

From Monocentric to Pluricentric Approach in Speaking Class: Exploring Accent Acceptance among Indonesian Pre-service English Teachers

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Abstract

Previous research has examined EFL learners' perceptions of diverse accents. However, research focusing on the perspectives of Indonesian English teacher candidates is still rare, particularly in the context of speaking classrooms, where identities associated with accents are most prominent. This qualitative case study investigates the impact of a pluricentric teaching approach on the attitudes and speaking confidence of Indonesian pre-service English teachers. Within Indonesia's vast ELT context, where monocentric, native-speaker ideologies often prevail, pre-service teachers frequently experience significant anxiety and linguistic insecurity regarding their own accents and comprehension of diverse English varieties. This study explores how implementing a pluricentric framework which validates diverse English accents and prioritizes intelligibility over native-like pronunciation in an academic speaking course influences these perceptions. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with five purposively selected pre-service teachers. Thematic analysis revealed three pivotal findings. First, the pluricentric method catalyzed a profound shift in attitudes, moving participants from frustration and anxiety towards an appreciation and normalization of accent diversity. Second, a strong, symbiotic relationship was identified between increased accent acceptance and growth in speaking confidence, facilitated by the mitigation of "accent anxiety" and the reframing of communication as a collaborative effort. Third, participants' experiences fundamentally reshaped their perception of "accuracy," redefining it from phonological perfection to mutual intelligibility, which solidified their identity as legitimate global English users. The study concludes that pluricentric pedagogy is crucial for preparing Indonesian English teachers for the realities of global communication. It recommends the integration of World Englishes and ELF principles into teacher education curricula, a reform of assessment practices to prioritize intelligibility, and the fostering of critical self-reflection among pre-service teachers to break the cycle of native-speaker ideology and build sustainable, authentic confidence.

Keywords: monocentric approach; pluricentric approach; accent acceptance; Indonesian pre-service English teachers

INTRODUCTION

The importance of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) reflects the extraordinary linguistic climate of the 21st century. ELF refers to using English as a common language among individuals whose primary languages differ, primarily for international communication, rather than achieving native-like proficiency. Studies indicate that nearly 25% of English speakers worldwide are native speakers, suggesting that much ELF communication occurs between non-native speakers (Alptekin, 2012; Loor et al., 2024; Seidlhofer, 2005, 2011). The growing status of English as a common language is fundamentally linked to globalization, which encourages more efficient communication in business, academia, travel, and various other sectors (Jenkins & Baker, 2020; Nickerson, 2005). The increasing diversity in the use of English in educational settings is evident, accompanied by noteworthy language research and learning taking place in Europe, Asia, and even in historically English-dominated regions, thus signaling a shift away from previously exclusive cultural and geographical boundaries (Mendoza & Phung, 2019).

This transformation demands a comprehensive reassessment of the educational objectives and methodologies employed in English Language Teaching (ELT), especially concerning the area of pronunciation and oral proficiency. For an extensive period, the realm of English language teaching has been characterized by a monocentric paradigm, perceiving English as a singular, uniform construct, concentrating predominantly on Native Speaker standards and frequently sidelining the rich diversity of English varieties present across the globe (Dimova, 2020; Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020). Several believe this framework limits educational tactics, harms student enthusiasm, and creates ideological divisions in a quickly globalizing setting (Rose et al., 2020; Xie, 2014; Zhang & Liu, 2020). This also creates significant tension in speaking classes, especially around the assessment of "accuracy," "intelligibility," and "acceptability." Accuracy in traditional ELT often refers to

native-like pronunciation and grammar, but this standard is increasingly seen as unrealistic and exclusionary for most learners, leading to anxiety and linguistic insecurity, and a sense of perpetual failure (Park & Seol, 2025).

In response, proponents of a pluricentric approach, often aligned with the ELF paradigm, argue for a shift in pedagogical priority. Pluricentric/ELF paradigm emphasizes the legitimacy of diverse English varieties, focusing on real-world communication among multilingual speakers rather than strict adherence to native-speaker standards. This approach encourages teachers to foster students' ability to negotiate meaning, value intercultural competence, and respect local identities in English use (Dewey & Pineda, 2020; Seidhofer, 2009; Sifakis, 2019; Vettorel & Corrizato, 2016).

