

NEGOTIATING LANGUAGE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE BRITISH ACCENT IN INDONESIAN TIKTOK COMMENTS: A DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Nikmatul Lailah

Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts

Universitas Negeri Semarang

Semarang, Indonesia

nikmatullailah024@students.unnes.ac.id

Abstract

The popularity of short video applications transforms language learning beyond what traditional classrooms offer. Despite linguistic authority being investigated, its reconfiguration through digital interaction remains underexplored. Specifically, regarding the mechanisms through which netizens in non-native contexts perceive elite linguistic standards through participative digital performances. This study adopts digital ethnography in the context of comment interactions on an Indonesian TikTok creator's pronunciation video to address the gaps. There is a paradox among netizens who manifest British as prestige, yet it simultaneously triggers a sense of linguistic insecurity. This is reflected as netizens perceive its elite status as a barrier rather than an attainable goal. Humor functions as an affective learning strategy that lowers the affective filter. The participants engage with the more complex phonetic nuances of the language through humor. Netizens domesticate the elitism of Received Pronunciation (RP). They re-negotiate linguistic identity and authority by grounding these distant standards within the familiar phonological and cultural systems of other languages. The comment section emerges as an informal participatory learning space. This study further investigates the way a non-native creator establishes legitimacy as a language authority in this community. Integrating digital platforms into pronunciation teaching, encouraging learner confidence, and recognizing informal online spaces as part of lifelong learning ecosystems are considerable in this digital age.

Keywords – Language attitudes; British; TikTok; Digital ethnography; Linguistic authority; Lifelong learning

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of short-video platforms like TikTok has revolutionized English learning beyond formal settings, turning them into informal environments for self-directed, lifelong engagement (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Zein et al., 2024). Boundaries between teachers and learners blur as creators and audiences interact participatorily, reshaping linguistic knowledge production (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023).

English is a foreign language in Indonesia. Local TikTok creators proficient in British Received

Pronunciation emerge as influential pronunciation models, introducing new sociolinguistic dynamics (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Kholida et al., 2025). This prompts questions on constructing linguistic authority and accent prestige when non-natives perform them in informal digital spaces (Tan et al., 2021).

Language attitudes related to global English focus not only on phonological matters but also incorporate ideologies, social status, and identities (Amin, 2020; McKenzie et al., 2025). Despite the emergence of more diverse attitudes, British and American accents

continue to maintain their high prestige
within global

English hierarchies (Baratta & Halenko, 2022; Fauzia & Poedjiastutie, 2025; McKenzie et al., 2025).

Standard language ideology is the tendency of society to consider one particular variant of language correct or superior to other options, which are considered erroneous. The ideology promotes "native-like pronunciation" of non-native speakers who may experience linguistic insecurity as a result (Levis, 2020; Tan et al., 2021). Standard language ideology provides an ideal theoretical framework for studying the netizens' ambivalence about British accents as prestige symbols and linguistic pressure.

The concept of language attitudes is interconnected with linguistic identity and symbolic authority. Linguistic insecurity occurs when an individual experiences a mismatch between actual language use and the expected linguistic norm, resulting in communication apprehension (Padmadevi et al., 2025). The current discussion indicates an emerging trend toward recognition of local varieties as legitimate representatives of worldwide English identities (Baratta & Halenko, 2022; McKenzie et al., 2025; Padmadevi et al., 2025). In this study, these theories provide insights into the clash between prestigious native-like accents and local linguistic pride among netizens.

The notion of linguistic authority has transformed into socially performed and digitally negotiated (Selvi et al., 2024). Amid this social process of language practice lies the phenomenon of linguistic passing, in which NNS learners gain credibility by demonstrating the native's linguistic capabilities and it is reflected in the fluid identity of the

non-native speaker (Huang & Hashim, 2020; Kholida et al., 2025). In this sense, digital creators earn their linguistic credibility by establishing consistent content and engaging with their followers (Kholida et al., 2025).

Bourdieu (1991) views this trend as the transformation of linguistic capital (Karman, 2017). Proficiency in a foreign language is not solely about communication but also about the social value assigned to it (Bilecen, 2024). By utilizing this accent effectively, the Indonesian content creator becomes equipped with 'symbolic digital capital, boosted by algorithmic measures like number of followers and engagement (Hasjim et al., 2026). In this study, the comment section is conceptualized as a contested 'linguistic marketplace' where the status of the creator is constantly negotiated.

