

The analysis of the language attitude of gen-Z students towards EFL in urban and suburban areas

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Abstract

Analyzing EFL students' language attitudes is essential, given the uniform national curriculum across Indonesia. The urban-suburban EFL proficiency gap shows greater challenges for suburban teachers. This study explores Gen-Z students' attitudes toward EFL in South and West Sulawesi. A mixed-method (Qual-Quan) design was used, combining classroom observations and interviews to gather concrete data on students' reactions to English use in the teaching-learning process, conducted over three separate days. The researchers distributed a 14-item language attitude questionnaire covering beliefs, feelings, and tendencies. The research finds that urban Gen-Z students showed generally positive attitudes—enthusiastic, adaptable, and willing to use English even when optional, while still retaining regional accents with pride. In short, *They were found to adapt linguistically to their interlocutors, indicating openness and pride in using English despite retaining traces of their regional accent.* In contrast, suburban students showed mostly negative attitudes toward English, often mocking peers' mistakes and feeling shy to speak. Yet, in individual tasks, they were more serious, revealing resistance shaped by peer pressure and strong local language loyalty. *The findings underscore the significant role of social context, peer influence, and ethnolinguistic identity in shaping language attitudes among Generation Z in multilingual regions. Nonetheless, the researchers would highly recommend for future scholars to develop specific EFL curriculum for suburban students for better outcomes on English mastery.*

Keywords: Language attitude; generation Z; EFL; urban area; suburban area.

INTRODUCTION

The study of foreign languages in Indonesia has been implemented for over three decades (Curtis et al., 2019). Among these, English has held a prominent position as a foreign language mandated by the Indonesian government. It has been officially required across all levels of education from elementary to senior high school (Zein, 2017). However, the status of English instruction has shifted

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over time in response to various curriculum revisions. At times, English has been designated as a compulsory subject, while in other instances it has been made optional. Despite these changes, English continues to be taught consistently throughout the country (Widodo, 2016).

The government has always been fully aware on the importance of mastering English. It is certainly because of the needs and the benefits of having generations with remarkable language skills, especially English (Macaro et al., 2018). The government always takes part in finding solutions for our generations to have better skills on the language. It is proven by the effort from the government in placing English in every curriculum (Kirkpatrick & Liddicoat, 2017). Not only that English is one of the primary subjects at schools, but also as an additional curricular which is studied in semiformal meetings.

The curriculum made by the government is applied for all level of schools everywhere in Indonesia (Intiana et al., 2023). Besides, all teachers have same choices of teaching methods, it is up to them which method to choose in teaching English. But what makes it different are the teacher who apply it and where and how are these students' capability and ability in receiving the materials. The curriculum might be the same, the method in teaching also might be the same, but the students are different and the geographical location is different, thus, the following issue would arise, whether the outcomes are also the same. Meanwhile, the success of reaching the learning goals is in the teachers' hand (Lambert et al., 2015).

It is vital for the teachers to be aware of the differences they have compared to other teachers. These differences are later to be their challenges in achieving the learning goals and eventually fulfilling the curriculum demands. The clear and visible difference is the geographical location of the students. As Bronfenbrenner said that the surrounding environment and the geographical location of a student really influence the development of learning (Bronfenbrenner, 2019). Moreover, Vygotsky in Kozulin said that the educational resources, the cultural context and the socioeconomic conditions influence the cognitive growth and the academic achievements of the students (Kozulin, 1998).

The geographical location in this research is urban and suburban areas in Indonesia. In every region, there are both urban and suburban areas. The main issue is that the government-designed curriculum standardizes foreign language education requirements across all regions, regardless of whether the schools are located in urban or suburban areas (Sidaauruk et al., 2025). The government has not thoroughly explored the most suitable curriculum for foreign language learning, particularly English, in suburban areas of Indonesia. The most fundamental aspect to consider is students' language attitude toward English learning (Winaldo & Oktaviani, 2022).