Pre-service teachers are not only language learners but also future arbiters of linguistic norms, as their beliefs and practices directly impact classroom language policies and student attitudes. If prospective teachers internalize monocentric ideals, they perpetuate the cycle of native speaker ideology, which views native speakers as role models and the best language teachers. This can foster negative attitudes toward linguistic diversity and a lack of preparedness for highly diverse classrooms, even among plurilingual prospective teachers (Cheruvu et al., 2015; Knight, 2024). Their training shapes their understanding of linguistic diversity, responsiveness, and the value of multilingualism, which they later transmit to students through curriculum choices, classroom discourse, and language-related decisions (Arabaci Atlamaz, 2022; Brandt et al., 2023; Cardenas Curiel et al., 2024; Fischer & Lahmann, 2022; Kardel et al., 2024; Paulsrud & Gheitasi, 2024). When lecturer education programs emphasize critical multilingual awareness, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and linguistically responsive teaching, pre-service teachers are more likely to adopt inclusive, non-prescriptive approaches to language in their classrooms (Mizell, 2020; Morea & Fisher, 2023).

Indonesia presents a particularly compelling and complex context for investigating this issue. Indonesia has a massive ELT apparatus as the world's fourth most populous nation, with over 280 million people. English is mandated from junior high school onwards, with over 26 million children learning it at the elementary level, making Indonesia one of the largest English-learning populations globally (Zein, 2017; Zein et al., 2020). English serves as a gateway to global knowledge, culture, and communication. It enables Indonesians to participate in international collaborations, access academic materials, and engage with global communities. English language education is seen as essential for preparing students to navigate globalization, fostering intercultural competence, and supporting Indonesia's integration into the global knowledge economy (Gayatri et al., 2023; Putri & Santoso, 2024; Setiawati, 2024). However, the Indonesian linguistic landscape is immensely diverse, with over 700 local languages influencing the acquisition and pronunciation of English (Zein, 2019). This influence is evident in both the learning process and the specific pronunciation patterns of Indonesian English speakers. Indonesian learners often substitute unfamiliar English vowel and consonant sounds with those from their native languages, leading to systematic mispronunciations. For example, English vowels like /æ/, /ʌ/, and /ɒ/ are often replaced with more familiar Indonesian vowels such as /e/ and /o/ due to the limited Indonesian vowel inventory (Dewi et al., 2024; Sukaton et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2024). Then, some regional languages may facilitate certain English sounds, while others create additional challenges, especially for vowels and consonant clusters absent in the local phonology (Arrahman, 2022; Purba, 2022; Masykar, et al., 2023).

Research consistently indicates that the Indonesian English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum has been shaped by ideological and political agendas, often upholding British or American English as the standard. This monocentric approach is evident in curriculum design, materials, and assessment, with limited integration of local or diverse English varieties (Muhammad, 2018; Widodo, 2016). Textbooks and teaching practices have tended to reinforce a uniform, monolithic identity, sometimes at the expense of Indonesia's multicultural reality (Ariyanto, 2018; Yumarnamto et al., 2020). Consequently, Indonesian learners frequently hold negative attitudes toward their own English accents, aspiring instead to sound like native speakers especially American or British (Waloyo & Jarum, 2019; Latifa, 2021). This sense of deficiency is reinforced by social pressures, fear of making mistakes, and the dominance of native-speaker norms in educational materials and media (Efendi, et al., 2025; Irham et al., 2021). Teachers, while sometimes accepting of local accents, also tend to prefer native-like pronunciation and may

unconsciously reinforce these preferences in the classroom (Dirham, 2022; Fransiska & Subekti, 2022). This creates a unique challenge for pre-service teachers: they are caught between the entrenched native-speaker ideals of the education system they came through and the pluricentric realities of the global language they are preparing to teach.

Despite the growing body of international literature on ELF and teacher beliefs, there remains a significant gap in research focusing specifically on the attitudes of Indonesian pre-service English teachers towards accent variation. Previous studies had been conducted by Imelwaty et al. (2022) who focused on attitudes toward Indonesian English and identity construction in English teaching, Lee et al. (2018) on Korean and Indonesian perception of English as an international language, acceptance of non-native English accents, perceived ownership of English accents, Ubaidillah (2018) on Indonesian pre-service teachers beliefs about English teaching, teacher preferences, use of native language, teaching materials, and cultural content. Few have empirically examined the core beliefs of this crucial cohort regarding the acceptability of non-native accents, including their own especially in speaking class.

Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by exploring the attitudes towards accent acceptance among Indonesian pre-service English teachers. It seeks to investigate the extent to which they uphold native speaker norms as the ultimate goal versus their openness to and acceptance of diverse English accents, including Indonesian-accented English, within the context of a speaking class. The research questions that will guide this inquiry are: 1) how does the implementation of pluricentric teaching method influence learners attitudes towards divers' English accents? 2) Is there a relationship between the increased acceptance of diverse English accents and the growth in speaking confidence among learners taught with a pluricentric approach? 3) How do learners' experiences in comprehending diverse English accents through pluricentric methods reshape their perceptions of 'accuracy' in speaking and their confidence as users of Global English?

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study design to achieve a rich, detailed, and contextualized understanding of the participants' experiences. The case was defined as the lived experiences of a small group of students concerning their attitudes toward diverse English accents and their speaking confidence within a specific academic context. Five university students were purposively selected from an intermediate-level academic speaking course known to incorporate pluricentric principles in its curriculum. This small sample size facilitated a deep, nuanced exploration of each participant's perspectives.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which proved highly effective in eliciting detailed personal narratives. Each interview lasted between 7 and 10 minutes and was conducted in a quiet setting to ensure recording clarity. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' prior consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and to provide a robust dataset for analysis. The semi-structured format allowed for consistency in covering key topics such as exposure to different accents, self-perception of speaking ability, and views on classroom methods, while also providing the flexibility to probe deeper into emerging and unexpected insights unique to each participant.

The data analysis followed the six-phase thematic analysis framework that Braun and Clarke (2006) outlined. In the first phase, I immersed myself in the data by reading the transcripts multiple times while listening to the audio recordings, which allowed me to become intimately familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. Next, initial codes were generated by systematically identifying and labelling pertinent features across the entire dataset. This process yielded codes such as "fear of negative evaluation," "validation of non-native accents," "listening comprehension anxiety," and "increased self-efficacy."

The third phase involved searching for themes, where the codes were collated and organized into potential overarching themes. A preliminary thematic map was created, which grouped codes into candidate themes such as "the liberation from the native speaker ideal" and "comprehension anxiety as a barrier to confidence." During the fourth phase, these potential themes were reviewed and refined. This process was rigorous; themes were checked against the coded extracts to ensure they formed a coherent pattern and then against the entire dataset to verify their

accuracy. This review led to the merging of two anxiety-related themes and splitting one broad theme into "teacher influence" and "peer dynamics."

The fifth phase focused on defining and naming the refined themes. Each theme was clearly articulated, and a detailed analysis was written to capture its essence and significance. For instance, the theme "the emergence of a global English Identity" was defined as the participants' developing self-perception as legitimate users of English within an international context, rather than deficient imitators of a native model. Finally, in the sixth phase, the report was produced. The analysis was woven into a coherent narrative, using vivid, anonymized excerpts from the transcripts as evidence to illustrate the themes and to construct a compelling answer to the research questions. This systematic process ensured the findings were deeply grounded in the participants' experiences and perspectives.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section delineates the pivotal findings unearthed from implementing a pluricentric approach in the speaking classroom and critically discusses their implications. The analysis was conducted through semi-structured interviews to answer the study's research questions comprehensively. The core narrative that emerges is a significant pedagogical shift: from a rigid, monocentric paradigm that often engendered anxiety and linguistic insecurity towards a flexible, pluricentric framework that fostered greater acceptance of global English accents. The findings are organized first to illustrate the evolution in pre-service teachers' attitudes, establish the symbiotic relationship between accent acceptance and speaking confidence, and explore the profound reconceptualization of notions like 'accuracy' and 'competence' in the context of global English.