Additionally, the emergence of social media has changed the way people define their roles as passive recipients become active participants in meaning construction through various online interactions (Kholida et al., 2025). TikTok facilitates this through video content and interactive comments, which are perceived as a space where netizens share language attitudes, share informal knowledge, and construct their identities (Anjani et al., 2025; Hasjim et al., 2026; Zhou et al., 2022).

According to recent studies, language acquisition on TikTok occurs through a variety of social activities such as mimicry, humor, peer correction, and community-driven dialogue. These interactions create a "third space" where education and entertainment intersect, also known as edutainment (Zein et al., 2024).

Analysis of comments shows that users actively discuss pronunciation and linguistic competence, making the platform a significant site for informal language learning (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Nguyen & Diederich, 2023).

Prior research emphasizes classroom, media, or institutional contexts, intelligibility in English as a *Lingua Franca*, and persistent accent hierarchies (Huang & Hashim, 2020; Kaur, 2014; Levis, 2020), but overlooks attitude negotiations in TikTok comments as natural sites for evaluating pronunciation, identity, and informal learning (Anjani et al., 2025; Kim & Zhang, 2025). These asynchronous interactions reveal tensions in EFL learning and non-native legitimacy (Hasjim et al., 2026; Padmadevi et al., 2025).

Building on this phenomenon, the present study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do Indonesian netizens construct language attitudes toward British accents displayed by non-native creators in digital learning environments?
2. How do identity negotiation and language standards emerge in TikTok comment sections as forms of asynchronous lifelong learning practice?

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze sociolinguistic patterns in netizens' negotiations of language attitudes toward British accents on TikTok and to examine how online communities respond to the linguistic authority of local content creators. By situating TikTok interactions within broader discussions of language ideology, digital participation, and lifelong learning, this study

contributes to understanding how linguistic prestige, identity, and authority are reshaped in contemporary digital environments and how netizens negotiate the legitimacy of non-natives speaker.

Unlike classroom-centric study, it captures real-time crowd validation, building linguistic authority and reinforcing linguistic passing. Educators gain practical models through netizens' interactions, which reinforce speaking confidence without formal situation. The digital platforms are not merely supplementary learning, but transform the definition of a legitimate teacher in the global English landscape.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative digital ethnographic approach to examine Indonesian TikTok users' (netizens) negotiation of language attitudes toward the British English accent via comments on pronunciation-focused videos by creator @zelynafah. Digital ethnography captures natural online communication and linguistic identity formation, which analysis shifts from individual posts to public comments as sociolinguistic interactions, with usernames and personal data anonymized for privacy (Pink et al., 2016; Zhao, 2024).

Videos were selected by three criteria: (1) high and substantive engagement in the comment sections; (2) content that explicitly addresses phonological aspects of British pronunciation; and (3) representativeness of how British pronunciation is framed as a learning topic on the account. Data from three high-engagement videos yielded 5,853 comments, cleaned by removing duplicates, spam, ads, irrelevancies, and

1,240 repetitive/emoji-only responses, leaving 550 key comments for iterative thematic analysis to identify patterns in attitudes. The study codes to categorize recurring patterns of language attitudes, learning practices, humour, accent ideology negotiation, and the construction of linguistic authority.

Data analysis employed iterative thematic discourse analysis, combining inductive and deductive methods. The thematic analysis helps researchers organize and interpret rich textual data to understand meanings, experiences, and perspectives systematically related to their research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Beginning with open coding for patterns like admiration, confusion, difficulties, humor, learning questions, imitating sound, and creator evaluations, evolving into broader themes via continuous comparison, and culminating in theoretical coding interpreted through frameworks of language attitudes, participatory culture, linguistic passing, and capital (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Trustworthiness ensured via a combination of theories and patterns in all three videos, following a cyclical process

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of data and their interpretations are conducted simultaneously. The collected comments showed various patterns that demonstrate how Indonesian TikTok users deal with attitudes towards the British accent, learning practices, and linguistic authorities in digital spaces.

