

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WORLD ENGLISHES AT UIN SULTAN THAHA SAIFUDDIN JAMBI

Anggraini Mahmuda S.N.¹ Alfian², Diana Rozelin³
English Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training,
State Islamic University Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi
anggrraa.mhmuda068@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated English Education students' perceptions of World Englishes at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. The study was derived from the author's thesis and used the original findings reported in Chapters IV and V. A mixed-methods design was applied by combining a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were collected through fifteen questionnaire indicators (X1-X15) from English Education students and were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews and analyzed thematically. The quantitative findings show positive perceptions across three constructs: overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea ($M = 3.8$), attitudes toward different English dialects ($M = 3.9$), and the implications of World Englishes for students' English language development ($M = 3.5$). The item-level data indicate that students generally agreed that English is no longer owned only by native-speaking countries and that exposure to different English varieties supports communication in real situations. The interview findings strengthened the questionnaire results by showing that students viewed English as a plural and global language, recognized the career and cultural benefits of learning World Englishes, but still experienced confusion, listening difficulty, and uncertainty about formal academic standards. The study recommends more systematic inclusion of World Englishes in English learning materials, classroom interaction, and assessment practices.

Keywords: World Englishes, students' perceptions, English language teaching

A. Introduction

The spread of English throughout the world has changed the sociolinguistic reality of English language teaching and learning. English is no longer used only by speakers from countries traditionally associated with native-speaker norms. It is used in communication, education, technology, tourism, business, and academic exchange by speakers from different linguistic and

cultural backgrounds. This global position has encouraged scholars to discuss English not as a single fixed standard, but as plural forms of English that emerge in different contexts. Within this perspective, World Englishes provides an important framework for understanding the diversity of English and the ways in which English users adapt the language to their local and international communicative needs.

The concept of World Englishes is commonly associated with the recognition that English has developed through different historical, sociolinguistic, and educational contexts. Kachru's model of Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle has been widely used to explain this distribution. The Inner Circle refers to countries where English functions as a first language and has traditionally provided linguistic norms. The Outer Circle refers to countries where English has institutional roles as a second language, often as a result of historical and colonial contact. The Expanding Circle refers to countries where English is learned and used as a foreign language for international communication. Indonesia is usually placed in the Expanding Circle because English is learned as a foreign language, but it is increasingly used to access global knowledge and to participate in international communication.

In the context of English language education, World Englishes challenges the assumption that British or American English should be the only models for learning and assessment. The thesis on which this article is based explains that students

are increasingly exposed to different accents and forms of English through social media, films, music, online interaction, and daily communication. This exposure means that students encounter English not only as a formal classroom subject, but also as a flexible communicative resource. Such a situation makes it important to understand whether students perceive different English varieties as valid, useful, and relevant to their learning.

At UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, English is introduced within the English Education Study Program through courses and learning experiences that support students' linguistic and pedagogical development. The thesis reports that students are able to recognize differences between British and American accents, and that they also encounter localized English expressions in Indonesian contexts. Expressions such as *forward thinking*, *di-ACC*, and *follow up dulu* demonstrate that English often interacts with local linguistic practices. These examples show that students do not only learn English as a set of grammatical rules, but also experience English as a social and cultural practice.

Despite this reality, World Englishes has not always been explicitly discussed in the English language classroom. Students may be familiar with different accents and localized English expressions, but their conceptual understanding of World Englishes may remain unclear. They may accept the existence of English diversity in daily life while still feeling pressure to imitate native-speaker accents in formal academic situations. This gap between everyday exposure and formal pedagogical recognition is one of the reasons why student perceptions need to be investigated.

Previous studies discussed in the thesis show that World Englishes has relevance for English language teaching because it supports awareness of linguistic diversity, tolerance toward accents, and intercultural communication. However, the thesis also identifies a local research gap. Research specifically addressing students' perceptions of World Englishes in Indonesian Islamic higher education, especially at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, remains limited. Therefore, this study focused on

students' perceptions in this specific institutional context.

