



## English shaming on TikTok: A Window into English Language Ideologies in Indonesia

Nakita Febiola Vesya\*

Universitas Indonesia

Jakarta, Indonesia

nakita.febiola@ui.ac.id

Muhammad Umar Muslim

Universitas Indonesia

Jakarta, Indonesia

m\_umar@ui.ac.id

### **Purpose**

*In Indonesia, positive opinions of English are frequently linked with instances of mockery aimed at those thought to have poor English skill, a practice known as English shaming which has gained importance in the modern era of social media. This study aims to identify English language ideologies in Indonesia through the lens of online English shaming.*

### **Method**

*Using a qualitative research approach based on virtual ethnography, this study draws on the theoretical frameworks of language ideology. Analysis of 417 comments on TikTok is carried out using a three-stage inductive coding process drawn from the Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology.*

### **Results/findings**

*The findings suggest that there are four key English language ideologies in Indonesia: 1) non-standard English is unacceptable; 2) English is an index of educational level; 3) non-standard use of English in international forum is national disgrace, and 4) non-standard English is acceptable.*

### **Conclusion**

*These findings highlight the dominant role of "Standard English" as a social marker in Indonesia, the harmful effects of online English shaming on individuals and national identity, and the need for embracing linguistic diversity. The study also demonstrates the potential for resistance against dominant ideologies and the importance of fostering inclusive language policies, as well as respectful online discourse.*

### **Keywords**

*English language ideologies, Indonesian language shaming, Tiktok.*

\* ) Corresponding Author

### Abstrak

#### Tujuan

Di Indonesia, opini positif tentang bahasa Inggris sering dikaitkan dengan ejekan yang ditujukan kepada mereka yang dianggap memiliki kemampuan bahasa Inggris buruk. Fenomena ini dikenal sebagai English shaming, dan makin marak di media sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi ideologi bahasa Inggris di Indonesia melalui lensa English shaming online.

#### Metode

Dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif berdasarkan etnografi virtual, penelitian ini mengacu pada kerangka teori ideologi bahasa. Analisis terhadap 417 komentar di TikTok dilakukan dengan proses pengodean induktif tiga tahap yang diadopsi dari metodologi Constructivist Grounded Theory.

#### Hasil/temuan

Temuan menunjukkan bahwa ada empat ideologi bahasa Inggris utama di Indonesia: 1) bahasa Inggris non-standar tidak dapat diterima; 2) bahasa Inggris adalah indeks tingkat pendidikan; 3) penggunaan bahasa Inggris non-standar di forum internasional merupakan aib bangsa, dan 4) bahasa Inggris non-standar dapat diterima.

#### Kesimpulan

Temuan-temuan ini menyoroti peran dominan "Bahasa Inggris Standar" sebagai penanda sosial di Indonesia, efek berbahaya dari English shaming online terhadap individu dan identitas nasional, dan perlunya merangkul keragaman bahasa. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan potensi perlawanan terhadap ideologi dominan dan pentingnya mendorong kebijakan bahasa yang inklusif, serta mendorong terciptanya praktik berbahasa online yang saling menghormati.

#### Kata kunci

Ideologi bahasa inggris, indonesia, english shaming, tiktok.

### المخلص

#### الهدف

في إندونيسيا، غالبًا ما ترتبط الآراء الإيجابية عن اللغة الإنجليزية بالسخرية من أولئك الذين يعتبرون ضعفاء في اللغة الإنجليزية. تُعرف هذه الظاهرة باسم "الخجل من اللغة الإنجليزية"، وهي تزداد انتشارًا على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد أيديولوجية اللغة الإنجليزية في إندونيسيا من خلال منظور الخجل من English shaming online.

#### الطريقة

باستخدام نهج بحثي نوعي قائم على الإثنوغرافيا الافتراضية، تشير هذه الدراسة إلى الإطار النظري لإيديولوجية اللغة. تم إجراء تحليل لـ 417 تعليقًا على TikTok باستخدام عملية ترميز استقرائي من ثلاث مراحل مستمدة من منهجية النظرية البنائية المبنية على الواقع.

#### النتائج

تظهر النتائج أن هناك أربع أيديولوجيات رئيسية للغة الإنجليزية في إندونيسيا: 1) اللغة الإنجليزية غير القياسية غير مقبولة؛ 2) اللغة الإنجليزية هي مؤشر على التحصيل العلمي؛ 3) استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية غير القياسية في المنتديات الدولية هو عار وطني؛ 4) اللغة الإنجليزية غير القياسية مقبولة.