Admiration and Aspirational Desire toward the British Accent

One of the most prominent patterns is the admiration of Indonesian TikTok

of familiarization, coding, categorizing, interpretation, and refinement to thematic saturation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, the researcher maintained a documented audit trail and fieldnotes. This included systematic records of how thematic categories were constructed, refined, or merged in the analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Ethics were observed by sourcing only public comments without user tracing, anonymizing usernames, and limiting use to academic purposes, thereby respecting online discourse anonymity. The study positioned the researcher as a non-participant observer who did not join conversations, post comments, or contact the creator or other users to minimize disruption of the natural dynamic interaction. The analysis and presentation of comment data were approached with care and respect. Overall, the research design was aligned with ethical guidelines for digital ethnography on social media, which emphasise transparency, caution, and reflexivity in the use of public data for research purposes (Abidin & Lee, 2023; Pink et al., 2016).

netizens toward the British accent. Netizens perceive the British accent in aesthetic terms, positioning it as “cool,” “satisfying,” and sounds pleasing rather than merely functional, while responding to both the content and the performative style of the videos. This tendency appears in statements such as “Hopefully I can master the British accent, it's COOL” and “It's so satisfying to hear the British accent,” where affective reactions dominate the evaluative frame. These comments exemplify the affective

dimension of language attitudes, which involves emotional responses, beliefs, and rapid evaluations about particular accents and their speakers (Amin, 2020). Pronunciation here is not just a segmental or suprasegmental feature, but it becomes an object of enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Kim & Zhang, 2025). In this sense, the British accent is construed not only as a communicative medium but also as a status symbol within broader global English hierarchies (Bilecen, 2024; Huang & Hashim, 2020).

This admiration frequently develops into explicit aspiration. Rather than remaining in the realm of detached appreciation, many netizens articulate personal goals that align with the accent. Comments such as “But I love the British accent, I want to learn it 🥹” and “I wish I could speak like this” indicate a process of self-positioning in which netizens imagine themselves as future users of the accent (Huang & Hashim, 2020). These expressions suggest that affective engagement with the accent functions as a motivational resource and admiration becomes the first step towards goal-setting in language learning. In line with existing research, the data show that language attitudes can shape learners’ motivation, their perceived desirability of certain targets, and the formulation of language learning goals (Xie & Peltokorpi, 2025). Thus, the British accent emerges as an inspirational model that guides learners’ imagined trajectories of linguistic advancement.

A further layer of this admiration concerns perceived social rewards. A netizen commented, “If I spoke British in class, my friends would definitely said...

awesome, cool...,” which reveals that the accent is imagined as a tool for garnering praise and enhancing their social standing. This comment illustrates how language practices can be linked to expectations of positive social evaluation and symbolic advantages (Seyranyan & Westphal, 2021). From the perspective of standard language ideology, the utterance illustrates how pronunciation is understood as an index of higher value, as certain ways of speaking are construed as superior or more correct than others (Levis, 2020). In this discursive frame, the British accent becomes associated with social approval, prestige, and “being impressive” in front of peers.

These patterns can be interpreted through Bourdieu’s notion of linguistic capital. From this viewpoint, the admiration expressed in the comments reflects recognition of the British accent as a valuable symbolic resource that can be exchanged for social advantages (Bilecen, 2024; Karman, 2017). Linguistic capital refers to the social value attached to particular language practices in a given “linguistic marketplace,” and the classroom scenario mentioned by the user provides concrete evidence of how pronunciation is imagined as convertible into prestige (Bilecen, 2024; Karman, 2017). The British accent is admired not only for its sound but because it is perceived as capable of yielding symbolic rewards and upward social positioning (Roberts, 2020).

Admiration in the findings also extends to the performance of the accent by the Indonesian content creator herself. For instance, the comment “It’s so exciting to see your videos that always discuss English and the pronunciation is the best!”

indicates an emotional connection between the user and the video, which translates into trust in the creator's linguistic competence. This affective bond contributes to the construction of the creator as a credible and reliable pronunciation model and as a valuable resource for informal learning (Kholida et al., 2025). These textual traces show that admiration for the British accent is entangled with prestige, aspiration, and expectations of social approval (Fauzia & Poedjiastutie, 2025). Beliefs and language practices combine to establish a hierarchy of linguistic prestige where British accents reign supreme. The comments recorded the emotional reaction that demonstrates the influence of digital platforms on enthusiasm and engagement in informal language learning environments (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023).

