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## The Impacts of British Accents on Students' Dialects in a Speaking Class

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### Abstract

The British people introduced their language to the Americans when they reached and occupied the lands of the indigenous people by sea between the 16th and 17th centuries. The British ways of communication and mass media played a very significant role in affecting dialect differences and modifying pronunciation and vocabulary into English standards, known as the received pronunciation (RP). This study is aimed to identify: (1) the students' perception towards British accents in speaking class and (2) the particular impacts of the accents on students' dialects when used in a classroom. This research applied a mixed-method, the sequential explanatory with the advanced quantitative (explanatory) and then a qualitative. In other words, the results of this research are made in the form of quantitative data and supported by qualitative data in the form of narrative depth. The participants were non-English students who had a less understanding of British accents. To collect data, observations on some of the participants' documents (archives, photographs, and field notes) and questionnaire, followed by in-depth interviews with the students. Furthermore, to get the validity of its findings, the triangulation validity of the data is discussed with researchers and colleagues who understand the areas studied. British Accents are expected to become a motivation and the standard of its assessment-based speaking skill level.

**Keywords:** British Accents, Speaking, Dialects

### Introduction

In English, four language skills should be mastered: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Speaking is one of the important skills in learning English. Richard (2008:19) comments: In speaking, we tend to be getting something done, exploring ideas, working out some aspects of the world, or simply being together. Meanwhile, in the international relationship, English speaking ability is very important to be able to participate in the world of work. The speaking skill is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language. This reality makes teachers think that their students should master speaking ability.

Thornbury (2008:1) describes speaking as so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted as follows: The average person produces tens of thousands of words a day, although some people – like auctioneers or politicians – may have even more than that. Speaking is so natural and integral that we forget how we once struggle to achieve this ability – until, that is, we have to learn how to do it all over again in a foreign language. The other researcher, Richard (2008:19), states that mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second languages or foreign language learners.

A good understanding of speaking skills is essential for the students to trigger learning outcomes, especially was motivated by new things. The researcher introduces the British accents to the students as a means of motivation in speaking skills. The aim is to create effective teaching and learning at school in different ways and find the particular impacts on the students' dialects when the British Accents are used in a classroom. As a learner, a student should be able to survive, be independent, and to be able to work in a team when practising with guidance. Rosenberg and Burket (2015) revealed learning style and their effect on learning and teaching; they created potential implications for teaching and learning. Thus, this study aims to identify the impacts of British accents on students' dialects in speaking class.

### **Review of Related Literature**

The British introduced English to the Americas when they reached these lands by sea between the 16th and 17th centuries. The British accents are acquired by people in the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales.) But even though both are in the UK and both use English, the accents are also different. The world of communication and the British mass media is very instrumental in reducing dialect differences and modifying pronunciation and vocabulary into English standards. So, what is often used now is Received Pronunciation.

British English tends to retain the spelling of many words originally from France. At the same time, American English tries to spell the word closer to the way they pronounce it, and they eliminate letters that are not needed. At that time, the spelling had not yet been standardised. It took the writing of the first dictionaries to set in stone how these words appeared. In the UK, the dictionary was compiled by London-based scholars. Meanwhile, in the United States, the lexicographer was Noah Webster. Allegedly, he changed how the words were spelt to make the American version different from the British to show cultural independence from its mother country.

Speaking describes something used for talking and communicating. An example of speaking is your voice when you give a lecture. Speaking describes the act of talking. An example of speaking is when you are talking and an instance of speaking is when you give a lecture in public. In Oxford Advanced Dictionary, the definition of speaking is "to express or communicate opinions, feelings, ideas, etc., by or as talking, and it involved the activity in the part of the speaker as psychological, physiological (articulator) and physical (acoustic) stages. According to Richard (2008), talk an interaction to what we normally mean by "conversation" and describes an interaction that serves a primarily social function. For example, Dignen (2011) suggests that the interviewer should be able to speak the home language of the respondent, match the ethnic grouping, age, and sex categories of the respondent and be from the same area.