Language attitude refers to a person's beliefs, feelings, and tendencies towards a language, its speakers, and its use (Dragojevic, 2017). These attitudes can be positive, negative, or neutral and are influenced by various factors like social perception, historical context, and personal experiences. Language attitude mainly is about how the students show their attitude towards different language (Tóдор & Dégi, 2016). Language attitudes can be broadly categorized

into two types, instrumental and integrative (Tódor & Dégi, 2016). Instrumental attitudes are pragmatic, focusing on the tangible benefits of speaking a particular language, such as economic advantages, educational opportunities, and job prospects. In contrast, integrative attitudes relate to the emotional and cultural connections to a language, reflecting the desire to belong to a particular community or cultural heritage. These language attitudes often coexist, shaping how individuals perceive their own language use and that of others (Kirilenko, 2024). Societies with multiple languages often experience complex interactions between different linguistic groups, with attitudes influencing language policies, educational curricula, and social integration (Shin, 2017).

By realizing the needs to make a different curriculum for students in urban and suburban areas, especially in EFL context, the researchers want to analyse the language attitude of the students towards EFL. This step is considered necessary as it is the initial step to decide how English is should be introduced and learnt in certain geographical location, urban and suburban areas. This is, of course, for effective results in achieving main learning goals to every English students in the country.

After analyzing the research issues, the researchers formulated the following research questions: (a) How does the language attitude toward EFL of Gen-Z students in urban area? and (b) How does the language attitude toward EFL of Gen-Z students in suburban area?.

The findings of the research are so vital for many people of different status and role. The findings definitely provide new insights for taking the next move on many aspects. Some of them are language learning policy, EFL curriculum development for Gen Z and future generations in urban and suburban areas, language maintenance among generations, language shift and language loss. Above all reasons, these findings could be a reference for initial move to the policy makers, educators, language enthusiast, linguists, and EFL researchers to take sample on how to introduce, bring and to teach different language.

The first related study to the upcoming research was conducted by Sohidi and Rifai (Sohidi & Rifai, 2022) in their qualitative research entitled “*Language Attitude of Generation Z: Gender and Socioeconomic Status Analysis*.” The study focused specifically on Generation Z students in Indonesia and explored how gender and socioeconomic status shaped their attitudes toward English. Using interviews, group discussions, observations, and personal documents, the researchers found that female and middle- to upper-class students generally expressed more positive attitudes towards English. These attitudes were influenced by prior learning experiences, perceived linguistic difficulty, and both instrumental and integrative motivations. The study provides rich qualitative insights that are directly relevant to the present research, which also examines Gen Z's language attitudes, albeit from a different geographical perspective, comparing urban and suburban settings.

Sohidi and Rifai's study also emphasizes the importance of contextual and social experiences in shaping language attitude, which aligns closely with the current article's assumption that external environments (such as urban versus suburban surroundings) can influence the way young learners view English. In their findings, female students were more inclined to engage in English-learning

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activities (e.g., taking courses, using English captions on social media), while students from higher SES backgrounds were more aware of the global relevance of English, particularly in relation to academic and career goals. This insight is particularly valuable when examining suburban students, who may come from a wider range of socioeconomic backgrounds and have differing access to English resources and exposure. Thus, while the original study focused on gender and SES, its findings can be extended to predict potential differences in language attitude based on geographical and environmental access, which the present study investigates.

A second relevant study by Paradewari and Mbato also looked at the relationship between gender, socioeconomic status, and language attitudes in the Indonesian context (Paradewari & Mbato, 2018). This study involved 256 university students and found five distinctive patterns of language attitude, with a significant correlation between SES and more positive orientations toward English. It was observed that learners from higher social classes tended to be more motivated and confident in using English. This corresponds with observations in the current research, where urban students who often have more exposure to technology, native-like media, and private schooling may demonstrate more favorable attitudes toward English compared to their suburban peers. The current study aims to expand on this by contextualizing such SES-influenced attitudes within different regional environments, adding a geographical dimension to the socio-demographic analysis.