Yet admiration does not appear in isolation. It often coexists with other, more ambivalent feelings, especially when users confront the cognitive and affective challenges of understanding and reproducing a prestige accent in participatory digital spaces.

Linguistic Insecurity

Although admiration for the British accent is pervasive, the data display clear signs of confusion, frustration, and perceived difficulty. These responses reflect linguistic insecurity, which anxiety, self-doubt, or lack of confidence triggered by a mismatch between one's own speech and the linguistic norms deemed prestigious or correct (Padmadevi et al., 2025). Netizens publicly acknowledge their difficulties with comprehension and production, indicating that the comments

section, as a digital learning space, also cultivates feelings of inadequacy (Grammon, 2025).

This pattern also appears on emotionally loaded comments such as "I don't get it, please," "I still don't understand 😞," and "The British accent is still really hard though." The negative markers repetition (don't get it, don't understand) highlight comprehension difficulties and intensifiers such as "really hard though" emphasize the perceived challenge. Rather than presenting the accent as accessible or easily learnable, these utterances frame it as cognitively demanding and resistant to straightforward acquisition. The contrast between the admiration discussed in the previous section and the difficulty highlighted here illustrates the coexistence of desire and anxiety in learners' attitudes toward the British accent (Tan et al., 2021).

In some cases, netizens articulate their frustration through humorous forms, such as the comment "Understand  more confused .

 Symbols (cross and check) produce a visual representation of confusion and cognitive overload. This expression indicates a discursive strategy that netizens handle their language struggles through humor instead of embarrassment. Comment sections emerge as semi-supportive spaces where netizens can publicly acknowledge and collectively negotiate their linguistic challenges (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025). It reinforces the solidarity through mutual recognition of their struggles since netizens transform the comments section into an online discussion forum to share their experiences and difficulties.

A comment, "so hard to understand," emphasizes that the British

accent struggles are not merely related to production, but comprehension as well. The prestige accent simultaneously serves as an interesting learning goal and a challenge to comprehension, directly related to linguistic insecurity (Levis, 2020). Linguistic insecurity itself arises when learners notice the mismatch between existing language capacity and an idealized standard variety (Padmadevi et al., 2025). Prestige models potentially motivate language practice. It increases awareness of deficiencies and leads to communication apprehension.

Interestingly, expressions of linguistic insecurity contribute to solidarity among users, as posting confusion and difficulties online helps netizens convert individual worries into a shared affective experience. The comment section evolves into spaces for normalizing confusion, defusing embarrassment through humor, and connecting others through empathy or similar experiences. Thus, participatory digital spaces allow learners to convert experiences of insecurity into collaborative spaces for meaning-making and mutual support (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Hasjim et al., 2026). From a standard language ideology perspective, linguistic insecurity establishes a mutually reinforcing link between the desire for prestige accents and the obstacles encountered in understanding, which in turn sustains IDLE's affective spaces (Anjani et al., 2025; Kim & Zhang, 2025).

Humor and Phonological Play as Affective Learning Strategies

Another notable pattern is the frequent use of humor and phonological play in response to British pronunciation. Instead of treating pronunciation solely as

a serious, technical learning task, many netizens engage in playful imitation, parody, and creative respellings of words. Examples include comments such as “wo’amelon,” “beha,” and “Harry po’ah,” which stylize British phonology in orthographic form. These playful renderings of words like “watermelon” or “better” serve not merely as jokes, but also represent informal phonetic experiments in a public, collaborative space (Anjani et al., 2025).

Such humor can be interpreted as a key affective learning strategy. By situating fun of complex phonological features and representing them in exaggerated or meme-like ways, netizens lower their affective filter, a concept that refers to emotional barriers that can impede language acquisition when anxiety is high (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Krashen, 2009; Zein et al., 2024). When the British accent that is commonly associated with “standard” or “proper” English is turned into a relatable meme, it reduces the intimidation value (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024). In other words, humor makes it easier for learners to engage with an otherwise intimidating target variety by reframing it as something they can play with rather than something they must fear. This aligns with studies showing that playful engagement and parody can enhance learners’ willingness to experiment with language in low-stakes settings (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025).