In addition, Harmer (2007) stated Speaking English is the primary goal of many adult learners. Their personalities play a significant role in determining how quickly and correctly they will accomplish this goal. Those who are risk-takers unafraid of making mistakes will generally be more talkative, but with many errors that could become hard to break habits. Conservative, shy students may take a long time to speak confidently, but their English often contains fewer errors when they do, and they will be proud of their English ability. It's a matter of quantity vs quality, and neither approach is wrong. However, if the aim of speaking is to communicate, and that does not require perfect English, then it makes sense to encourage quantity in your classroom. Break the silence and get students communicating with whatever English they can use, correct or not, and selectively address errors that block communication. Based on the above definitions, it can be inferred that speaking is expressing ideas, opinions, or feelings to others by using words or sounds of articulation in order to inform, persuade and entertain that can be learned by utilising some teaching.

Dialect is a variety of languages that surrounds a group of speakers. It contrasts with various languages, namely forms of language that are distinguished according to the context of usage. Dialect generally refers to the variety of a language characterised by its own distinct pronunciation, vocabulary, and other grammatical features such as plural marker deletion, subject-verb agreement, use of negatives, etc. Different dialects can be formed when people are separated geographically and socially (Fromikin et al., 2003). Hence, the term dialect can be used to describe differences in speeches that are associated with geographical areas and social groups of a speaker (Wardhaugh, 2006). Besides, there are different ways of classifying dialects. One way to classify dialect is based on the social class and geographical background of a speaker. Based on these criteria, dialects are classified as social dialects and regional dialects (Holmes, 2001).

## Methodology

The approach used in this study is a 'mixed method,' as a sequential explanatory with the advanced quantitative (explanatory designs of Creswell in 2007) followed by a qualitative. In other words, the results of this research are made in the form of quantitative data and supported by qualitative data in the form of narrative depth. The type of data collected is both primary data and secondary data. The primary data is in the form of verbal, behavioural research subjects and the results of the questionnaire (quantitative), while the secondary data is taken from documentation, archives, photographs, and field notes, which is the source of data being the non-English students.

The selection of participants is made through purposive and snowball sampling techniques.

Supporting the research result, a test as the main step to collect the data in his research was given. Brown (2004:401) stated, "A test is an instrument or procedure designed to elicit performance from learners with the purpose of measuring their attainment of specified criteria." The researcher used tests as the instruments of this study. The researcher collected data from the test to identify, classify, and evaluate. The test was used to determine whether the treatment given is successful or not. To measure the students' motivation in speaking class, the researcher uses the British accents as a trigger for a questionnaire and in-depth interview. Research questions in this study were:

1. How is the students' perception towards British accents in speaking class?
2. What are the impacts of the British Accents on the students' dialects when used in a classroom?

## Findings and Discussion

The qualitative data were analysed through the Interactive Model (Lamb, 2004) following some stages that include data reduction, questionnaires presented, and triangulation to the validity of the data. Following the pattern of current qualitative research, data analysis activities are performed in conjunction with the data collection process. The data in this study consists of two kinds of data that belong together: part of the description (note of the answers to the questionnaire and interview field note of analysis results) and part reflection (reflections on the part of the description). All data were processed and made field notes in the form of principal findings, and then the researchers developed the descriptive data presentation. In addition to qualitative data analysis was also conducted inferential data analysis in the form of simple correlation among the students' levels of British Accents in speaking skills. So, the result of qualitative data analysis is reinforced by the findings of quantitative data to generate a complete thing of the British Accents in speaking skill.

After analysing the data, the researcher continued to determine the findings. The data were obtained from the result of the research. The researcher attempts to conclude by responding to the research questions. The students used an American accent when speaking English; it is without reason because they learn from what they hear and what they see. When paying close attention, they often hear someone talking with an American accent, even more so the learning method that the students used. The students learned English autodidact only by books, movies, websites, and communication with my friends from abroad, making it possible for most of them to use American accents without realising they were accustomed to the style of speech of those who spoke who use American accents. Apart from that, maybe the British Accents sound a bit difficult to be applied with the tongue of Indonesian people, so from what the researcher sees, perhaps most of the Indonesian students use American accents when learning to speak English. Maybe the researcher thinks learning British accents is more difficult than learning American accents. Even though we know the basics, we still have complicated problems unless we really try and have the intention to learn.

British English is in some sense more "authentic" than American English. American English comes from the tongues of the ancestors of British immigrants who in the past (17th century) sailed and then settled on the "new continent". Consequently, British English has a richer history than American English. British English is officially used in more countries than American English. Look at 54 countries that are members of the Commonwealth. As far as we know, English used in the European Union is British English too. However, the total number of speakers of American English (both as a mother tongue and second language) seems to be more than British English. British English accents sound sexy, elegant, and educated. Just watch films played by British actors/ actresses, such as the Harry Potter series and The Chronicles of Narnia. Then, compare it to the "wild and crude" label that is usually worn on speakers of American English. The stereotype of the English people is the discipline of pronunciation and spelling. Meanwhile, Americans are generally mistaken and do not care about the two linguistic points. Former President George W. Bush and former vice-president Dan Quayle even made fun of spelling words such as "potato" to "potatoe".