Moreover, the study by Paradewari and Mbato points to a growing trend among Indonesian students to view English not only as a communication tool but also as a symbol of social mobility. This integrative and instrumental duality is reflected in the current study's theoretical framing, which adopts Gardner's model of language attitude. In suburban areas, where infrastructure and global access might be limited, English may be seen as a distant or unattainable skill, thereby influencing students' perceptions and lowering their motivation. In contrast, urban students might relate English more directly to real-life benefits such as higher education opportunities, social prestige, and career advancement. These patterns of perception underscore the need to explore regional variations in language attitude among Gen Z, a demographic often influenced by globalization yet shaped by local realities.

Further insight is provided by Sabiq (Sabiq, 2023) in his article "*Investigating Individual Differences, School Locality, and Management on Indonesian Students' Attitudes and Motivation in EFL Learning*", published in the LEARN Journal. This mixed-method study involved 344 high school students from both urban and rural areas in Central Java. The research revealed that while individual differences (e.g., gender, age, learning experience) are important, contextual factors such as school locality and type of school management (public vs. private) significantly affect students' language attitudes and motivation. Interestingly, students in urban settings did not always have higher motivation; in some cases, students from rural schools exhibited stronger personal drive, perhaps due to a scarcity of resources prompting higher appreciation. This nuance is highly relevant to the current study, which explores how different social and educational landscapes between urban and suburban areas influence Gen Z's attitudes toward English.

In contrast to purely demographic studies, Sabiq's work contributes a nuanced perspective by analyzing how school systems and regional contexts intersect with students' internal dispositions. This intersection is central to the present research, which attempts to capture the dynamic between environment (urban or suburban) and the internalized attitudes of Gen Z learners toward English. Both studies recognize that motivation and language attitude do not develop in isolation; they are instead the result of a complex interplay between personal, institutional, and environmental factors. By situating the current study within this broader discussion, it becomes possible to identify how educational inequality, access to language resources, and regional development influence Gen Z's positioning of English in both academic and social contexts.

METHOD

This research was a mixed-method research. The research implemented Qual-Quan research design (Palinkas, 2022). To gain the quantitative data, the researchers handed out the questionnaire to the research subjects to examine the language attitude of the Gen-Z students viewed from three aspects; beliefs, feelings and tendencies. In this instrument, there were 14 statements that described the language attitude towards English. Meanwhile, for the qualitative design, the researchers conducted observations by taking fieldnotes as the instrument. The use of an appropriate research approach is vital in a research discussing about life worlds of people (Honer & Hitzler, 2015). The research subject as the primary source of data and information were determined by using purposive sampling technique and with complete planning by ensuring that the natural setting in the data collection process was maintained, where the research subject experienced the issue being researched (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009), in the context of this research, namely language attitude during EFL classroom.

The research sample was Generation Z, born in 1997–2012, that was more exposed to digital media, global languages, and the evolving cultural dynamics of the 21st century. By examining this generation, the research sought to reveal how Gen-Z shapes language attitudes in a rapidly changing sociolinguistic environment. To collect qualitative data, the research employed direct observation as the instrument to provide qualitative data. Field notes were used to document observations of language interactions in natural settings, capturing spontaneous language use and the social contexts in which these interactions occur.

The researchers chose EFL students of IMMIM Putra and Putri Boarding School of Makassar City as the sample of Gen-Z students of urban areas, age 16 to 18 years old. Meanwhile, the researchers chose EFL students of STAIN Majene as the sample of Gen-Z students of suburban area, age 18 to 20 years old. These samples were chosen since they were in a group of multicultural people. Many students come from different cultural background and then live as well as study in the same area, IMMIM boarding school in urban areas and STAIN Majene in suburban area. To sum up, multiculturalism was considered as one factor that defines in choosing sample for the research and to assure the relevance of the issue with the data collection.