Moreover, this linguistic playfulness indicates symbolic resistance. Netizens domesticate the elitism of RP and recontextualize it as a participatory digital performance through parody (Hasjim et al., 2026; Karman, 2017; Kim & Zhang,

2025). Turning the pronunciation into jokes is not trivializing but a strategy to redistribute the symbolic power, encouraging non-native speakers to claim ownership of the accent through creative parody (Grammon, 2025).

Humor also signals in comments like “british accent make me wanna laugh 😂” and “It’s funny when say it,” indicating that some netizens consider the accent amusing rather than intimidating and causes anxiety. Approaching pronunciation practice with this perspective can foster an image of language speaking as a fun and communal act, which in turn decreases anxiety about speaking a foreign language publicly (Tan et al., 2021; Xie & Peltokorpi, 2025). Importantly, it indicates that humor and confusion are interconnected, thus playful imitation often appears alongside admissions of difficulty.

From an affective language learning perspective, this pattern underscores the central role of humor in reducing anxiety and promoting active participation (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Zein et al., 2024). Speaking a foreign language, especially in a visible, semi-public arena such as TikTok comments, can trigger a fear of making mistakes and being judged (Tan et al., 2021; Xie & Peltokorpi, 2025). Humor mitigates this fear by normalizing errors and framing them as opportunities for laughter and bonding rather than as evidence of deficiency (Anjani et al., 2025; Huttayavilaiphan, 2024). Furthermore, humor helps create a sense of group belonging. As users share jokes, parody each other’s attempts, and collectively laugh at their difficulties, they develop a sense of community that

sustains engagement and supports ongoing informal learning (Kholida et al., 2025).

The finding also includes comments that interpret British phonology through local religious and linguistic categories, for example, by comparing certain sounds to the “silent hamzah,” or by drawing analogies with how Javanese, Madurese, or Sundanese speakers recite the Qur’an. These data and netizens’ jokes about “Inggris Kejawen” indicate that netizens perceive the meaning of the British accent by connecting into their earlier phonological system knowledge (Abidin & Lee, 2023; Nurafifah et al., 2025). It shows the role of the comment section as a micro-archive of language ideology, which might not emerge in questionnaires but reflects on humor, metaphors, and playful interactions. To sum up, humor and the playful sounds emerge as effective affective mechanisms, contributing to a learning process that was both enjoyable and socially integrated within local contexts. This provides further support that informal online learning environments can foster language proficiency beyond formal classroom instruction.

Negotiating Linguistic Authority through Linguistic Passing and Linguistic Capital

The theme explores how linguistic authority is negotiated in comment sections, especially around the Indonesian content creator. Even as a non-native English speaker, netizens consistently treat her as a legit English learning source. They credit her pronunciation with real expertise and reliability. Comments such as “It’s so exciting to see your videos that always discuss English and the pronunciation is the best!” position her as a trustworthy pronunciation model, while

"I acquired English because I scroll through your videos." credits her content with tangible learning outcomes. These statements signal a shift in how linguistic authority is constructed; rather than being confined to native speakers or formal teachers, authority can emerge from sustained digital participation and community validation (Selvi et al., 2024).

Audience recognition of @zelynafah's expertise illustrates how linguistic passing operates in participatory environments. By convincingly performing a British RP-like accent, the creator accumulates prestige that is decoupled from native origins, thereby challenging native-speakerism and moving toward a paradigm of expert-speakerism (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Padmadevi et al., 2025; Selvi et al., 2024). Netizens endorse her not because of British heritage, but because she embodies a relatable Indonesian learner identity combined with an "ideal" accent performance. This hybrid positioning enables her to serve as a bridge between high-status native-like norms and local aspirations (Kholida et al., 2025; Zein et al., 2024). Consistent with theories of linguistic passing, performative competence builds the creator authority rather than native birthright (Kaur, 2014; Kim & Zhang, 2025). Transcending native speaker privilege, Credentials emerge through social negotiation and collective validation on TikTok (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Tan et al., 2021).

Comment sections evidence continuous authority renegotiation and metalinguistic awareness as the comment "Aussie accent and British accent are different" (Canagarajah, 2013; Kim & Zhang, 2025). This comment embodies analytical depth and collective

categorization refinement (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). Digital platforms exhibit participatory learning dynamics where authority emerges through interactive co-construction (Anjani et al., 2025; Kholida et al., 2025).