Finding 1

The influence of a pluricentric teaching method on learners' attitudes towards diverse English accents

Thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews with five Indonesian pre-service English teachers revealed a profound and positive shift in their attitudes towards English accent diversity. This transformation, spurred by the implementation of a pluricentric approach in their speaking class, can be organized into three overarching themes: (1) from anxiety and frustration to appreciation and normalization, (2) deconstructing the "native speaker" Ideal: a redefinition of "correct" English, and (3) developing metacognitive awareness and strategic listening competence.

1.1 From anxiety and frustration to appreciation and normalization

Prior to the pedagogical intervention, participants consistently reported feelings of anxiety, frustration, and linguistic insecurity when encountering non-native accents. This discomfort was a direct product of their prior monocentric learning experiences, which had exclusively exposed them to a narrow range of native-speaker models (typically American or British English). Student 1 (S1) articulated this common sentiment: "I used to panic when I heard an Indian or Scottish accent in a video. I immediately thought, 'My English is terrible because I can't understand this.' It was discouraging." This response aligns with what Derwing and Munro (2009) identify as communication anxiety, a barrier that arises from unfamiliarity with linguistic variation.

The structured exposure to a wide array of accents including Australian, Singaporean, Indian, and Nigerian English through curated podcasts, TED Talks, and simulated listening exercises acted as a powerful desensitizing agent. The initial anxiety gradually gave way to a sense of normalcy and even appreciation. Student 3 (S3) described this shift: "Now I realize the difficulty wasn't a sign of failure. It's simply a different sound system. I've started to appreciate the melody of Irish English and the clarity of Nigerian newscasters. It's like tuning your ear to different types of music." This finding strongly supports Kirkpatrick's (2007) assertion that deliberate exposure reduces linguistic prejudice and normalizes diversity, thereby lowering the affective filter that hinders comprehension and acceptance. The process moved beyond mere habituation; it involved the active construction of new mental schemata for processing diverse linguistic input, a concept underpinned by research in second language acquisition (Clarke, 1979).

1.2 Deconstructing the "native speaker" ideal: a redefinition of "correct" English

Perhaps the most significant finding was the fundamental change in the participants' internal definition of "good" or "correct" English. Initially, all five participants unequivocally equated proficiency with native like pronunciation, reflecting the pervasive influence of the "native speaker myth" (Davies, 2003). The pluricentric approach directly and explicitly challenged this deep seated notion. Student 2 (S2) explained this conceptual breakthrough: "our lecturer constantly emphasized 'intelligibility' over 'imitation.' We had discussions about how Japanese engineer and a Brazilian businessman can communicate successfully without sounding American. That was a real eye opener for me."

Students 4 (S4) added a crucial perspective related to their own identity: "I used to see my Indonesian accent as a problem, a flaw to be hidden. Now I view it as part of my identity as a global user of English, as long as I am clear and understandable." This marks a critical transition from a deficit model where any deviation from a native norm is perceived as a failure to a pluralistic model where communicative effectiveness and mutual intelligibility are paramount. This shift in attitude resonates powerfully with the core principles of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research (Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011), which prioritizes successful communication between speakers from different first language backgrounds over conformity to exogenous standards. The findings demonstrate that pluricentric pedagogy does not merely teach about diversity; it actively deconstructs ingrained linguistic hierarchies, empowering learners to view themselves as legitimate users of English rather than failed copies of native speakers (Canagarajah, 2013).

1.3 Developing metacognitive awareness and strategic listening competence

Beyond changing attitudes, the pluricentric method equipped the pre-service teachers with practical, metacognitive skills for managing accent diversity. They evolved from passive, often frustrated listeners into active, strategic, and empathetic ones. They began to articulate the strategies they employed to parse unfamiliar accents. Student 5 (S5) described this new strategic approach: "Before, I would just get stuck on one word I didn't catch and then miss the whole sentence. Now, I listen for keywords, use the context to guess meaning, and I understand that my ear needs a minute or two to adjust. It's a skill you can practice."

Student 1 (S1) echoed this, highlighting the role of patience and empathy: "I'm more patient with myself and with the speaker now. I understand it's a shared effort in communication." This development of strategic listening competence is a crucial outcome for future English teachers. It moves them beyond a reliance on idealized listening materials and prepares them for the authentic, pluricentric reality of global communication. This finding supports the pedagogical argument made by scholars like Harding (2012), who advocates for explicit training in strategic listening comprehension for World Englishes, rather than solely relying on exposure to a single "standard" model.