#### الخلاصة

تسلط هذه النتائج الضوء على الدور المهيمن للغة الإنجليزية القياسية كعلامة اجتماعية في إندونيسيا، والآثار الضارة لإحراج الأفراد والهوية الوطنية بسبب استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية عبر الإنترنت، وضرورة تبني التنوع اللغوي. تظهر هذه الدراسة أيضًا إمكانية مقاومة أيديولوجيات السائدة وأهمية تعزيز سياسات اللغة الشاملة، فضلًا عن تشجيع خلق ممارسات لغوية متبادلة الاحترام عبر الإنترنت.

#### الكلمات الرئيسية

أيديولوجية اللغة الإنجليزية، إندونيسيا، الإحراج بسبب اللغة الإنجليزية، TikTok

## INTRODUCTION

Language ideologies, the unspoken beliefs about language's role and nature within a community (Rumsey, 1990, p. 346), bridge linguistic practices and social context (Gal, 1998). Yet, their inherent diversity fuel implicit tensions (Woolard, 2020). These tensions stem from linking language judgments to speaker identity and social standing. In the context of ethnically and linguistically diverse Indonesia, English continues to permeate various spheres of Indonesian life (Zein, 2020, p. 46). Its increasing presence in online spaces raises questions about its influence. While the internet empowers individuals (Rismaya et al., 2022), it also amplifies harmful voices like "English shaming". This phenomenon is particularly rampant on social media platforms, such as TikTok.

TikTok's anonymity and open dialogue fuel online criticism. Faceless interactions amplify negativity and instant judgments (Irawati et al., 2023; Ott, 2017) transforming perceived language imperfections into fodder for mockery and critique. This digital shaming not only reflects existing language ideologies, but actively shapes them (Nguyen, 2019; Piller, 2017a, 2017b). It becomes a powerful lens for examining standard language ideologies (SLI) in contemporary Indonesia.

Digital shaming towards perceived non-standard varieties of English in Indonesia is particularly evident in the case of Javanese-accented English. Despite being grammatically correct, it is often ostracized as "non-standard" due to its pronunciation differences from Westernized norms (Dewi & Kariko, 2017; Wardani & Suwartono, 2019). Javanese learners struggle with specific consonant and vowel sounds. For example, [v] sound is replaced with [f] sound, pronouncing [θ] as [t], and voicing long vowels as short vowels (Fauziah, 2017). They also face negative stereotypes and potential insecurity due to the tendency of English teachers to "correct" their accents (Dewi & Kariko, 2017). This prejudice fuels perpetuate negative stereotypes and potentially fuel insecurity and exclusion among Javanese speakers.

The dominant Standard Language Ideology (SLI) highlights "correctness," uniformity, and authority (Heuman, 2022; Milroy, 2001, 2007). Deviations face intolerance fueled by education, media, and employment pressures (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 26; Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 67). Mastering the "right" forms grants prestige, while non-standard usage triggers criticism, discrimination, and even shame (Garrett, 2010, p. 7; Vogl, 2012). This shaming, encompassing critiques of language itself and the speaker's identity, inflicts emotional harm like shame, language anxiety and discomfort (Amadi, 2022; Milroy, 2001; Piller, 2017a; Zhang & Hu, 2008). Feelings of shame that occur due to failure to meet others' standards and expectations of language are referred to as linguistic shame (Liyanage & Canagarajah, 2019).

Social media has propelled this shaming phenomenon into the digital spotlight. Platforms like TikTok amplify critical voices, transforming SLI into a potent tool for public judgment. Research from Kytölä (2012) and Sharma (2014) on the online criticism of nonstandard English, particularly accented forms, reveal that despite the widespread adoption of English as a lingua franca, a tendency to ridicule or question nonstandard varieties persists, reflecting the enduring influence of SLI. This echoes the "tradition of complaining" identified by (Milroy, James; Milroy, 2012, p. 31) where individuals, often self-proclaimed language experts, publicly condemn deviations from perceived norms (Milroy, James; Milroy, 2012; Schaffer, 2010).

Existing study of English language ideologies in Indonesia has traditionally taken root in educational settings and family dynamics. For example, Harsanti & Manara (2021) shed light on native speakerism ideology among English teachers in school, while Lumbanbatu et al. (2023) explore parental ideology of English as an asset for their children's future. However, the ever-expanding landscape of social media platforms presents a largely uncharted territory for English ideology research. This study ventures into this new frontier, focusing on the relatively young platform of TikTok to offer fresh insights into how Indonesians engage with and perceive English in the dynamic realm of online

discourse.

