

## Language Attitudes and Identity Construction of Rotenese EFL Learners in the English Department: A Case Study

Josua Julian Bulu Mesang<sup>a,1,\*</sup>, Gracia M.N. Otta, S.Pd., M. Hum<sup>b,2</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Student of English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup> [joshua.julian2107@gmail.com](mailto:joshua.julian2107@gmail.com)\*

<sup>b</sup> Lecturer of English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> [gracia.otta@staf.undana.ac.id](mailto:gracia.otta@staf.undana.ac.id)

\* corresponding author

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### ABSTRACT

This case study examines Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners' attitudes toward English and how these attitudes shape their identity construction in English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. The study aims to understand both the learners' attitudes toward English and the way these attitudes influence their identity formation. The study employs a mixed-method research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis. A Likert scale questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data on the learners' attitudes, while semi-structured interviews offered qualitative insights into their experiences and identity formation. Results reveal varied attitudes shaped by personal backgrounds and motivations; while Nick and Allan display highly positive attitudes and active engagement, Angel, Mirma, and Endang show mixed feelings influenced by confidence and external factors. Generally, positive attitudes contribute to proactive and confident learner identities, whereas mixed attitudes lead to hesitancy and self-doubt. The implications of this study suggest that fostering positive attitudes toward English could enhance students' engagement and confidence, contributing to stronger learner identities. Language educators may consider integrating strategies that address both the cognitive and affective components of language learning to support EFL learners in overcoming challenges related to self-doubt and hesitation. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of understanding students' individual motivations and backgrounds, as these factors can significantly influence their language learning experiences and identity development.

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## 1 Introduction (*Heading 1*) (bold, 12 pt)

### 1.1 Background

The English language is becoming a global lingua franca that unites people from different countries all over the world, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. The ability to communicate effectively in English is often seen as a valuable skill, opening up opportunities for international communication, education, and employment. However, learning a new language is not just about acquiring vocabulary and grammar; it also involves the complex processes of attitude formation and identity construction.

Language attitudes and identity construction are significant aspects of second language acquisition and learning. The attitudes of learners toward a second language can greatly influence their motivation, interest, and overall performance in learning the language. Identity construction, on the other hand, refers to the process by which individuals develop a sense of self and belonging in a particular social context or group. In the case of EFL learners, their identity construction can be influenced by their attitudes toward the English language and its learning process.

It is known from previous studies that language attitude can be quite a powerful factor in the learning outcomes of a language. For instance, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) found that learners with positive attitudes toward the target language and its speakers were more likely to be successful in language learning. Likewise, Gardner and Lambert (1972) discovered that learners who had more positive views toward the target language and culture had stronger motivation for learning the language.

Identity construction, on the other hand, has been studied in various contexts, including language learning. Norton (2000) found that learners' identities as language learners were influenced by their experiences in the target language community. Similarly, Norton and Toohey (2001) discovered that learners' perceived competence in the target language and their experiences within the target language community shaped their identities.

This study focuses on the undergraduate EFL learners from Rotenese ethnic groups in the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. Rotenese learners, originating from Rote Island in Indonesia, bring a unique cultural and linguistic background to their EFL learning experience. The Rotenese language and culture are distinct within the Indonesian archipelago, and this distinctiveness can impact learners' attitudes toward English and their identity construction. Investigating these aspects can provide valuable insights into their language learning experiences and outcomes.

### 1.2 Research Problems

The research addresses the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of the Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners at Nusa Cendana University toward English?
2. How do these EFL learners construct their identities based on their attitudes toward English?

### 1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the attitudes of the Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners at Nusa Cendana University toward English.
2. To explore how these EFL learners construct their identities based on their attitudes toward English.

### 1.4 Literature Review

#### 1.4.1 *Language Attitudes in EFL Learning*

Language attitudes play a crucial role in the process of learning a foreign language, as they influence learners' motivation, engagement, and overall success. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, attitudes toward the target language can significantly affect how learners perceive and approach their studies. These attitudes encompass emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses that shape the learning experience and outcomes. Understanding language attitudes in EFL learning provides valuable insights into the factors that promote or hinder language acquisition, allowing educators to create more effective teaching strategies tailored to learners' needs. This section explores the concept of language attitudes, their components, influencing factors, and their indicators within the EFL context.

#### 1.4.2 Definition of Language Attitudes

Learning a language is closely connected to individuals' attitude toward the language. Attitude, as defined by Baker (1992), is "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related." Ajzen (2005) further describes attitude as a predisposition to react positively or negatively toward an object, person, institution, or event. When connected to language, attitude can be viewed as a state of readiness, shaped by experience, that influences how an individual perceives and interacts with a specific language.