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The researchers observed the language attitude of the students of the urban city, Makassar and the suburban area, Rangas district, Majene regency. The areas provided a rich context for examining how geographical context influences the language attitude of the students. South Sulawesi is known for its huge linguistic diversity, with several local languages such as Buginese and Makassarnese are being spoken alongside Bahasa, the national language. West Sulawesi, while smaller, whose local language called Mandarese, showcases a range of indigenous languages and dialects. The students' language for daily conversations in Makassar city is Bahasa with Makassar accent, and Mandarese in Rangas district, Majene regency, West Sulawesi. This geographical setting was very ideal for observing how language attitudes differ across communities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION***The Language Attitude towards EFL of Generation Z Students in Urban Area***

Here is the research result that shows the language attitude viewed from beliefs, feelings and tendencies on urban students.

Table 1. The language attitude towards the English

Number	Category	Indicator	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	Beliefs	Speaking English signals higher education or intelligence.	78%	15%	7%
2	Beliefs	Using English makes someone look more modern or globally minded.	82%	12%	6%
3	Beliefs	Speaking English fluently increases one's career opportunities.	90%	8%	2%
4	Beliefs	People who avoid English are less competent in certain fields.	35%	28%	37%
5	Beliefs	People who speak too much English sound arrogant or elitist.	30%	22%	48%
6	Feelings	I feel impressed when someone	68%	20%	12%

		speaks fluent English in daily conversation.			
7	Feelings	I feel intimidated when speaking to Indonesians who use a lot of English.	32%	28%	40%
8	Feelings	I feel annoyed when English is used excessively in casual Indonesian settings.	33%	30%	37%
9	Feelings	I feel proud when I can speak English well among my peers.	76%	15%	9%
10	Tendencies	I often switch to English when discussing pop culture or academic topics.	40%	25%	35%
11	Tendencies	I tend to use English terms for concepts that feel awkward in Indonesian.	66%	14%	20%
12	Tendencies	I rarely speak English with family members.	68%	8%	24%
13	Tendencies	I prefer captions or comments in English when posting on social media.	35%	37%	28%
14	Tendencies	I avoid using English with older Indonesians or in formal traditional settings.	82%	10%	8%

Here are the explanations of the table above:

a. Observations result on day one

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On the first day, the researchers engaged in an EFL classroom with Generation Z students in Makassar. The researchers have concluded that the language attitude of the students is neutral by indicating the expressions, neither positive nor negative during teaching and learning process of EFL. The teaching and learning process was conducted by a Millennial's teacher, using English dominantly and sometimes mixing it with Bahasa and Makassarnese's accent. On the first day of observations, it became evident that the language attitude towards EFL was quite positive. This is proven when the students are asked to describe exciting or emotional events using Bahasa, the pride and the enthusiast of using English was highly noticeable. Sometimes, they use English term when speaking in EFL classroom even being asked to speak in Bahasa Indonesia.

From the students' interview result, they admitted that, they use to hear and use the English terms that they just uttered. Therefore, they feel comfortable using English terms in daily conversations, formally and informally. However, their Makassar accent remained consistent, particularly when speaking about personal experiences or details that were emotionally charged. This consistent use of English combined with Makassar accent, underscores a positive language attitude characterized by linguistic pride and language loyalty. According to Giles (Giles, 2016) in his Communication Accommodation Theory, such behavior can be explained by a desire to maintain one's ethnolinguistic identity, particularly in the face of a new social setting. Even though the students were in a city with a more diverse linguistic population, they did not seem like they were unfamiliar with English. This supports the notion that Generation Z students, especially those who live in an urban area show positive language attitude towards EFL.

b. Observations result on day two

A second observation was conducted two months after the initial meeting, in which the researchers employed an assistant who was a native of Makassar and had a strong Makassar accent to conduct the meeting. During this second session, it was evident that the Gen-Z student's language had started to change. Their responses, particularly in shorter exchanges, were increasingly marked by a Makassar accent in English, indicating a slight change in language attitude in using English over the course of one month. The researchers indicate the changes happen because of the interlocutor, which is the teacher has strong Makassar accent. The students felt triggered to use the same linguistic characteristics as the interlocutor. This aligns with Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 2016), which posits that speakers modify their speech in order to align with the speech style of their conversation partners, either to show solidarity or to reduce social distance.