The finding also contains comments that question the necessity of conforming to strict accent norms, for example: "We don't have to sound British when we speak English... so be proud of the Indonesian accent." This comment introduces an important counter-discourse to the prevailing admiration for British pronunciation. While many users valorize the prestige of British English, others assert the legitimacy of local accents and identities (Padmadevi et al., 2025). The resulting tension illustrates the negotiation between global language hierarchies and local identity, creating what the study describes as "linguistic friction" (Bilecen, 2024; Grammon, 2025). In this frictional space, netizens acknowledge the symbolic capital associated with British accents while simultaneously affirming their Indonesian linguistic pride (Canagarajah, 2013; Padmadevi et al., 2025). Rather than simply failing to reach a native standard, users are actively constructing hybrid identities that resist total submission to native-speaker hegemony (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Tran et al., 2025).

In terms of linguistic capital, popularity and interaction metrics, such as follower counts, likes, and positive comments, function as symbolic capital generated within the digital linguistic market (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Karman, 2017; Kim & Zhang, 2025). These digital indicators enhance the creator's perceived

credibility and authority (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024). Collective praise, questions, and attribution of learning achievement from netizens construct the creator's linguistic authority (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Kholida et al., 2025; Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). Therefore, it emphasizes the urgent role of the comment section as a crucial site for linguistic capital production. TikTok thus emerges as a digital linguistic marketplace where authority is established through performance, visibility, and participation, and where the very notion of who can legitimately occupy the role of "language educator" is being reshaped in the contemporary digital era.

TikTok as a Participatory Informal Learning Space

Netizens also position TikTok's comments as a participatory informal language learning space. They request instruction, clarification, or guidance. These indicate that netizens actively reframe the videos as learning resources rather than merely entertainment. Comments such as "TEACH ME ENGLISH" and "How to pronounce can't?" reveal explicit learning orientation. Netizens position the creator as a pronunciation authority (Zein et al., 2024). The capitalization in "TEACH ME ENGLISH" emphasizes urgency and "How to pronounce can't?" specifies the phonological challenges. These comments demonstrate evolution from passive consumption to interactive participation as audiences articulate instructional needs within digital platforms (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Nguyen & Diederich, 2023).

The learning orientation becomes even more evident in comments that ask for broader grammatical explanations,

such as "teach me how to use to, the, did, do" and "How to pronounce Ronaldo in British?" Here, users engage in a form of "on-demand pedagogy," seeking tailored explanations of grammar and pronunciation. The first comment addresses the function word and auxiliary verb accuracy. Meanwhile, the second targets variety-specific proper name phonology (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). The engaging short video and accessible comment format support edutainment, which delivers educational content through entertainment-oriented mechanisms (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024; Zein et al., 2024).

Several netizens explicitly acknowledge the learning benefits they have obtained through repeated exposure to the creator's content. The comment "I acquired English because I scroll through your videos" is particularly revealing. Learning emerges from platform scrolling habits, not classrooms. It evidences social media enabling autonomous language acquisition beyond formal education (Zhou et al., 2022). This comment also supports short-video engagement's contributions to vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation improvement, and confidence without intentional study from IDLE frameworks' perspective (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). TikTok's algorithm repeatedly exposes netizens to similar content. This weaves micro-learning right into everyday scrolling rhythms (Lee, 2019; Zein et al., 2024).

Peer interactions in comments extend the platform's pedagogical function beyond creator-viewer interactions. Netizens occasionally respond to each other's questions, share pronunciation tips,

and link the British accent to familiar phonological patterns in local languages or religious recitation practices. Such interactions embody communities of practice, where knowledge emerges via sustained, shared participation (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). The comment section constitutes multi-directional inquiry networks rather than unidirectional expert-novice transmission. Netizens contribute interpretive aids, such as analogies, clarifications, and humor. It positions TikTok as an experiential learning space embedded within routine digital practice (Gambarotto & Pujols, 2025; Zhou et al., 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, the platform manifests participatory dynamics where netizens co-construct linguistic knowledge (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). Platform features, such as comments, likes, and algorithms, empower netizens' influence over pronunciation model salience and pedagogical prominence, configuring collective input salience. This validates collaborative learning via imitation/dialogue/multimodality (Huttayavilaiphan, 2024). The data reveal TikTok doesn't just spread British pronunciation models. As part of IDLE, it disseminates British models while prompting netizens' questions or remixing within sociolinguistic repertoires. Functions as a third space merging institutional norms with peer ecologies, enabling lifelong learning fused with cultural participation (Wijaya, 2024; Zein et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study investigates how Indonesian TikTok users negotiate attitudes toward the British English accent