In the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (2002) language attitudes" is defined as "the attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's languages or to their own language". Typically, language attitude lies between thought and action. One's attitude toward a language can be either positive or negative. A positive attitude tends to lead to constructive actions, resulting in successful language learning. Conversely, negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and hinder language learning progress (İnal et al., 2000).

#### 1.4.3 Three Component Model of Attitude

According to Gardner (1985), attitude, which can be either positive or negative, is a mental and neural state of readiness that influences our responses to various life aspects. Baker (1992) introduced a model of attitude, which is composed of three distinct components: cognitive, affective, and readiness for action (conative).

1. **Cognitive Component:** This component pertains to the thoughts and beliefs an individual holds about the attitude object. For instance, someone might learn English because they believe that English is an important language. The cognitive aspect is deeply rooted in knowledge and perception, influenced by factors such as personal experience, cultural background, and exposure to information. It often guides an individual's reasoning and can impact the formation of attitudes based on logic or factual evidence. The more positive the cognitive assessment, the stronger the belief that the attitude object is beneficial or valuable.
2. **Affective Component:** This component relates to the feelings an individual has towards the attitude object. These feelings can range from love to hate, passion for English literature, or anxiety about learning the language. Emotions play a significant role in shaping attitudes, as they can either encourage or hinder engagement with the attitude object. Positive feelings, such as enjoyment or pride, lead to more frequent and enthusiastic interaction with the object, whereas negative emotions, such as fear or frustration, may lead to avoidance or resistance. The affective component is often the most immediately influential in forming attitudes, since emotions tend to be more visceral and immediate than cognitive evaluations.
3. **Readiness for Action Component:** Also known as the conative component, this refers to how one behaves or acts towards the attitude object based on their attitude. For example, a person who has a positive attitude towards English (affective and cognitive components) might frequently use English in speaking, indicating a good conative component. This component reflects the practical manifestation of attitudes in real-world behavior. It is influenced not only by an individual's beliefs and emotions but also by external factors such as social norms, perceived utility, and opportunities to act. A strong conative component is often the result of both favorable cognitive and affective components, leading to consistent and proactive engagement with the attitude object.

#### 1.4.4 Factors Shaping Language Attitude

Factors influencing language attitude can be categorized into four main aspects (Jendra, 2010 as cited in Alfian, 2021): the prestige and power of the language, social factors, historical background of nations, and the language internal system.

1. **The prestige and power of the language:** The prestige and power of a language often influence an individual's attitude towards it. Languages that are associated with power, such as English, are often considered more prestigious and desirable to learn. This is because they are often associated with economic and social success, as well as access to global communication and opportunities. On the other hand, languages that are considered less prestigious or powerful may be perceived as less valuable and less likely to be learned or used.
2. **Social factors:** Socio-demographic variables, such as age, education, and social class, can also influence an individual's language attitudes. For example, younger individuals may be more likely to have positive attitudes towards learning new languages, while older individuals may

have more negative attitudes due to their established language habits and preferences. Education and social class can also play a role in shaping language attitudes, as individuals with higher levels of education and social status may be more likely to have positive attitudes towards learning and using multiple languages.

3. Historical background of nations: The historical background of nations can also influence language attitudes. Countries with a history of colonialism may have more negative attitudes towards the language of the colonizing power, while countries with a history of linguistic diversity may have more positive attitudes towards learning and using multiple languages. For instance, some Middle East people resist studying English due to its historical ties to Western colonialism. This perspective is further influenced by contemporary tensions between Western and Arabic (Muslim) cultures. Similarly, Japanese, still affected by the aftermath of atomic bombings, may not prioritize English as a global language. Consequently, both the Middle Eastern and the Japanese hold negative attitudes toward English based on historical context. A similar sentiment exists among certain Indonesians who view learning Dutch or Japanese as inappropriate due to past colonial associations.
4. The language internal system: The internal system of a language, such as its grammatical structure and vocabulary, can also influence an individual's attitudes towards it. For example, individuals who find a language's grammatical structure complex or difficult to learn may have negative attitudes towards it, while individuals who find it easy to learn may have positive attitudes towards it. English is often chosen over French or German due to its simpler gender-based nominal system. Conversely, learning Chinese can be met with negativity due to its complex total pronunciation and writing system.