TikTok offers more than just a mirror reflecting established ideologies. As a dynamic and highly popular platform in Indonesia with 106,5 million users as of October 2023 (Statista, 2023), it captures the evolving nature of language attitudes in response to online interactions and shifting societal norms. By analyzing English shaming on TikTok, we gain deeper insights into the intricate relationship between language ideologies and online shaming practices on the TikTok platform.

Utilizing comments towards English speech delivered by prominent public figures, particularly Indonesia's president, Mr. Joko Widodo, this research aspires to deepen our understanding of the intricate link between English ideologies and online English shaming in Indonesia. By employing theories of language ideology, English shaming, and the unique role of English in the Indonesian context, this study addresses the research question on what the specific English language ideologies are surrounding non-standard English used in Indonesia, as evidenced by online shaming towards Javanese-accented English on TikTok. Understanding this specific English language ideologies surrounding Javanese-accented English on TikTok can contribute to a broader understanding of languages in multilingual Indonesia.

## METHOD

This study employs a virtual ethnography approach (Hine, 2000) to investigate the manifestation of language ideology in the online environment. As a "lurker," the researcher observed user interactions without actively engaging. Data collection focused on the comment section of a specific video, selected using the keyword "Jokowi pidato Singapura" ("Jokowi Singapore Speech"). This choice targeted President Widodo's latest English speech at the time, which is on Ecosperity Week 2023.

The analysis centered on the first video displayed in the search results, a 1 minute 11 seconds excerpt from Widodo's full speech uploaded on 7 June 2023. Among the 1,523 comments, only 417 explicitly evaluated his English usage. Therefore, in this study, only 417 comments will be used as data. To gauge sentiment agreement, the number of likes for each comment was recorded, with each like treated as an individual opinion. Microsoft Excel was used for manual data compilation and organization. To ensure commenters privacy, usernames will not be disclosed throughout the study.

To answer the research question, this study employed a constructivist grounded theory approach (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014) for analysis. Analysis involved a three-stage inductive coding process. The initial stage involved identifying and labeling emerging themes within the data. For example, a comment that said "*hancur banget*" is labeled as '*explicit negative evaluation*'. Next, on the focused coding stage, pre-formed labels that share something in common are grouped into a focused category. For instance, comments labeled '*doubting validity of educational background*' and '*implying the importance of university diploma*' are grouped into a new umbrella category '*evaluating education and intelligence capacity*'. Finally, the theoretical coding stage integrated these codes into a broader framework and revealed the English language ideologies in Indonesia. As an example, two formed categories from the previous focused coding stage are '*expressing secondhand embarrassment*' and '*questioning audience's understanding of the English speech*'. Those two categories are then analyzed with pre-existing theories to see how they might relate and form a bigger picture. Thus, a new category called '*non-standard English in international forum is a national disgrace*' is created. The category created during this last stage is then the identified English language ideology in Indonesia.

In brief, through this three-stage inductive coding method, the analysis focused on recurring patterns present in the comment section of President Joko Widodo's English speech on a TikTok video. This was done to identify and describe the specific English language ideologies surrounding non-standard English used in Indonesia, as evidenced by online shaming comments on TikTok towards Javanese-accented English.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of 417 comments on President Joko Widodo's English speech video on TikTok reveals four recurrent English language ideologies surrounding non-standard English in Indonesia. However, 3 comments manifest more than one ideology, and this adds up the amount of data to 420. The limited amount of data available prevents generalizations, but the comments analyzed offer a valuable insight of these ideologies and their complex interplay with online shaming. To delve deeper, the table below presents a quantitative summary of the four dominant English language ideologies identified through a three-phase coding process. The ideologies in the table are presented in the order of frequency.

**Table 1.** The occurrences of each recurrent ideological themes

No.	Language ideologies	Comments	Likes	Total
1	Non-standard English is unacceptable	266	182	448
2	English is an index of educational level	91	165	256
3	Non-standard English in international forum is national disgrace	39	55	94
4	Non-standard English is acceptable	24	4	28
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>420</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>826</b>

From the table, it can be inferred that the most prevalent English ideologies in Indonesia are 'Non-standard English is unacceptable'. The following section will be discussing the four ideologies manifested in the comments in order of the relevance.

### Non-standard use of English is unacceptable

The most prominent ideology, "Non-standard English is unacceptable", is expressed in 266 comments and garnering 182 likes. This reflects a strong adherence to Standard English as the sole benchmark for linguistic competence. Deviations from this perceived norm, particularly pronounced Javanese accents like President Joko Widodo's in the analyzed video comments, trigger criticism and mockery. This ideology manifests in various forms, as seen in (1) and (2).