This type of language change is particularly evident in Gen-Z, as they are generally more flexible and open to linguistic modifications due to the fluid nature of their social interactions and exposure to diverse communication environments. Thus, the findings from this second observation reinforce the notion that Gen-Z is highly adaptable, as they easily modify their language use based on the social context and the linguistic behaviors of those around them. This ability to shift accents and language patterns can be seen as a natural

response to social identity and accommodation, as theorized by Giles & Coupland (Giles et al., 1991). The student's adoption of the Makassar accent in English illustrates how exposure to social circles can lead to noticeable changes in language attitude and usage over a short period.

c. Observations result on day three

The next follow-up observation took place the day after the second session. This time with another different teacher, a native speaker of English who is originally an American. As expected, the student continued to engage in conversation using English with the American accent enthusiastically, despite occasional traces of their original Makassar accent. This shift in their language behavior highlights how social interactions and environments can influence one's language use. The student confessed that they are frequently socializes with English natives mostly on social media.

The observed pattern suggests that the student's language attitude to English during EFL classroom is very positive since they confess during a short interview that they are very adaptable to English. Although, their language loyalty to their mother tongue is particularly vulnerable to change, especially when in contact with a more dominant linguistic environment as the English native teacher is. As noted, the American English accent became more pronounced in their interactions with the teacher, they seemed proud to be able to speak in English fluently. This aligns with Labov's social network theory (Milroy, 2005), which suggests that language use is closely tied to social networks and relationships. The student's ease in adopting the American English accent demonstrates how young people, particularly Gen-Z, are more likely to undergo language change due to the influence of their peers.

Despite this change in accent and linguistic features, the researchers did not interpret this shift as a negative language attitude. The students did not express any dissatisfaction or discomfort with the change, nor did she show any signs of rejecting English. This could be understood through Trudgill's theory of linguistic accommodation, which highlights that speakers are often unconsciously influenced by those they interact with in terms of accent and linguistic features (Trudgill, 1999). Furthermore, the students' transition to the Makassar accent is not a rejection to English but rather a linguistic adaptation to the social context, which is common in Gen Z, known for their linguistic flexibility and openness to adopting new linguistic forms as a result of social integration and changing environments.

In conclusion, this observation illustrates the fluidity of language loyalty among Generation Z who lives in urban area, especially on accent, where accent convergence or adaptation to a dominant social language is a common phenomenon. The observations result just show to the world that EFL students of urban areas could have better skills on English pronunciation and accent adaptability due to their multicultural environment and are accustomed to foreign languages. The fact that the students did not express any major negative attitude towards English use suggests that EFL is more adaptable and acceptable in urban areas as observed in Gen-Z. This phenomenon surely eases the EFL teaching and learning process in class. Therefore, the teachers surely

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have no issue in introducing EFL to the Gen-Z in the urban areas.

The Language Attitude towards EFL of Generation Z Students in Suburban Area

Here is the research result that shows the language attitude viewed from beliefs, feelings and tendencies on suburban students.

Table 2. The language attitude towards the English

Number	Category	Indicator	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	Beliefs	Speaking English signals higher education or intelligence.	43,75%	26,25%	30%
2	Beliefs	Using English makes someone look more modern or globally minded.	30%	21,25%	48,75%
3	Beliefs	Speaking English fluently increases one's career opportunities.	50%	30%	20%
4	Beliefs	People who avoid English are less competent in certain fields.	40%	15%	45%
5	Beliefs	People who speak too much English sound arrogant or elitist.	32,5%	20%	47,5%
6	Feelings	I feel impressed when someone speaks fluent English in daily conversation.	30%	31,25%	38,75%
7	Feelings	I feel intimidated when speaking to Indonesians who use a lot of English.	65%	10%	25%
8	Feelings	I feel annoyed when English is used excessively in casual Indonesian settings.	35%	30%	35%
9	Feelings	I feel proud when I can speak English well among my peers.	40%	25%	35%
10	Tendencies	I often switch to English when discussing pop culture or academic topics.	0%	5%	95%
11	Tendencies	I tend to use English terms for concepts that feel awkward in Indonesian.	0%	15%	85%

