricula in the Junior and Senior High School: the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) and the 2013 Curriculum (Anjanillah et al., 2021; Wahyudi, 2018). Previous studies (Alwasilah, 2013; Gandana, 2014; Widodo, 2016; Wahyudi & Chusna, 2019) have shown that the KTSP often struggles to implement local materials while still allowing government control over national assessment. This results in the limitation of teaching materials that are only based on the competency standard (Widodo, 2016). It also contributes to the legitimation of Inner Circle English, in which communicative competence, as the core of this curriculum, still does not position the learners' mother tongue in an advantageous position (Baw, 2011; Wahyudi, 2018).

Similarly, the 2013 Curriculum continues to rely on Western materials in English teaching. Although it has supplanted the ELT approach from a communicative to a scientific approach, the 2013 Curriculum that accentuates "idealized guidelines" in its teaching materials (Wahyudi, 2018; Widodo, 2016) reflects the existence of 'standard' English in the ELT practices of the Curriculum. In higher education, the hegemony of Inner Circle English as the primary reference also exists in a course like Argumentative Writing (Wahyudi, 2018, 2021b). This hegemony sheds light on how Inner Circle English discourses are still perpetuated in most formal English education in Indonesia. It is further legitimised in non-formal education that focuses solely on British or American English (Wahyudi, 2024), even as learners are exposed to diverse English(es) through platforms like *YouTube* and movies. This emphasizes the influence of English curricula in endorsing and perpetuating the dominant discourses of standard Englishes.

In addition to institutional practices and the ELT curricula, another factor that may trigger the ongoing dominance of Inner Circle English is Indonesian English learners' limited daily exposure to English.

[4] Kampung Inggris (English village): a village in Kediri, Indonesia, where several non-formal institutions of English learning have been establishing

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> *I prefer the American accent while listening and speaking English since, in fact, I also often listen to American songs and watch American movies.* (Mudip, Initial interview, August 5, 2021)

Mudip's activities of watching movies or listening to songs from America and Britain, for example, demonstrate how the English learners' hobby can also shape English learners' subjectivity. It is no wonder then that most Indonesian English learners still could not escape from native English norms domination who prioritize Inner Circle English over LVE, as similarly documented in the former studies from expanding circles (Al-Ahdal & Al-Qunayeer, 2020; Tamimi, 2018; Wang, 2015).

Interestingly, the participants could display contrasting identities in different contexts. One of the participants, Faiz, displayed this trait when asked about his perception of English varieties.

> *For me, the least favourite accent is still Indian English because the accent is weird and unintelligible.* (Faiz, Follow-up interview, August 6, 2021)
>
> *Right now, I have become more respectful by not judging and more accepting the varieties of English outside the Inner circle.* (Faiz, Follow-up interview, October 20, 2021)

In the first statement, it is clear that Faiz created a stereotype of Indian English by labelling it as “weird and unintelligible.” Faiz appeared to perform a linguistic hierarchy that conceives Indian English as lower than Inner Circle English as the standard (Phillipson & Sukutnabb-Kangas, 2013). His second statement contradicts his first statement, as he demonstrated a dialogical communicator identity (Gao, 2014) respecting every language variety. To clarify his contradictory identities, Faiz was asked the question again.

> *My answer about Indian English came up since you asked me about my least favourite accent. However, since I have already learned about World Englishes, I have become more respectful towards all of the varieties of English.* (Faiz, Follow-up interview, October 20, 2021)

Faiz's explanation suggests he has changed his mind about of the dominant English discourse (Wahyudi, 2018) and became more inclusive. This contributed to his multiple and changing identities and was possibly the effect of the Introduction to (Critical) Applied Linguistics, after he gained critical materials including *English as an Islamic Language* (Mahboob, 2009) and *English as an Asian Language* (Kachru, 1998). as taught in the course (Wahyudi, 2022). Thus, this finding reinforces Walshaw's (2007) argument regarding the nature of someone's fluid subjectivity.

While exploring learners’ changing subjectivities about English varieties*, a legitimate speaker identity* (Gao, 2014) was also discovered with Mudip:

> *Now, I prefer World Englishes. Non-native varieties are a normal thing. As long as it is understandable, any accents of English could be accepted.* (Mudip, Initial Interview, August 5, 2021)

The formation of a legitimate speaker identity as one of the results of World Englishes exposure has even brought Mudip to exercise his “technology of the self” (Foucault, 1988; Walshaw, 2007).

> *In the Introduction to Applied Linguistics, my lecturer taught me many things about World Englishes, such as the relation between language and power and how to deconstruct our mindset regarding the superiority of British English and American English. Due to this exposure, right now, I think every accent has its uniqueness.* (Mudip, Initial interview, August 5, 2021)
>
> *I think that teachers are better at implementing multilingual pedagogy in English teaching since we can also preserve our culture from being marginalized* (Mudip, Follow-up interview, August 9, 2021)

This result denotes that learning materials in the ICAL classroom, played a significant role in shaping Mudip’s renewed subjectivity.