(1) Hancur banget

*Really awful*

(2) Ngomong apa dek

*What are you talking about, kiddo*

Comment (1) shows the commentator's negative evaluation of President Joko Widodo's English language speaking skill that is perceived not conforming to the 'standard'. The way he pronounced the [v] sound in investment as [f], and the [əʊ] sound in also as [ɔ:] are perceived by the commenters as 'horrible English'. By using the verb *hancur* (destroyed) and the adverbial *banget* (really) to emphasize the evaluation, the commenter expressed their dislike of President Joko Widodo's Javanese-accented English speech. Commenter (1) reveals what they perceive as conventional norms of language use, i.e. language ideology (Rumsey, 1990). While the comment on (2) seem like genuine confusion, closer inspection reveals a hidden layer of disrespect. Using informal terms like *dek* (kiddo) to address the President suggests an attempt to belittle his authority and stature. This goes beyond language critique; it's a veiled form of shaming aimed at undermining the President's position. This highlights the complex nature of online discourse, where seemingly innocent language choices can mask veiled attacks.

Beyond direct criticism, humor can also be a tool for shaming. Derision and mockery directed at speakers using non-standard English highlight the potential for shaming to in-



flict emotional harm and create feelings of linguistic insecurity. These reactions, both verbal and non-verbal, aimed to ridicule President Joko Widodo's English without explicit critique, subtly turning humor into a tool for shaming.

Many comments mocked President Joko Widodo's English pronunciation through laughter, evident in words like *ngakak* (informal laughter) and *hhha* (onomatopoeia for laughter), as seen in (3) and (4). In these comments, laughter and emojis are used to ridicule President Widodo's pronunciation, turning humor into a subtle weapon of attack. However, the researcher also acknowledges potential alternative interpretations (e.g., genuine laughter without malicious intent, laughing emoji) for some comments.

(3) hhha 🤔🤔🤔

(4) 🤔🤔🤔 ngakak

To further understand the usage of humor present in this ideology, specific contexts come into play. Instead of direct criticism or just pure laughter accompanied with emojis, some comments like (5) and (6) humorously mock President Joko Widodo's English by imitating his pronunciation. This reveals a regional dimension to language scrutiny.

(5) Plis inpes in Mai kantri...

*Please invest in my country...*

(6) nonitumori 🤔🤔

*No need to worry 🤔🤔*

Comments like (5) exaggerate Javanese-accented English, aiming to ridicule his speech patterns. Comment (6) highlights misspelling words to mimic his Javanese-accented pronunciation, and is accompanied by laughing emojis, revealing the intent to ridicule his speech. This playful jab, mirroring Nguyen's (2019) findings on English shaming in Vietnam, turns President Joko Widodo's use of English into a source of amusement, subtly shaming his accent and delivery.

The whole scrutiny towards Javanese-accented English reflects a pervasive issue—accent shaming, where comments mock the individual's English pronunciation and subtly shame their accent and delivery. This aligns with research by Dewi & Kariko (2017) and Latifa (2020) revealing widespread beliefs in Indonesia that British and American accents are the only acceptable standards in English learning, even overshadowing grammar and written accuracy. This belief leads to a positive attitude toward 'native' accent and negative attitude towards local accents.

This dominant ideology has broader implications. Javanese speakers, like many non-native speakers worldwide, face additional challenges due to the inherent differences between their native language and English phonemes. Lestari (2017) highlights how specific English phonemes clash with Javanese pronunciation, creating hurdles for effective communication. Another study (Istiqomah, 2016) also shows the difficulties of mastering a new language while carrying the imprint of their mother tongue. This reflects the need for English language teaching to acknowledge and embrace accent diversity.

Furthermore, the association of English with social status in Indonesia (Zein, 2020) intensifies the negative impact of shaming on individuals perceived as lacking fluency or adhering to the narrow "standard." Studies exploring language ideology and attitudes towards English among multilingual families emphasize the importance of understanding and accommodating diverse linguistic backgrounds (Lumbanbatu et al., 2023).

Accent shaming is a form of discrimination that can have a significant impact on an individual's identity and well-being. By challenging the misconceptions surrounding non-native accents and promoting acceptance of linguistic diversity, we can create a more supportive environment for all English learners, regardless of their background or accent.

### English is an index of educational level

The second prevalent ideology, "English is an index of educational level," emerges in 91 comments and 165 likes, reflecting a deeply ingrained association between English proficiency and educational attainment. Manifestation of this ideology can be seen in (7) and (8).