12	Tendencies	I rarely speak English with family members.	0%	10%	90%
13	Tendencies	I prefer captions or comments in English when posting on social media.	0%	20%	80%
14	Tendencies	I avoid using English with older Indonesians or in formal traditional settings.	100%	0%	0%

a. Observations result on day one

The first observation was conducted on a group of Gen Z students, native Mandar speakers, who were enrolled as freshmen in one of the departments at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Majene. During the first observation, it became evident that many students displayed a negative language attitude toward foreign languages, particularly English, as well as toward language characteristics that differed from their everyday language. This was observed during a classroom session where the researchers, who was teaching an English language course, incorporated both English and Bahasa into the lesson, with English being the more dominant language.

The students' responses were telling. They appeared to find the integration of English into the lesson amusing, often laughing when one of their peers attempted to respond in English. In one instance, the student who spoke in English was met with mockery from their peers. This behavior reflected a negative language attitude, as the students seemed to perceive the use of English as unnecessary and perhaps even intimidating or foreign. According to Gardner, a negative language attitude often arises when individuals do not perceive a need for the second language, leading to resistance or mockery of its use (Gardner, 2001). In this case, the students' laughter and derision can be interpreted as an expression of language rejection, where they view their native language, Mandar, as superior or more appropriate for communication.

The analysis suggests that the students have yet to recognize the value of learning other languages, particularly in an academic and professional context. Language attitudes are deeply influenced by social, cultural, and psychological factors (Albury, 2020). In this case, the Mandar language pride exhibited by the students likely contributed to their negative attitude toward English, which they might not see as relevant or necessary. This behavior aligns with negative language attitude theory, which holds that when individuals do not see the need for learning a new language, they may reject or mock its use, leading to less motivation to engage with or learn it.

The lack of engagement with English in this setting can be attributed to the students' linguistic identity. As native speakers of Mandar, the students' sense of linguistic pride may lead them to value their language above others, especially those they perceive as foreign or extraneous. This language loyalty to

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Mandar, coupled with their lack of exposure to the practical utility of other languages, forms the foundation of their negative language attitude.

b. Observations result on day two

On the second day of observation, the researchers invited an assistant who is a native Makassar speaker to become the invited English lecturer. This lecturer taught English and use her Makassar accent at certain point. The interaction revealed significant insights into the students' language attitude. Specifically, the male students in the class demonstrated negative reactions to the Makassar accent used by the assistant interviewer. Similar to the first observation, their responses included laughter and mockery. When prompted to speak, at least two of the students imitated the Makassar accent, possibly as a form of jest or lighthearted teasing.

The negative language attitude was particularly evident when the students' behavior mirrored their previous reactions to foreign language usage, as observed during the first day of teaching. These reactions suggest that the students, particularly the male participants, did not view the Makassar accent as an accepted variant of language or cultural identity. Instead, it became a source of humor and mockery.

The negative perception of the accent can be connected to ethnolinguistic identity theory which suggests that when a dominant group or language comes into contact with a less familiar or less prestigious one, the less familiar language may be stigmatized (Kayaalp, 2016). This further emphasizes the need to validate and promote respect for linguistic diversity in such settings. Therefore, the researchers concludes that for Generation Z students to adopt a more positive language attitude toward new languages or accents, it is essential to demonstrate the importance of these languages and cultivate respect for linguistic differences.

c. Observations result on day three

On the third day of the research, the researchers assigned a task in which the students were asked to introduce themselves in English. The task required each student to enter the classroom one by one and present their introduction without an audience. The goal was to provide them with a comfortable environment to speak English freely, followed by a short Q&A session with the researchers in English. This observation aimed to examine how language attitude might differ when the students were alone compared to when they were in a group setting.