in participatory digital environments, revealing interplay among attitudes, linguistic identity, informal learning, and linguistic authority in lifelong digital-era learning. The British accent is perceived as a prestigious resource, inspiring admiration and native-like imitation desires under standard language ideology and global hierarchies, yet accompanied by pronunciation difficulties that highlight ambiguous, emotionally charged attitudes. TikTok comments function as collaborative informal learning spaces for linguistics discussions and self-directed pronunciation practice, where humor, edutainment, and phonological play mitigate anxiety, integrating social media into lifelong learning beyond formal education. TikTok emerges as a space for renegotiating prestige, identity, and authority. The accent retains high linguistic capital amid sociolinguistic ambivalence (linguistic insecurity vs. local pride), humor, and a shift to expert-speakerism, as with @zelynafah's performed credibility.

Theoretically, findings advance language attitudes and digital linguistic capital, portraying informal learning as identity construction through humor and linguistic passing while navigating global hierarchies. Practically, educators should harness digital platforms' impact on pronunciation motivation to bridge academic and personal experiences. Limitations include focus on comments from three videos by one creator; future research could examine diverse accounts, platforms, English varieties, and effects on actual pronunciation development. Overall, digital participation increasingly shapes language attitudes and practices,

with TikTok reflecting lifelong learning's dynamic nature.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, C., & Lee, J. (2023). Being bound in a fieldsite: Cross-cultural methodological notes on doing digital ethnography on TikTok. *Cultural Science*, 15(1), 82–98. <https://doi.org/10.2478/csij-2023-0007>
- Anjani, A., Azzahra, K., Elisabeth Lingga, N., Siagian, N., & Aquilera Ramadhani, R. (2025). The Influence of Tiktok Content and Interaction on The Formation of Social Dialects Among Indonesian. *JPKP: Jurnal Pendidikan Kurikulum Dan Pembelajaran Language Variation in the Digital Era*, 1(2), 128–134.
- Baratta, A., & Halenko, N. (2022). Attitudes toward regional British accents in EFL teaching: Student and teacher perspectives. *Linguistics and Education*, 67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2022.101018>
- Bilecen, B. (2024). Linguistic capital and social inequalities: Experiences of international Chinese students in Germany. *Population, Space and Place*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2725>
- Canagarajah, S. (2013). *TRANSLINGUAL PRACTICE: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations* (First). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *FIFTH EDITION RESEARCH DESIGN Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publication, Inc.
- Fauzia, A. N., & Poedjiastutie, D. (2025). Exploring EFL students' preferences for English accents: A survey-based study in a listening class. *A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 12(1), 405–425. <https://doi.org/10.22219/celtic.v12i1.40563>
- Hambarotto, P. D., & Pujols, M. D. C. (2025). English TikTok videos: 'short lessons' or just waffle? *Language and Dialogue*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ld.00212.gam>
- Irammon, D. (2025). Inappropriate Identities: Racialized Language Ideologies and Sociolinguistic Competence in a Study Abroad Context. *Applied Linguistics*, 46(2), 193–210. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amae003>
- Iasjim, M., Arimi, S., Kushartanti, B., Arafah, B., & Taqdir. (2026). Language Transformation in Social Media and Its Impact on the Linguistic Identity of Indonesian Youth. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 17(1), 296–305. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1701.30>
- Iuang, Y., & Hashim, A. (2020). A quantitative study of Chinese learners' identities as reflected in their attitudes toward english accents. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 20(1), 151–168. <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2020-2001-10>
- Iuttayavilaiphan, R. (2024). From local flavor to global fandom: an exploration of the cultural presentation and attitudes towards using English by Thai content creators on the TikTok platform. *Frontiers in Communication*, 9, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1453316>
- Marman. (2017). LANGUAGE AND POWER (Symbolic Instrument To Power in Bourdieu). *JURNAL STUDI*