The findings collectively demonstrate that the pluricentric teaching method served as a powerful catalyst for changing pre-service teachers' attitudes, facilitating a journey from a mindset of anxiety and narrow prescriptivism to one of appreciation, broader conceptual understanding, and enhanced strategic competence. This shift has profound implications for teacher education in Indonesia. By internalizing the values of a pluricentric approach, these pre-service teachers are less likely to perpetuate the "native speaker myth" in their own future classrooms (Matsuda, 2012). Instead, they are poised to foster more inclusive, confident, and globally competent English speakers. Their students would be prepared for real world international communication, which is inherently pluricentric.

Consequently, these findings argue for a systemic integration of global linguistic awareness into teacher training curricula. Courses in English teacher education programs should explicitly include modules on World Englishes, the phonology of ELF, and practical strategies for comprehending accent variation. Without this focused training, teachers may unconsciously transmit their own monocentric biases to students, perpetuating a cycle of linguistic insecurity. This study shows that a structured, albeit relatively brief, pedagogical intervention can have a transformative effect on the beliefs and attitudes of pre-service teachers, ultimately contributing to a broader, more necessary shift in English language teaching pedagogy in Indonesia and other expanding circle countries.

Finding 2

Relationship between the increased acceptance of diverse English accents and the growth in speaking confidence

Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed a strong, mutually reinforcing relationship between the acceptance of diverse English accents and a growth in speaking confidence among the five pre-service teachers. This symbiotic relationship was articulated through three key themes: 1) the mitigation of "accent anxiety" and the liberation from the native speaker benchmark, 2) the reframing of mistakes and communication as a collaborative effort, and 3) embracing the identity of a legitimate global English user.

2.1 The mitigation of "accent anxiety" and the liberation from the native speaker benchmark

All students described a direct link between their previous anxiety over their own "non-native" accent and a lack of speaking confidence. This anxiety was rooted in the constant, and often unfavourable, comparison to an idealised native speaker model. Student 2 (S2) stated, *"Before, I was so conscious of my accent. I would not speak up in class because I thought my classmates would judge me for not sounding American enough. It was paralyzing."*

The pluricentric approach directly dismantled this benchmark. By validating a wide range of accents as legitimate and effective for communication, it alleviated the pressure to sound like a native speaker. Student 4 (S4) explained this sense of liberation: *"Learning that there are many 'correct' ways to speak English was a huge relief. I stopped focusing so much on perfecting my American 'r' sound and started focusing on just being clear. That alone made me feel more confident to open my mouth."* This finding aligns with the concept of "accent acceptance" leading to reduced "linguistic insecurity" (Lippi-Green, 2012), which in turn creates a lower affective filter (Krashen, 1982), facilitating a greater willingness to speak.

2.2 The reframing of mistakes and communication as a collaborative effort

The interviews indicated that the pluricentric approach reshaped the participants' understanding of the nature of communication. In a monocentric model, any deviation from the norm is often framed as a "error." The new pluricentric framework reframed communication as a collaborative process of negotiation for meaning, a core principle of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) interaction (Cogo & Dewey, 2012).

Student 1 (S1) described this shift: *"I used to think if someone didn't understand me, it was entirely my fault because my pronunciation was bad. Now I see it as a shared responsibility. Maybe they are not familiar with my accent, so I can paraphrase or use different words. It takes the pressure off me being 'perfect'."* Participant 5 (P5) added, *"Since we all listened to different accents in class, we all became more patient listeners. We knew everyone was trying their best, so the classroom felt like a safer space to practice without fear of judgment."* This creation of a supportive "community of practice" (Wenger, 1998) was crucial. Confidence grew not in a vacuum, but within an environment that normalized linguistic diversity and mutual support, reducing the fear of making mistakes.

2.3 Embracing the identity of a legitimate global English user

The most profound theme was the participants' shift in self-perception from "failed native speakers" to "legitimate global users" of English. This identity shift, facilitated by the acceptance of their own accent as valid, was a powerful confidence booster. Student 3 (S3) articulated this powerfully: *"This course made me realize that I don't speak 'broken' English; I speak 'global' English. My accent shows my*

Indonesian identity, and that's something to be proud of, not to hide. When I own it, I speak with much more confidence and power."