The students have many questions in learning the British accents because their dialects are so strong. It pushed more problems because they think the practice of English in Indonesia is very confusing. From elementary to junior high school, the students have always been taught American English at school. They are initially familiar with words such as cookies, centre, colour, dialogue, favourites, soccer, and realise. However, when they were in middle school also took English courses at many courses; they began to recognise British English words such as biscuits, centres, colours, dialogues, favourite, football, and realisation. But in high school, American English dominates their ears and eyes, mainly because of the onslaught of Uncle Sam's products, such as music, films, commercial advertisements, and others. Our confusion has not yet been answered when suddenly one more question arises: what about the practice of English in Southeast Asian countries? As for indicators, we set suffix -ise as a representation of British English and the suffix -ize for American English.

The researcher strongly recommended pushing the pronunciation, she started to teach the sound "R". Understanding that most speakers of British accents does not roll R, after vowels, don't say R, but extend the vowels and maybe add "uh" (Here is "heeuh"). In words like "hurry", don't combine R with vowels. Say "huh-ree". In addition, the researcher explained comparing the British accents with the American accent. For American English, words ending in "rl" or "rail" can be pronounced using one or two syllables and exchanged completely. This does not apply to British English. The words "-rl" such as "girl", "hurl", etc., are pronounced in one syllable by not pronouncing R, while "squirrel" is "squih-rul", and "referral" is "re-fer-rul". Some words are easier said with a British accents. For example, a mirror is pronounced like "mih-ra". Don't say "mirror" like "they"; British people seldom do it. A word that ends with W is often pronounced with "r" at the end. For example, the word "saw" can be pronounced "saw-r", if used in the sentence, it becomes "I saw it!"

A dialect was strongly influenced by the way the students speak English, for instance, British accents. Accent refers to how the speakers produce a different sound of speech. Also, it was purposed to identify the causal influence of the English Students Accent interference of the pronunciation. In addition, as shown in the literature review, errors produced by the British accents in several areas of phonemes occurred because the phoneme is not in their first language. Referring to the description above, it informed that the non-English students have some problems solved. The students must be aware of their first language and dialect interference, which influence their English pronunciation.

It is actually normal when a group of students finds it difficult to adjust to another accent because of their natural habit of speaking their local language with their dialects because it is in their culture, showing that culture can be interpreted as a habit or behaviour of a society. The interaction affected each other by showing their behaviour in their presence. It shows how the environment affects the way the students speak English. So, the students are actually having a chance to speak English with a proper accent and good pronunciation if they are in an area but theirs or find a person not from their environment to talk with. However, this research has reached the main target. It is found by doing the Observation and Interview whether it is a planned interview; moreover, some previous related research data support the information of both main data collection activities.

## **Conclusion**

The researcher has full consideration in making “The British Accents Environment”. The students need to use British accents in casual conversation with their classmates, friends, and people who study around in order to balance their dialects into a good pronunciation. The teachers/ lecturers are also aware of the students’ dialects when they are in class, especially speaking class. It has resulted in several points of British Accents and dialect interference or influenced the way the participants talk to English, especially in casual conversation, as follows:

- 1) Most students used British accents in the classroom during teaching and learning but usually spoke English with their own dialects, and most of them used to speak Indonesian in casual conversation.
- 2) Some students had difficulties pronouncing the British words and adjusting to the American accent because they have been used to speaking their American, and even though they sometimes speak in another language, for instance, they use Indonesian, and also, they still used their local dialects.
- 3) Some of the students had strong local dialects and accents (in this case is, Javanese), so they found it difficult to try British accents in pronouncing words.

For further study, the researcher hopes the British Accents become the primary choice as a complementary speaking skill, so the teachers are expected to give more attention to the students in reconsidering the standard of English that has been gained, too, is expected to become a motivation and the standard of its own assessment-based level of speaking skill by using British Accents. Thus, through British Accents, a student would have balanced in speaking to provide feedback to enhance the teaching and learning process in the school as a result of the interaction and the motivation to apply their potential through research in the future come.

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