- KOMUNIKASI DAN MEDIA*, 21(2), 235–246.
- Kaur, P. (2014). Accent Attitudes: Reactions to English as a Lingua Franca. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 134, 3–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.04.218>
- Kholida, N. N., Zalfa, K., & Saekhoni. (2025). Multimodal Identity Work and Value Construction in English-Language TikTok Edutainment: A Discourse Analysis Perspective. *Journal of Character and Sustainability*, 1(1), 1–11.
<https://doi.org/10.64780/jcas.v1i1.129>
- Kim, J., & Zhang, L. (2025). “I Want to Be Born with That Pronunciation”: Metalinguistic Comments About K-Pop Idols’ Inner Circle Accents. *Languages*, 10(4).
<https://doi.org/10.3390/languages10040075>
- Krashen, S. D. . (2009). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition* (First Internet Ed.). Pergamon Press Inc.
- Lee, J. S. (2019). *Quantity and diversity of informal digital learning of English*. 23, 114–126. <https://doi.org/10.125/44675>
- Levis, J. (2020). Revisiting the Intelligibility and Nateness Principles. *Journal of Second Language Pronunciation*, 6(3), 310–328.
<https://doi.org/10.1075/jslp.20050.lev>
- McKenzie, R. M., McCarty, K., & Huang, M. (2025). Implicit and explicit linguistic biases: The influence of social dominance orientation (SDO) upon hierarchical language attitudes. *Lingua*, 319, 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2025.103928>
- Nguyen, H., & Diederich, M. (2023). Facilitating knowledge construction in informal learning: A study of TikTok scientific, educational videos. *Computers and Education*, 205, 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2023.104896>
- Nurafifah, A., Ridwan, R., Junaedi, A., & Ikhsan, I. (2025). Using TikTok English Song Lyrics to Improve Pronunciation Among Junior High School Students. *Innovations in Language Education and Literature*, 2(1), 1–7.
<https://doi.org/10.31605/ilere.v2i1.5044>
- Radmadevi, P. S., Wahyu, R., & Khairunnisa, A. (2025). STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF LOCAL ACCENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING. *Journal of English Education Literature and Linguistics*, 8(1), 1–10.
- Rankin, S., Horst, H., Postill, J., Hjorth, L., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). *Digital ethnography: Principles and practice*. SAGE Publication.
- Roberts, G. (2020). Language attitudes and L2 pronunciation. *English Text Construction*, 13(2), 178–211.
<https://doi.org/10.1075/etc.00040.rob>
- Selvi, A. F., Yazan, B., & Mahboob, A. (2024). Research on native and non-native English-speaking teachers: Past developments, current status, and future directions. *Language Teaching*, 57(1), 1–41.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444823000137>
- Seyranyan, S., & Westphal, M. (2021). Attitudes of Armenian and German students toward British English, American English, and their own Englishes. *English*

- Today, 37(2), 76–84.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078419000543>
- Tan, K. H., Jospa, M. E. A. W., Mohd-Said, N. E., & Awang, M. M. (2021). Speak like a native english speaker or be judged: A scoping review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(23), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182312754>
- Tran, T. L. N., Le, T. Van, & Nguyen, T. L. (2025). Teachers' perspectives about the benefits, challenges, and strategies for using generative AI in English language teaching. *The JALT CALL Journal*, 21(3), 1–31.
<https://doi.org/10.29140/jaltcall.v21n3.102514>
- Wijaya, S. A. (2024). A Critical Review on Informal Digital Learning of English: Key to Develop Intercultural Awareness For EFL Students. *Proceedings of UNNES-TEFLIN National Conference*, 6, 261–270.
- Xie, J., & Peltokorpi, V. (2025). It is not only what you say, but how you say it: A language attitude perspective of skilled migrants' culture-related linguistic skills and workplace integration in multinational corporations. *Journal of International Management*, 31(2), 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2025.101235>
- Zein, M., Weny, K., & Perangin-Angin, A. B. (2024). Edutainment of Using TikTok in Learning English Vocabulary a Case Study of Secondary Student. *Journal Of Social Science Research*, 4(6), 2236–2287.
- Zhao, Y. (2024). TikTok and researcher positionality: Considering the methodological and ethical implications of an experimental digital ethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23(1), 1–11.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231221374>
- Zhou, W., Nakatsubo, F., Wu, J., & Liu, K. (2022). Digital ethnography of an online professional learning community based on WeChat for Chinese early childhood teachers. *Computers and Education*, 191, 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2022.104617>