#### 1.4.5 Indicators of Attitude towards English

Positive and negative indicators of attitude towards English among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners can be multifaceted, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components.

Positive Indicators:

1. High Motivation: Learners with positive attitudes are often highly motivated, both integratively and instrumentally. They may want to learn English to integrate with English-speaking communities or for practical benefits such as better job opportunities (Ahmed, 2015; Imsa-Ard, 2020).
2. Positive Beliefs: Students who believe that learning English is important and beneficial tend to have a positive attitude towards the language. They recognize its global significance and the advantages it can bring (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012; Imsa-Ard, 2020).
3. Interest and Enjoyment: A genuine interest in the language and culture associated with English, as well as enjoyment in learning activities, are signs of a positive attitude (Getie, 2020; Imsa-Ard, 2020).
4. Desire for Interaction: Wanting to interact with native speakers and believing that such interactions can improve proficiency indicates a positive attitude (Imsa-Ard, 2020).
5. Positive Classroom Behavior: Engaging actively in class, paying attention, and participating in discussions are behavioral indicators of a positive attitude (Getie, 2020; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010).
6. Positive Self-Perception: Learners with positive attitudes often have confidence in their ability to learn and use English effectively (Getie, 2020; Le & Le, 2022).

Negative Indicators:

1. Lack of Motivation: A lack of interest or motivation to learn English, often due to not understanding its importance, can indicate a negative attitude (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012).
2. Negative Beliefs: Believing that English is not necessary or important, or that it is too difficult to learn, can reflect a negative attitude (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012; Getie, 2020).
3. Anxiety and Discomfort: Feelings of anxiety or discomfort when using or learning English suggest a negative attitude (Imsa-Ard, 2020; Le & Le, 2022).
4. Avoidance Behaviors: Avoiding participation in class, not doing homework, or not seeking help when needed are signs of a negative attitude (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010).
5. Negative Influence of Peers: If peer groups do not value English, this can negatively affect a learner's attitude towards the language (Getie, 2020).

6. Perceived Irrelevance: If students do not see English as relevant to their personal goals or interests, they may develop a negative attitude (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012; Getie, 2020).
7. Teacher Influence: Negative attitudes can be reinforced by unenthusiastic or ineffective teachers, or teaching methods that do not engage students (Getie, 2020; Le & Le, 2022).

#### 1.4.6 Studying Attitudes

Studying attitudes, which are "psychological constructs" (Garrett, 2010:20), or mental states, is a challenging task. It's crucial to remember that the attitudes reported might not accurately represent the actual views of the group being studied. As Baker (1992:19) suggests, respondents might adjust their attitudes to appear more agreeable or desirable to their audience in interviews and questionnaires. Moreover, the researcher and the research's purpose might influence the respondents. Therefore, it's always important to compare reported and observed attitudes.

There are three common methods for studying attitudes: societal treatment studies, direct measures, and indirect measures (Garrett, 2010). The first two methods use a variety of techniques to study language attitudes, while the indirect method mainly relies on the matched guise technique. Each method is used with varying frequency. Societal treatment studies infer participants' attitudes from sources like policy documents, media scripts, and advertisements. Direct measures involve asking participants straightforward questions about their language attitude, also known as evaluation preference (Garrett, 2010). This is typically done through questionnaires, interviews, and surveys. Indirect methods, on the other hand, determine the language attitudes of participants using techniques that avoid direct questions, with the matched guise technique being the most common. In terms of usage, the direct approach is the most frequently used technique, followed by the indirect approach, with societal treatment studies being less commonly used in most language attitude research (Garret, 2010:51)

#### 1.4.7 Identity Construction in EFL Learning

The construction of identity is a central theme in the field of language education, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Understanding how learners develop, negotiate, and adapt their identities within the language learning process is essential for fostering meaningful and transformative educational experiences. Identity is no longer viewed as static or fixed but as dynamic, multifaceted, and continuously evolving through social interactions and contextual influences. In EFL contexts, learners' identities are shaped by their engagement with the target language, their aspirations for the future, and the sociocultural and historical contexts in which they learn. This section explores the critical components of identity construction in EFL learning, examining definitions, types of identity, the role of language learning, poststructuralist perspectives, and the influence of imagined identities and investment. Together, these concepts provide a comprehensive understanding of how identity is intricately connected to the language learning journey.