- (7) ngomong apa sih kok begituh bnget bahasa inggris nya. kata nya kuliah 😂😂  
*what are you talking about why is your english like that. you said you went to university* 😂😂
- (8) bahasa inggris anak tk  
*English (the level) of a kindergartener*

Comment (7) sneers at President Joko Widodo's English speaking ability as well as the Javanese accent present in his speech, and expresses disbelief that such ability belongs to a university graduate. Furthermore, the comment on (8) compares President Joko Widodo's English ability to that of a kindergarten-aged child, which is around 4-6 years old. They express disbelief that President Joko Widodo's English, marked by his Javanese accent, could belong to a university graduate, and compare it to that of a young child. This ideology reveals a deeper assumption that English proficiency goes beyond linguistic competence; it becomes a marker of intellectual achievement in Indonesian society. These further fuels the pressure for conforming to a narrow "standard" English, often associated with Western accents, as deviations are perceived as indicators of lower educational attainment.

President Joko Widodo's Javanese-accented English at Ecosperity Week 2023 became a focal point for this ideology. His pronunciation, deemed non-standard, clashed with the expectations shaped by years of English education in Indonesia. Stemming from post-colonial era where English replaced Dutch and Japanese as the dominant foreign language (Lauder, 2020; Nababan, 1991), English education has been positioned as a gateway to global opportunities and a symbol of progress (Zein et al., 2020). However, this emphasis often leads to a misconception of "standard" English, with many EFL teachers prioritizing American or British accents and even correcting students who speak with regional accents like Javanese (Dewi & Kariko, 2017).

Furthermore, Indonesian English classrooms contribute to this rigid expectation. Traditional, grammar-focused methods with limited exposure to diverse English varieties cultivate intolerance towards accents like President Joko Widodo's. Even the Merdeka Curriculum, with its emphasis on various skills, still aims for a B1 (intermediate) level proficiency standard (Kemendikbudristek, 2023) reinforcing the notion of a minimum "standard" to achieve. It is no surprise, then, that President Joko Widodo's accent sparked comparisons to schoolchildren and doubts about his education.

The shaming directed at President Widodo highlights the societal pressure to conform to this narrow "standard" English, despite the varying access to quality English education in Indonesia. As Sugiharto (2015) points out, not everyone has equal opportunities to achieve fluency, leading to unfair judgments based on English proficiency. This pressure for conformity, evident in the comments, reflects the deep-seated belief that English is a marker of educational attainment regardless of individual circumstances.

### Non-standard use of English in international forum is national disgrace

The final dominant ideology, "Non-standard use of English in international forum is national disgrace", expressed in 39 comments (garnering a total 55 likes), indicates a potential link between language and national pride. Comments like (9) and (10) echoed a collective sense of shame, implying that President Joko Widodo's Javanese-accented English tarnished Indonesia's image on the international stage.

- (9) bikin malu presiden 1 ini  
*this one president makes me embarrassed*
- (10) dia yg pidato gua yg malu 🤔  
*he's the one speaking but I'm the one who's embarrassed* 🤔

This concern for national image stems from the concept of "face", where an individual's reputation reflects on their community (Haugh & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009). In this context, the President's thick Javanese accent in his English speech became a collective loss of face and shame for the entire nation. English, as seen from this ideology, goes beyond personal competency. It's seen as vital for international communication and repre-

senting Indonesia on the global stage. This echo Ammon's (2006) view of language choice and national pride, where fluency becomes a marker of national standing.

This ideology sheds light on how language can transcend simple evaluation, becoming a battleground for national identity and pride. President Joko Widodo's English wasn't just judged; it was a source of shame for some, reflecting a complex interplay between language, identity, and the global stage. Comments like (11) and (12) reflect the pressure on public figures to conform to idealized linguistic standards.

(11) jokowi presiden jdi hrus mmpunyai keahlian dan basic berbahasa inggris yg baik agar lbih di pahami, krna bhsa inggris bhsa dunia  
*Jokowi as a president should have a good basic english skill to be understood, because english is the language of the world*

(12) y ga bisa gitu bro ,dia pidato ke luar negri tuh bro bukan ke emak2 kampung, apa yg di sampaikan mencerminkan bangsa Indonesia bro  
*yeah it cannot be like that bro, he's delivering a speech overseas not to the village mothers, what he says mirror Indonesia as a nation bro*

Commenter on (11) specifically demands 'good basic English skill' for global understanding. This mirrors a belief that perfect English is a non-negotiable requirement for a head of state, especially on the global stage. Others, like in (12) consider a president's English a reflection of the whole country on the global stage. President Joko Widodo's perceived shortcomings, which is his Javanese-accented English, then become a source of national embarrassment, tarnishing both his and Indonesia's image. Both comments exemplify the pressure on public figures to conform to idealized linguistic standards.