Based on the focus of the thesis, this article addresses two research questions. First, what are the students' perceptions of World Englishes? Second, what are the benefits and difficulties experienced by students in learning World Englishes in the classroom? The objectives are to investigate the opinions of English Education students at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi about the idea of World Englishes and to explain the advantages and challenges that students associate with incorporating World Englishes into the learning process.

B. Research Method

This study used a mixed-methods design by combining quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative component was used to obtain an overview of students' perceptions of World Englishes through questionnaire responses, while the qualitative component was used to explore students' views and experiences in greater depth through semi-structured interviews. The combination of both types of data allowed the researcher to examine

trends in students' responses and to interpret these trends through the participants' own explanations.

The research was conducted at the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. The research context was relevant because students in the program study English in an Expanding Circle context, where English functions as a foreign language but is also needed for wider academic and international communication. The participants were sixth-semester English Education students who had been exposed to sociolinguistic concepts and therefore had sufficient background to respond to the topic of World Englishes.

The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of fifteen indicators coded X1 to X15. These indicators were grouped into three constructs: overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea, attitudes toward different English dialects, and the implications of World Englishes in relation to students' English language development. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

The thesis reports that the questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, especially mean scores, standard deviations, and response percentages.

The qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were designed to explore students' understanding of World Englishes, their familiarity with different accents, their views on pronunciation and native-speaker norms, the usefulness of World Englishes for future careers, and the difficulties they experienced when learning World Englishes. The interview data were analyzed thematically by identifying recurring ideas, grouping related codes, and interpreting the major themes that emerged from the participants' answers.

The article uses the original data reported in the thesis. It does not add new respondents, new statistical tests, or new interview results. The quantitative tables were adapted from the original descriptive findings in Chapter IV, and the qualitative discussion was summarized from the original themes and participant quotations reported in the thesis.

C. Findings and Discussion

The findings are presented in two main parts. The first part summarizes the quantitative results from the questionnaire. The second part discusses the qualitative themes from the interviews. Together, the findings show how students understand World Englishes, how they respond to different varieties of English, and how they connect World Englishes with their learning development.

The questionnaire findings were organized into three constructs. The

first construct measured students' overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea. The second construct measured their attitudes toward different English dialects and pedagogical implications. The third construct measured the implications of World Englishes in relation to students' English language development. The mean score interpretation used in the thesis classifies 3.41 to 4.20 as positive agreement.

Table 1 Summary of All Constructs (Overall Quantitative Perception)

No	Construct	Mean	Interpretation
1	Overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea	3.8	Positive
2	Attitudes toward different English dialects	3.9	Positive
3	The implications of World Englishes in relation to students' English language development	3.5	Positive

Table 1 shows that all three constructs were interpreted positively. The highest mean appeared in the construct of attitudes toward different English dialects ($M = 3.9$), followed by overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea ($M = 3.8$), and the implications of World Englishes for English language development ($M = 3.5$). These results indicate that

students generally accepted World Englishes as a relevant concept for English learning. The results also show that students were most positive when responding to the acceptance of different English dialects, while they were more cautious when connecting World Englishes to their own language development.

The positive tendency across all constructs suggests that students did not view English as a language that belongs only to native-speaking countries. Instead, they recognized that English functions globally and that different varieties may be used for

communication. This finding is consistent with the World Englishes perspective in the thesis, which emphasizes linguistic diversity, communicative intelligibility, and the need to move beyond a single native-speaker model.

Table 2 Overall Comprehension of the World Englishes Idea (N = 100)

Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
X1	3.9	0.659	100
X2	3.8	0.748	100
X3	3.8	0.706	100
Average	3.8		

Table 2 presents the findings for the first construct, namely students' overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea. The mean scores for X1, X2, and X3 ranged from 3.8 to 3.9. Item X1 obtained the highest mean score in this construct (M = 3.9; SD = 0.659), while X2 and X3 each obtained a mean score of 3.8. The results indicate that students generally understood the basic idea that English is plural and that different varieties of English exist in different linguistic and cultural contexts.

that 59% of students agreed and 16% strongly agreed with the statement that English no longer belongs only to native-speaking countries. For X2, 48% agreed and 19% strongly agreed. For X3, 50% agreed and 16% strongly agreed. These figures show that the majority of students accepted the plurality and validity of English varieties. The presence of neutral responses, especially in X2 and X3, indicates that some students were still developing their conceptual understanding of World Englishes.