Despite the supportive attitude shaped by Indonesian English learners towards World Englishes, Bella’s subjectivities remained unstable as she still could not escape from the dominant English.

> *I adjust my accent based on my interlocutor. If they are native English speakers, I will use my British accent, but if the English proficiency level of my interlocutor is lower than mine, maybe I will use the Indonesian accent.* (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)
>
> *Since my thesis discusses monocentric that emphasizes Anglo-American norms, I became interested in Standard English again.* (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)

The way Bella changes her English accent based on the English proficiency level of her interlocutor, for instance, indicates that she was a playful creator identity (Gao, 2014). However, Bella also was still trapped in the dominant English as a metric of truth (Wahyudi, 2018).

The inability of English learners to fully deconstruct the domination of native English speakers was also shown by Nana’s cynical attitude below:

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> *Honestly, I do not like Indonesian people who change their accent to the British accent. It sounds freaky to me.* (Nana, Follow-up Interview, August 7, 2021)

To sum up, this present case explicates the complexity and dynamics of the multilingual English learners' subjectivities and attitudes toward English(es) (Fauziyah, 2021). The results of this study, at a certain point, may correspond with the existing studies conducted by Anjanillah et al. (2021), Nabilla & Wahyudi (2021), and Sung (2014) related to the myriad identities of English learners in relation to global English(es). Similarly, Liu et al. (2021) found that multilingual English learners' attitude towards English(es) also pinpoints how attitude can be negotiated in different settings.

The learners' investments in English(es)

Paralleled with the construction of English learners' multiple subjectivities towards the English varieties, this study also reveals the students' complex investments, one of which is their desire to improve their low proficiency level in English:

> *From elementary school until senior high school, I did not even know that English had tenses. Therefore, one of my big purposes in learning English in Kampung Inggris was to have an accent like a native English speaker.* (Faiz, Initial interview, August 2, 2021)

> *Actually, although I was on the first rank in my school, I did not even know what was discussed in my English book, and I also did not able to speak English properly.* (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)

Through their economic capital, many Indonesian English learners highly invest in studying English to improve their linguistic capital by joining an English course such as Kampung Inggris (English Village). This investment toward dominating English is likely shaped by the lack of locally produced teaching materials in most of the ELT practices in Indonesian secondary schools (Gandana, 2014; Mistar, 2005; Wahyudi, 2018). Moreover, English learners' investment may also be shaped by their desire to have a 'native-like' identity. This construction resonates with Darvin and Norton's (2015, 2017) explanation of the prevailing ideologies' impact on language investment.

The language that Indonesian English learners' invest in is also, to some extent, built on their awareness of the inequality issue of English learning access in different socio-economic backgrounds.

> *My motivation to be smart like a native English speaker is due to the condition of English teaching in Bima. I mean… even with my status as an accomplished student in senior high school, my English skill was still far behind. Only rich students can learn more about English in a course, while the ability of the other students is pathetic. Therefore, I really want to be a competent person when I go back to Bima. I already know what kinds of English teaching methods are easily understood by the students.* (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)

Bella's reflection implies how inequality issues encouraged her to form an imagined identity as a competent English teacher.. Her statement 'Only rich students can learn more about English in a course' suggests that students with a higher economic background were more privileged to learn English like a native speaker (Taylor, 2021).

The enactment of neoliberalism in social practices also played a big role in Faiz' language investment:

> *English is an essential language in this world. One of the real examples is my tutor in Kampung Inggris. He is only a high school graduate, but since he has the ability to speak English like a native, he is considered to be an educated and knowledgeable person. Also, we cannot ignore the fact that in East Java, having English skills can be highly valued, like when getting a job.* (Faiz, Initial interview, August 2, 2021)

> *For me, it would make me proud if I could speak English with a British accent. In workplaces, good English mostly refers to English that is close to that of a native speaker. So, I assume that my ability to speak English with a British accent will become a strength on getting a job.* (Bella, Initial interview, August 4, 2021)

The excerpts above suggest how neoliberal ideology has shaped Faiz' investment toward Inner Circle English by positioning native English accents as a marketable asset (Holborow, 2018). This ideology, to some extent, even can predispose Indonesian English learners to view someone who has a native-like accent to be an educated person (Bunce et al., 2016). Thus, it is no wonder that some Indonesian English learners' investments in English learning are dominated by the orientation toward Inner Circle English.