This expectation stems from the deeply ingrained ENL ideology in Indonesia (Zein et al., 2020). English education often prioritizes the "standard" varieties (American English & British English) (Dardjowidjojo, 2000) and high school graduates are expected to possess intermediate proficiency (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). The rigid adherence to 'standard' English and misconception about native-like accent resulted in negative perception towards Javanese-accented English, as evidenced in Dewi & Kariko (2017). Coupled with the presidential requirement of a high school diploma as stated in UU No. 7/2017, this creates a societal link between English fluency and presidential qualifications.

President Joko Widodo's Javanese-accented English, perceived as falling short of this expected standard, became a symbol of inadequacy incompatible with the image of a leader. This highlights the broader societal implications of the identified language ideologies, where non-standard English use can trigger online shaming and perpetuate negative perceptions of individuals and their regional linguistic backgrounds.

### Non-standard English is acceptable

While the previous sections revealed dominant ideologies favoring "standard" English and shaming non-standard usage, a different perspective emerges within the comment section. A small but significant minority, evident in 24 comments with 4 likes, expresses a counter-ideology of tolerance and acceptance towards non-standard English.

This dissenting voice challenges the rigid adherence to a narrow 'Standard English', advocating for inclusivity and acceptance of diverse linguistic forms. Instead of focusing on flawless pronunciation, comments like (13) emphasize understanding the message over accent. Similarly, comment (14) promoted confidence in Indonesian accents, urging against imitating "westerners." They suggested embracing unique linguistic identity, referencing India's English fluency as an example. This sentiment aligns with Heuman's (2022) observation that dominant ideologies can be downplayed through process like trivialization, highlighting the dynamic nature of language beliefs. It is within such resistance that alternative perspectives gain ground.

(13) emang knp b.inggrisnya kan emang logatnya mendok..yg pnting mkna nya dapet  
*so what if his english is heavily accented..what matters most is the (obtained)*



*meaning*

- (14) berbahasa Inggris gak perlu sampe aksennya niru org barat, kita hrs bangga aksen Inggris kita sekaligus menambah pede utk ngomong. contoh india jg gt  
(we) *don't have to mimic the accent of westerners, we must be proud of our english accent as well as increasing (our) confidence to speak (english). In dia as example also does that*

- (15) Alhamdulillah udah mendingan ya bahasa inggris nya  
*Alhamdulillah his english is getting better*

Furthermore, acknowledging progress and offering encouragement isn't absent even among dissenting voices. Comment (15) illustrates this point, praising President Joko Widodo's efforts to improve his English. This demonstrates that even within counter-narratives, appreciation and support can coexist with critical perspectives. This aligns with Phyak's (2015) assertion that language ideologies are not monolithic and can be contested.

This minority perspective sheds light on the complexity of language ideologies in Indonesia. While a tendency towards strict adherence to an idealized "standard" English was evident, the counter-ideology reflects a more nuanced perspective. It shows that criticism can be met with resistance, pride, and even encouragement, challenging the dominant narrative of English shaming. This reminds us that language is a diverse landscape, where different voices and values intersect.

## CONCLUSION

This study delved into English language ideologies in Indonesia, as reflected on 417 comments shaming President Joko Widodo's English speech video on TikTok. Four recurrent ideologies emerged, revealing the intricate relationship between language, identity, and power. The four key English language ideologies in Indonesia are as follow: 1) non-standard English is unacceptable; 2) English is an index of educational level; 3) non-standard use of English in international forum is national disgrace, and 4) non-standard English is acceptable.

The first three ideologies rigidly uphold "Standard English," equating non-standard forms with incompetence and national shame. President Widodo's Javanese accent became a target for ridicule, intertwining with educational expectations, social status, and national pride. As Dewi (2009) notes, English fluency is perceived as a marker of educational attainment and social standing. In the case of Indonesia, as seen in this study, fluency also emphasize a 'standard' American or British accent. This study also resonates with Latifa's (2020) findings that English teachers in Indonesia still exhibit a bias against local accents, contributing to public scrutiny and embarrassment.

English shaming extends beyond pronunciation, revealing a regional bias against Javanese accents, where Javanese-accented English becomes a target of online mockery. This phenomenon echoes Amalia et al.'s (2017)'s study, highlighting the internal doubts Javanese English faces despite its international exposure. Comparisons with established World Englishes and a bias towards Western accents deepen skepticism. The study confirms Indonesians' belief in British/American accents as "standard," deeming local accents, especially Javanese, inferior. There is a need for English language teaching to acknowledge linguistic diversity and move beyond a singular "standard" variety.