The thesis explains that the distribution of responses for X1 shows

Table 3 Attitudes Toward Different English Dialects (N = 100)

Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
X4	3.9	0.642	100
X5	3.9	0.751	100
X6	3.8	0.748	100
X7	3.8	0.657	100
X8	3.8	0.642	100
X9	3.9	0.706	100

X10	3.9	0.626	100
Average	3.9		

The second construct focused on attitudes toward different English dialects and their pedagogical implications. Table 3 shows that all items in this construct received positive mean scores, ranging from 3.8 to 3.9. Items X4, X5, X9, and X10 each obtained a mean score of 3.9, while X6, X7, and X8 obtained mean scores of 3.8. These results demonstrate that students generally valued exposure to different English varieties and believed that learning about such varieties could support classroom learning and real-world communication.

Item X4 indicates that students positively perceived the usefulness of studying different varieties of English rather than focusing only on one standard variety. The thesis reports that 60% of respondents agreed and 13% strongly agreed with X4. Item X5 also showed a strong positive tendency, with 49% agreeing and 21% strongly agreeing. These findings suggest that students understood multidialectal exposure as a useful part of preparing for communication with diverse English users.

Items X6, X7, and X8 showed slightly lower mean scores than the other items in the same construct, although they remained positive. The thesis notes a neutral cluster in this part of the questionnaire, including 32% neutral responses on X7 and 31% on X8. This pattern suggests that World Englishes may have been introduced in the learning environment, but not always in a systematic or explicit manner. Students may agree with the value of World Englishes, but their classroom exposure to the concept may still depend on particular topics, lecturers, or learning materials.

Item X10 focused on fairness in assessment standards and obtained a mean score of 3.9. The response distribution shows that 59% of students agreed and 13% strongly agreed. This result indicates that many students questioned the fairness of assessing English only through native-speaker norms. The finding supports the thesis discussion that students were beginning to prioritize intelligibility and communicative function rather than

perfect imitation of native-speaker accents.

Table 4 Implications of World Englishes for Students' English Language Development

Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
X11	3.8	0.682	100
X12	3.6	0.752	100
X13	3.4	0.776	100
X14	3.4	0.798	100
X15	3.4	0.648	99
Average	3.5		

The third construct measured the implications of World Englishes in relation to students' English language development. Table 4 shows that the construct mean was positive, although lower than the other two constructs. X11 obtained the highest mean in this construct ($M = 3.8$; $SD = 0.682$), followed by X12 ($M = 3.6$; $SD = 0.752$). X13, X14, and X15 each obtained a mean score of 3.4. These results suggest that students generally recognized the usefulness of World Englishes for their development, but they were more uncertain when the concept was connected to confidence, formal academic use, or assessment.

The thesis reports that X11 reflected students' comfort and confidence in speaking English with their local Indonesian accent. The response distribution for X11 showed that 54% of respondents agreed and 14% strongly agreed. This indicates that many students were willing to see

their local accent as acceptable in English communication. However, the lower mean scores in X13, X14, and X15 show that students still had areas of uncertainty. For example, X15 recorded a large neutral response of 63%, with 25% agreeing and 7% strongly agreeing. The valid total for X15 in the original table was 99, indicating one missing valid response for that item.

The pattern in this construct is important because it shows both acceptance and hesitation. Students may support World Englishes in principle, but they may still feel pressure when they face academic writing, standardized tests, formal classroom evaluation, or expectations about correct pronunciation. Therefore, the implication of World Englishes for student development depends not only on attitude, but also on how clearly the curriculum and

assessment system recognize
 linguistic diversity.