The other key findings in this study is that all the research participants' subjectivities, to some extent, have been deconstructed through the World Englishes paradigm. This deconstruction, in return, may change the Indonesian English learner's investment to be more inclusive. Nana, for example, expresses her desire as an English teacher to invest in the practice of World Englishes in the ELT by destabilizing the traditional view of English:

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> *Since in the village, I am considered a teacher; then I want every student that I teach to see English as something normal, not as superior.* (Nana, Follow-up interview, August 3, 2021)
>
> *What I mean by normal in this context is that people should not perceive English as something super. I hope that people will view English in an equal position with the Indonesian language or Javanese language in daily communication.* (Nana, Follow-up interview, November 8, 2021)

By shaping a legitimate speaker identity (Gao, 2014), Nana appeared to resist the domination of Inner Circle English. This investment was also presumably structured based on her desire to affirm her identity as a legitimate speaker. Nana's investment towards World Englishes, unfortunately, contradicts her other statement related to how she values her English ability.

> *My problem is I need more confidence. I am afraid of not having value in front of native English speakers. While meeting foreigners in Bali, for example, I could not even utter a few words to talk to them even though my English grades are good enough in school (Nana, Follow-up interview, August 3, 2021)*

The statement “I am afraid of not having value in front of native English speakers”, seems to show how Nana's mind is still colonized by native speaker ideology and linguistic hierarchy in society (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013). Thus, this contradictory finding is in line with Norton (2013) and Darvin and Norton’s (2015, 2017) explanation about contradictory investment of language learners and its connection to the vibrant negotiation of power in particular settings.

The following text reflects Faiz’ little classroom investment due to an unsupportive environment.

> *Right now, I actually do not really pay any attention to my English accent. Different than my tutor in Kampung Inggris who had a hard-and-fast preference for an American accent, my university's environment, conversely, tends to accept all varieties of accents. To tell the truth, I also have a problem practicing my English-speaking skills at the university. For example, while taking part in a discussion in the classroom, though it was an interesting topic to be discussed, the students mostly did not actively contribute, and it made me feel uncomfortable since I could not get any response from the other students.* (Faiz, Initial interview, August 2, 2021)
>
> *Maybe, one of my obstacles is in the implementation of English since, in fact, I only listen to or read English audio and text, but do not directly practice my English-speaking skills.* (Mudip, Follow-up interview, August 25, 2021)

Faiz's statement above indicates an experience faced by Faiz limiting his investment in English practice since most of his friends tended to be silent in class. This result thus supports Teng (2019) and Soltanian and Ghapanchi's (2021) statements that point out the impact of learning situation, family, culture, and society on the English learners' investment in English learning and practicing.

Conclusion

With the domination of Inner Circle English, native speakerism, and neoliberal discourse in society, it is common that particular groups tend to project native English varieties as the 'standard' of English. However in this case of multilingual English learners, this study shows contradictory findings with a *faithful imitator* identity of standard English in one side of the continuum (Gao, 2014) and the acceptance of Localised Varieties of Englishes on the other.

These different subjectivities further shaped the constitution of English learners' attitudes and investments. On the one hand, learners may invest in the ‘standard’ variety of English with a desire to have a 'native-like' identity. On the other hand, learners appeared to destabilize standard English.

Some factors such as institutional practices, policy documents, teacher’s subjectivity and hobbies related to English mainly contribute to the constitution of these examples of subjectivity, attitude, investments, and identities. The findings of this study reveal that in different settings, the English learners' subjectivities, attitudes, and investment towards multiple English(es) are complex and multiple ranging from acceptance to critical negotiation of standard British and American English. This adds further nuances to existing discussions on the intersection among identity construction, subjectivity, and investment in ‘standard’ English or World Englishes.

With this in mind, critical perspectives and practices on ELT must be continually conducted to shape EFL learners' critical positioning toward Inner Circle English. Further research on the same issue could be conducted longitudinally (for a longer period) and ethnographically grounded to have deeper insights and nuances so that stronger conclusions could be made.

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Appendix A

Semi-structured Interview

Learners' investment during the process of learning English

1. When do you start studying English? How did you grasp English as a language at that time?
2. How do you invest in English learning? Do you have any desires while learning and practicing English?
3. How do you perceive your academic credentials and knowledge regarding English? Do you think it might help you to improve your value in academic or society in general?
4. In what ways do you think that the practice of English teaching in the classroom can construct the way you act and think about the value of your English skills?

Learners' subjectivity, attitude and identity towards English varieties

5. Do you have any English accents preference? If yes, why do you prefer particular accent over the other?
6. How do you perceive the role of English material in the classroom to the construction of your accent's preference?
7. How do you define Standard English and World Englishes? Do you appreciate more one idea over the others?
8. How do you perceive the use of localised English accents such as Indian English, Indonesian English, or Javanese English in communication?
9. Do you think that following standard American or British English is crucial for your communication? Why or why not?
10. How do you describe your English learning experience in non-formal institution? Are there any differences with what you have already gained in the higher education?

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