While dominant, three ideologies face opposition advocating inclusivity and embracing linguistic diversity. This counter-ideology challenges rigid adherence to prescriptive norms, prioritizing understanding over flawless pronunciation. It resonates with Nguyen's (2019) findings in Vietnam, where a minority of commenters expressed similar sentiments, viewing the criticism of non-standard English as unnecessary. In the Indonesian context, this translates into accepting and celebrating accents like Javanese, prioritizing understanding over flawless pronunciation.

Findings also expose the harmful impact of English shaming, amplifying prejudices and perpetuating linguistic discrimination. The pressure for conformity also put an em-

phasis on standard English, reinforcing a narrow exclusionary vision of language proficiency. There is also a red string tying national pride and language, resulting in English intertwining with national identity, which then leads to shame and embarrassment when expectations are not met.

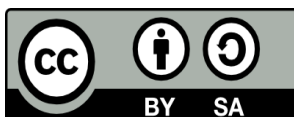
The study, albeit limited in scope, provides insight into language ideologies in Indonesia. Future research could explore these ideologies in other social media contexts with larger datasets, examining the long-term effects of English shaming, the evolving nature of languages in the digital age, and the role of social media platforms in shaping language ideologies. Ultimately, this study calls for challenging discriminatory language ideologies and promoting linguistic diversity. Fostering inclusive environments where diverse linguistic forms are valued empowers language learners and speakers to embrace their unique voices and identities.

## REFERENCES

- Amadi, C. E. (2022). The effect of language shaming on second language learner's self-confidence. *Interdisciplinary Journal of African & Asian Studies (IJAAS)*, 8(1).
- Amalia, S. D., Laila, M., & Adityarini, H. (2017). The place of Javanese English among globally known varieties of Englishes in Asia. *URECOL*, 123–128.
- Ammon, U. (2006). Language conflicts in the European Union: On finding a politically acceptable and practicable solution for EU institutions that satisfies diverging interests. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16(3), 319–338. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2006.00121.x>
- Dardjowidjojo, S. (2000). English teaching in Indonesia. *EA Journal*, 18(1), 22–30. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/aeipt.113365>
- Dewi, U. P. (2009). “The pronunciation is too much”: Indonesians ideologies toward English-Indonesian code-switching. *International Seminar Prasasti III: Current Research Linguistics*, 845–850.
- Dewi, U. P., & Kariko, A. A. T. (2017). Dialect prejudice: Language attitude of English teachers toward local dialect of spoken English in EFL class. *The 2nd International Conference and Linguistics on Language Teaching (I-COLLATE)*, 182–187.
- Fauziah, E. R. (2017). *Errors in pronunciation of English segmental sounds by Javanese students*. Retain.
- Gal, S. (1998). Multiplicity and contention among language ideologies: A commentary. *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, 317–331.
- Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Harsanti, H. G. R., & Manara, C. (2021). “I have to teach the ‘English’ English”: Native-speakerism ideology among the English teachers. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 330–340. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i2.26379>
- Haugh, M., & Bargiela-Chiappini, F. (2009). Face and interaction. *Face, Communication and Social Interaction*, 1–30. Equinox Publishing.
- Heuman, A. (2022). Trivializing language correctness in an online metalinguistic debate. *Language and Communication*, 82, 52–63. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2021.11.007>
- Hine, C. M. (2000). Virtual ethnography. *Virtual Ethnography*, 1–192.
- Irawati, R. A., Sujatna, E. T. S., & Yuliawati, S. (2023). Strategi ketidaksantunan sarkasme warganet pada kolom komentar Instagram Ganjar Pranowo. *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya*, 6(3), 911–930. <https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v6i3.739>