Table 5 Summary of Qualitative Themes from the Interviews

Theme	Main finding	Illustrative evidence from the thesis
Conceptual understanding of World Englishes	Students viewed English as plural, global, and not limited to one native-speaker model.	Participants associated World Englishes with various accents and forms of English used in real communication.
Benefits of learning World Englishes	Students connected World Englishes with career readiness, intercultural communication, and tolerance toward diversity.	P1 noted that real-world communication involves different groups of people; P10 viewed English diversity as positive.
Challenges of incorporating World Englishes	Students experienced initial confusion, listening difficulty, and uncertainty about standards in formal learning.	P10 reported that many variations were confusing at first but became more understandable after careful learning.

The interview findings strengthened the questionnaire results. The thesis reports three main qualitative themes: students' conceptual understanding of World Englishes, the benefits of learning World Englishes, and the challenges of incorporating World Englishes in English learning. The participants generally described World Englishes as an indication that English is not limited to one national or native-speaking model. They recognized that English can be spoken with different accents and can be shaped by local and cultural contexts.

In relation to conceptual understanding, the interview data show that students tended to associate World Englishes with

plurality and global communication. One participant explained that English in the real world is not used by only one group of people. This view aligns with the quantitative finding that most students agreed that English is no longer owned exclusively by native-speaking countries. The qualitative data therefore confirmed that the positive questionnaire responses were connected to an actual awareness of English diversity.

In relation to benefits, the participants emphasized career preparation, intercultural communication, and tolerance toward linguistic diversity. P1 stated that in the real world, people do not interact with only one group of people, so knowing various linguistic differences

can help them understand different interlocutors. P10 also emphasized that diversity in English is a positive thing because students can learn about the customs and traditions of different countries. These responses show that students viewed World Englishes as useful beyond the classroom.

In relation to challenges, participants reported cognitive overload, phonological misunderstanding, and uncertainty about academic standards. P10 explained that many variations were confusing at first, but that careful learning led to better understanding and greater tolerance. This theme is consistent with the quantitative data showing neutral responses in several items. Students may support World Englishes, but they still need structured guidance when dealing with unfamiliar accents, formal writing, high-stakes tests, and classroom assessment.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings indicates that English Education students at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi held generally positive views toward World Englishes. They accepted the existence of diverse English varieties

and recognized the importance of communicative intelligibility. At the same time, the findings reveal a pedagogical gap. Students' attitudes are progressive, but classroom materials, assessment practices, and explicit instruction may not yet fully support their transition from native-speaker orientation to a more plural and communicative understanding of English.

D. Conclusion

Based on the mixed-methods findings, this study concludes that English Education students at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi have positive perceptions of World Englishes. The questionnaire data show positive mean scores across all three constructs: overall comprehension of the World Englishes idea, attitudes toward different English dialects, and the implications of World Englishes for students' English language development. The interview data also show that students understand English as a global and plural language that can support intercultural communication and future career needs.

The study also concludes that students experience both benefits and challenges when learning World Englishes. The benefits include broader awareness of English diversity, greater tolerance toward accents, increased confidence in using local accents, and better preparation for real-world communication. The challenges include initial confusion, difficulty understanding unfamiliar accents, uncertainty about which English variety should be used in formal academic situations, and continued pressure from standardized testing and native-speaker norms.

The study suggests that English lecturers should gradually introduce various World Englishes materials in speaking and listening classes rather than relying only on British or American norms. The English Education Study Program should also consider integrating World Englishes more explicitly into curriculum design, learning materials, and assessment practices. Future researchers may expand this study by involving a larger sample, comparing several universities, or examining lecturers' perceptions and classroom practices related to World Englishes.

REFERENCES

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2015). Introducing global Englishes. Routledge.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- Jenkins, J. (2015). *Global Englishes: A resource book for students* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11-30). Cambridge University Press.
- Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2nd ed.). University of Illinois Press.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). The Routledge handbook of World Englishes. Routledge.

McKay, S. L. (2002). Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and approaches. Oxford University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research and evaluation methods (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). Understanding English as a lingua franca. Oxford University Press.

Smith, L. E. (1983). Readings in English as an international language. Pergamon Press.

Vettorel, P. (2015). World Englishes and English as a lingua franca: Implications for teacher education and ELT. De Gruyter Mouton.