This aligns directly with the work of Jenkins (2015) on the ownership of English and Canagarajah (2013) on translingual practice. Confidence, in this context, is not derived from approximating a foreign norm but from the empowerment that comes with claiming ownership of the language. Student 2 (S2) connected this directly to their future career: *"As a future teacher, this is so important. How can I teach my students to be confident if I am not confident myself? Now I feel I can tell them that their accent is part of their story, and that is a strength."*

The data provides a clear affirmative answer to the second research question. A strong, positive relationship exists between increased accent acceptance and growth in speaking confidence. This relationship is not merely correlational but appears to be causal and synergistic. The mechanism of this relationship can be summarized as follows: exposure to diversity deconstructs the native speaker ideal; deconstructing the ideal reduces anxiety and the fear of making mistakes; reduced anxiety lowers the affective filter, increasing willingness to communicate; a reframing of communication as collaborative shared effort further reduces performance pressure; this process facilitates an empowering identity shift from imitator to legitimate user; and this new identity is the bedrock of genuine, sustainable speaking confidence.

For these Indonesian pre-service teachers, this confidence is not about achieving phonological perfection but about developing the communicative competence and strategic flexibility to operate effectively in a global, pluricentric world. This finding has critical implications for pedagogy, suggesting that building speaking confidence is not just about repetitive practice but must involve a fundamental reshaping of learners' attitudes towards the language itself and their place within its global community.

Finding 3

Reshaping perceptions of accuracy and confidence as global English users

Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed that the direct experience of successfully comprehending diverse accents served as a powerful catalyst for fundamentally reshaping the participants' core beliefs about language. This transformation was characterized by three interconnected themes: 1) the paradigm shift: from phonological perfection to intelligibility, 2) the emergence of strategic and empathetic competence, and 3) solidifying a confident identity as a global English user.

3.1 The paradigm shift: from phonological perfection to intelligibility

The most profound change reported by all five students was a complete redefinition of the concept of "accuracy." Prior to the intervention, "accuracy" was synonymous with achieving native-like pronunciation, a goal they found elusive and demotivating. Student 1 (S1) captured this previous mindset: *"My only goal was to sound like a native speaker. If I couldn't get the vowel right, I felt I had failed and my English was inaccurate."*

The pluricentric method, through structured listening tasks featuring successful non-native communicators (e.g., Indian tech speakers, European diplomats), provided a tangible counter-narrative. Student 3 (S3) explained the shift: *"I listened to a German professor give a lecture. His accent was strong, but his ideas were clear and everyone understood him. That's when I realized accuracy isn't about a perfect accent; it's about being intelligible and getting your message across. That was a game-changer."* This experiential learning aligns with the core principle of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which posits that the goal of communication is mutual intelligibility, not conformity to a native standard (Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011). The participants' perception of accuracy evolved from a static, externally defined notion of *correctness* to a dynamic, pragmatic notion of *effectiveness*.

3.2 The emergence of strategic and empathetic competence

As their definition of accuracy shifted, the participants developed a new set of competencies centered on strategic communication and empathy. They stopped seeing themselves as passive failures when comprehension broke down and instead became active agents in the communicative process. Student 2 (S2) described this new strategic approach: *"Now, if I don't understand someone immediately, I don't just panic. I use strategies. I listen for keywords, I watch their body language, and I'm not afraid to ask for clarification or to repeat something. It's a skill, not a test."*

Furthermore, this experience fostered empathy, which in turn boosted their own confidence. Student 4 (S4) noted, *"Since I know how it feels to need a moment to understand an accent, I assume others might need a moment to understand mine. It makes me more patient with myself when I speak. I know that communication is a two-way street."* This development of what Canagarajah (2013) calls "translingual competence" the ability to negotiate meaning across linguistic differences is crucial. It reframes the speaker's role from one of mere reproduction to one of skilled negotiation, significantly reducing the anxiety associated with "imperfect" production.