- Istiqomah, N. (2016). *The Analysis of Javanese accent interference in students' English pronunciation (sound/g/) and its application in teaching speaking at the fourth semester of English Education Program of Purworejo Muhammadiyah University in the academic year of 2015/2016*. Undergraduate Thesis. <http://repository.umpwr.ac.id:8080/handle/123456789/2554>
- Kemendikbudristek. (2023). *Capaian pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka*. <https://kurikulum.kemdikbud.go.id/kurikulum-merdeka/capaian-pembelajaran>. Accessed 10/12/2023.
- Kroskrity, P. V. (2000). Language ideologies in the expression and representation of Arizona Tewa identity. *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*, 329–359. School for Advanced Research Press.
- Kytölä, S. (2012). Peer normativity and sanctioning of linguistic resources-in-use—on non-standard Englishes in finnish football forums online. In *Dangerous multilingualism: Northern perspectives on order, purity and normality* (pp. 228–260). Springer.
- Latifa, A. (2020). The impact of local language dialect toward the teacher's language attitude in EFL class room in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications (IJSRP)*, 10(3), 740–750. <https://doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.10.03.2020.p9990>
- Lauder, A. F. (2020). English in Indonesia. *The Handbook of Asian Englishes, 2008*, 605–627. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118791882.ch26>
- Lestari, T. I. (2017). Javanese Accent in English Pronunciation of Harris Hotel Batam Employees: A Phonological Analysis. *IALLTEACH (Issues In Applied Linguistics & Language Teaching)*, 1(1), 20–26.
- Lippi-Green, R. (2012). English with an accent: Language ideology, and discrimination in the United States. In *English with an Accent* (Second edi). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003332886>
- Liyanage, I., & Canagarajah, S. (2019). Shame in English language teaching: Desirable pedagogical possibilities for Kiribati in neoliberal times. *Tesol Quarterly*, 53(2), 430–455. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.494>
- Lumbanbatu, I. M. F., Zen, E. L., Rachmajanti, S., & MR, E. R. (2023). Language ideology and attitudes toward English among Multilingual families in Indonesia. *20th AsiaTEFL-68th TEFLIN-5th INELTAL Conference (ASIATEFL 2022)*, 291–302. [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1\\_24](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-054-1_24)
- Milroy, J. (2001). Language ideologies and the consequences of standardization. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 5(4), 530–555. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9481.00163>
- Milroy, J. (2007). The ideology of the standard. *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*, 133. Routledge.
- Milroy, James; Milroy, L. (2012). *Authority in language: Investigating standard English* (First, Ed.). Routledge.
- Nababan, P. W. J. (1991). Language in education: The case of Indonesia. *International Review of Education*, 37, 115–131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00598171>
- Nguyen, H. D. (2019). *Language shaming practices on YouTube: Ideologies of English in Vietnam*. Master's thesis. JYX University of Jyväskylä. <https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/64883>
- Ott, B. L. (2017). The age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of debasement. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 34(1), 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1375000>

- doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2016.1266686
- Phyak, P. (2015). (En)Countering language ideologies: language policing in the ideospace of Facebook. *Language Policy*, 14(4), 377–395. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-014-9350-y>
- Piller, I. (2017a). *Anatomy of language shaming*. Retrieved from <https://www.languageonthemove.com/anatomy-of-language-shaming/>. Accessed 10/12/2023.
- Piller, I. (2017b). *Explorations in language shaming*. Retrieved from <https://www.languageonthemove.com/explorations-in-language-shaming/>. Accessed 10/12/2023.
- Rismaya, R., Wahya, W., & Lukman, F. (2022). Kata bahasa Indonesia penanda register Twitter: Suatu kajian morfologi. In *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya* (Vol. 5, Issue 2, pp. 511–526). <https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v5i2.411>
- Rumsey, A. (1990). Wording, meaning, and linguistic ideology. *American Anthropologist*, 92(2), 346–361. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1990.92.2.02a00060>.
- Schaffer, D. (2010). Old wine online: Prescriptive grammar blogs on the internet. *English Today*, 26(4), 23–28. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078410000398>
- Sharma, B. K. (2014). On high horses: Transnational Nepalis and language ideologies on YouTube. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 4–5, 19–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2014.04.001>
- Statista. (2023). *Countries with the largest TikTok audience as of October 2023 (in millions)*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1299807/number-of-monthly-unique-tiktok-users/>. Accessed 10/12/2023.
- Sugiharto, S. (2015). Translingualism in action: Rendering the impossible possible. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 12(2).
- Thornberg, R., & Charmaz, K. (2014). Grounded theory and theoretical coding. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, 5(2014), 153–169. Sage.
- Vogl, U. (2012). Multilingualism in a standard language culture. *Standard Languages and Multilingualism in European History*, 1–42. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Wardani, N. A., & Suwartono, T. (2019). Javanese language interference in the pronunciation of English phonemes. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 6(2), 14–25.
- Woolard, K. A. (2020). Language ideology. In *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology* (pp. 1–21). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118786093.iela0217>
- Zein, S. (2020). *Language policy in superdiverse Indonesia*. Routledge.
- Zein, S., Sukyadi, D., Hamied, F. A., & Lengkanawati, N. S. (2020). English language education in Indonesia: A review of research (2011–2019). *Language Teaching*, 53(4), 491–523. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000208>.
- Zhang, W., & Hu, G. (2008). Second language learners' attitudes towards English varieties. *Language Awareness*, 17(4), 342–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658410802147337>.



© 2025 by Nakita Febiola Vesya, Muhammad Umar Muslim  
This work is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License (CC BY SA)

Received (01-02-2024)

Accepted (26-12-2025)

Published (30-12-2025)