The findings showed a significant reduction in negative language attitude when the students were alone. Unlike in group interactions, where there was more laughter and mockery, the students were more reserved and self-conscious about speaking in English. Some students expressed discomfort and even verbalized their struggle with the language by saying things like "ais" which is "a grumbling reaction to something" when they struggled to find the right word. This reaction suggests a language maintenance attitude, where students, when alone, were more cautious and aware of their language abilities. It also aligns with language resistance theories (Labov, 1972), which posit that

individuals often become more sensitive to their linguistic choices when they are in a less supportive or more evaluative environment.

In a group context, however, the solidarity among peers seemed to drive a different response (Tranow, 2019). When together, the students displayed a collective solidarity, which led them to adopt a mocking or teasing behavior towards unfamiliar language use. This suggests that group dynamics play a significant role in shaping language attitude (Alhazmi, 2023). When in solidarity with others, the language loyalty to their local dialect (Mandar) and the accompanying mockery toward other accents or languages appeared to be more pronounced. As noted in communicative accommodation theory (Giles et al., 1991), individuals are more likely to adjust their language to align with the social norms of the group, especially when they share a common identity. In this case, the group cohesion and peer pressure influenced the students' language behavior, reinforcing their regional dialect and mocking any perceived linguistic "otherness."

Overall, these observations confirm that the language attitude of Gen Z in this particular setting is heavily influenced by social context. When students were alone, they exhibited a more cautious and respectful attitude towards English, while in a group, the solidarity within the peer group led to more mocking and negative reactions toward unfamiliar accents or language use. This finding supports theories related to language maintenance and group solidarity, demonstrating that peer influence and group identity play a critical role in shaping language attitudes and behaviors.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research highlight a critical distinction in language attitudes of Gen-Z EFL students in urban and suburban areas. The Gen-Z students of urban areas display a more positive and adaptive attitude toward English, influenced by exposure, social media interactions, and flexible linguistic identity, especially their accent. Their willingness to engage in English, even when infused with regional accents, reflects linguistic pride and openness towards English and other foreign language possibly. The researchers also conclude that Gen-Z in urban areas are very adaptable with English accents. Therefore, it is very promising for EFL students in urban areas have better English pronunciation skills. In contrast, the Gen-Z students of suburban areas exhibit a strong loyalty to their native language and are more resistant to using English, particularly in group contexts where peer influence fosters mockery and rejection of foreign linguistic features, especially when the friend was making mistakes. These actions were showing a negative attitude towards English, yet considered as a seen and tangible one proof of local language loyalty. However, when isolated from group dynamics, their cautious engagement suggests potential for positive language attitude development. Overall, this study reaffirms that language attitudes among Gen-Z are deeply shaped by social environment, peer interactions, and the perceived relevance of English in their daily lives, pointing to the need for more context-aware language education strategies. This shall be an important and valuable reference to policy makers as well as educator, teacher and lecturer, to take serious actions to

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overcome this differences to finally achieve the same goal as the curriculum has set.

AUTHOR STATEMENTS

Uswatunnisa, the first and corresponding author, hereby declare that this research article is the result of my own original work. All sources and references used in the development of this research have been properly acknowledged and cited. I take full responsibility for any errors or oversights that may exist within the work. **Andi Miftahul Maulidil Mursyid**, the second author, hereby declare that this research article is the result of my own original work. All sources and references used in the development of this research have been properly acknowledged and cited. I take full responsibility for any errors or oversights that may exist within the work. **Rahmat**, the third author, hereby declare that this research article is the result of my own original work. All sources and references used in the development of this research have been properly acknowledged and cited. I take full responsibility for any errors or oversights that may exist within the work.

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