3.3 Solidifying a confident identity as a global English user

The cumulative effect of this paradigm shift and newfound competence was the solidification of a new, more confident identity. The participants began to shed the identity of "deficient language learner" and embrace that of "legitimate global English user." Their confidence was no longer tied to an external benchmark but was built on a proven record of their ability to function effectively in a multilingual world. Student 5 (S5) articulated this empowered identity: *"This experience made me feel like I belong in the international community of English users. My accent is my identity card. I'm not trying to imitate anymore; I'm just communicating as myself, an Indonesian who uses English. That is a huge confidence boost."*

This finding directly supports the work of scholars like Norton (2013) on investment and identity, which argues that learners become more confident and invested when they feel a sense of ownership over the language. Student 1 (S1) connected this directly to their future role: *"As a future teacher, this is everything. I can't teach confidence if I don't have it. Now I feel I can empower my own students to see themselves as valid English speakers, not just perpetual learners."*

The data provides a clear narrative for the third research question. The learners' experiences with pluricentric methods did not merely add new information but actively reshaped their core perceptions. The mechanism of this transformation was experiential and reflective: exposure to successful communication in diverse accents provided living proof that intelligibility, not native-likeness, is the true measure of effective communication; this evidence destabilized their existing monocentric belief system, creating a conceptual conflict that was resolved through a paradigm shift towards a pluricentric understanding of accuracy; this new paradigm fostered the development of strategic and empathetic skills, equipping them to handle real-world communication challenges effectively; successfully using these skills validated their efficacy and led to an empowering identity shift from an outsider to a legitimate participant in global English communication; this new identity, built on competence and ownership, became the foundation for authentic and sustainable confidence.

In summary, the pluricentric approach moved beyond the cognitive to impact the affective and identity domains of language learning. For these pre-service teachers, it wasn't just about learning to understand different accents; it was about fundamentally reimagining their place in the global linguistic landscape and finding their own confident voice within it. This has profound implications for pedagogy, suggesting that building lasting speaking confidence requires curating experiences that enable learners to successfully navigate and ultimately embrace linguistic diversity.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the impact of a pluricentric teaching approach on the attitudes and confidence of Indonesian pre-service English teachers. The findings provide a compelling narrative of transformation, demonstrating that a deliberate pedagogical shift away from monocentric, native-speaker-centric models can yield profound benefits. The analysis of the students' experiences reveals that the pluricentric method successfully fostered a greater acceptance of diverse English accents, which in turn catalyzed a significant growth in speaking confidence and facilitated a fundamental reconceptualization of key notions like "accuracy" and "competence."

The study conclusively answers its research questions. Firstly, the implementation of a pluricentric method profoundly influenced learners' attitudes, moving them from a state of anxiety and frustration towards an appreciation and normalization of linguistic diversity. This was achieved by deconstructing the entrenched "native speaker ideal" and developing their metacognitive and strategic listening skills. Secondly, a strong, symbiotic relationship was identified between increased accent acceptance and growth in speaking confidence. This relationship was mediated by the

mitigation of "accent anxiety," the reframing of communication as a collaborative effort, and the empowering embrace of a "global English user" identity. Finally, the learners' experiences reshaped their perceptions, causing a paradigm shift from equating accuracy with phonological perfection to defining it by mutual intelligibility. This new understanding, coupled with the development of strategic competence, solidified their confidence as legitimate and effective users of global English.

In essence, this study concludes that for Indonesian pre-service teachers and by extension, learners in similar expanding circle contexts confidence is not a prerequisite for communication but a product of it. It emerges when the learning environment validates their linguistic identity, prepares them for the pluricentric reality of global communication, and equips them with the strategies to navigate it successfully. By challenging the hegemony of native-speaker norms, the pluricentric approach did not lower standards but rather promoted a more realistic, inclusive, and empowering set of goals centered on intelligibility, strategic flexibility, and communicative effectiveness.

Recommendation for future research: it should track these pre-service teachers into their early careers to investigate if and how these changed attitudes translate into actual classroom practices; this study's qualitative findings could be tested on a larger scale using mixed methods (e.g., surveys complemented by interviews) to generalize results across a broader population; and further studies could focus on evaluating the efficacy of specific teaching materials and activities (e.g., curated accent exposure playlists, role-plays simulating ELF interactions) in fostering accent acceptance and confidence.

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