#### 1.4.8 Defining Learner's Identity

In the 1970s and 1980s, it was widely accepted that 'identities' were fixed ideas related to personalities, learning styles, and motivation. However, newer studies on language learner identities have discovered that they are fluid, context - dependent, and context - producing (Norton, 1997). Learners' identity could be defined as a multifaceted concept that involves changes in the learner's sense of self and adaptation to various learning contexts. Bell & Bell (2020) proposed a definition of transformative learning that encompasses changes in the identity of the learner. This definition aligns with the idea that learner identity is not fixed but evolves through experiences and adaptations to different learning situations. Norton & Toohey (2011) emphasized the role of investment in shaping learner identity, highlighting how learners construct their identities through their experiences and interactions within the learning environment. Learners negotiate and re-negotiate their identities through their interactions with others in different contexts. Their investment in learning a language is mediated by their identities and the extent to which they perceive learning the language as contributing to their desires for the future (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

#### 1.4.9 Types of Identity

Bichani (2015) identified various types of identities. These include, but are not restricted to, personal, social, ethnic, and religious identities, which are outlined briefly as follows:

1. Personal Identity: This refers to the unique mix of traits, beliefs, and desires that an individual identifies as important. These can be things that an individual is proud of, elements that are essential to their daily functioning, or characteristics so deeply ingrained



that changing them would seem nearly impossible. Personal identity is shaped by factors such as age, sex, family, work, and education.

2. **Social Identity:** This is a group identity that reflects an individual's sense of belonging to a certain group, along with the attitudes and emotions that come with this sense of belonging.
3. **Ethnic Identity:** This is an individual's connection to a social group that shares a common ancestral heritage. A similar concept applies to cultural identity, which is defined as the relationship between an individual and members of a specific ethnic group who are believed to share a common history, language, and way of understanding the world. Ethnic and cultural identities are often considered interchangeable and are referred to as ethno-cultural identity, which involves self-identification, feelings of belonging and commitment to a group, shared values, and attitudes towards one's own ethnic group.
4. **Religious Identity:** This type of identity becomes significant when individuals or groups choose to identify themselves by their religion rather than their ethnicity or nationality. This was particularly common in 14th-century Europe, especially in rural areas where people often identified themselves as either Jews or Christians.

#### 1.4.10 Identity in Language Learning

Norton (2000) describes identity as the way a person perceives their connection to the world, how this connection is built over time and space, and how the person envisions future possibilities. Identity, as Gandana (2008) explains, covers all aspects of life, including personal, social, cultural, and political, and it includes a broad spectrum of terms and meanings. The process of forming an identity involves interpreting our experiences as part of social groups (Wenger, 1998)..

Identity is not isolated, fixed, or unchanging; instead, it develops and shifts over time, and it involves ways of connecting oneself to the world and others (Lamb, 2011). Gandana (2008) summarizes Gomzina's theory of identity formation, explaining that individuals appear to have a 'core' - a static component - while everything else around them is dynamic and continuously changing, depending on the situation. These contexts can provide individuals with different life interpretations as they interact with others, altering their worldview in a dynamic and ongoing manner. Furthermore, Lie (2017) proposes that proficiency in a foreign language should serve as "a bridge to explore the wider world and reflect on our own identity with more mature perspectives".

Language plays a central role in identity construction, serving as a tool through which individuals can signal their affiliations, differentiate themselves from others, and navigate social hierarchies. Linguistic choices, such as dialect, accent, and style, become markers of identity, aligning speakers with specific social groups or cultural norms (Eckert & Rickford, 2001). These choices are not merely about communication but are deeply embedded in the social fabric, reflecting and reinforcing social structures and power dynamics. In multilingual contexts, language attitudes can influence how individuals construct their identities in relation to different languages, with implications for social integration and cultural affiliation (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The prestige associated with a language may lead individuals to adopt it as part of their identity, reflecting broader social values and power dynamics.

In communities where English is not commonly used, students are likely to encounter it only in the classroom through the school curriculum (Wirza, 2018). Given that English is typically taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, it's understandable that most English instruction and learning occur in the classroom rather than in daily communication (Sulistiyo, 2016). Lobaton (2012) viewed the classroom interaction is the main setting where language learners form their identities. This setting provides both the social context and the means for students to develop their individual identities and strive to redefine themselves within their community: the community of EFL students.

Various methods are employed for teaching and learning a foreign language. Language teachers are responsible for interpreting and implementing language policies that influence their teaching methods. They also convert the national language policy into a school or classroom policy that fits the local teaching context (Widodo, 2016). Teachers play a crucial role in creating an active, unrestricted learning environment that helps students foster positive attitudes towards learning English (Gömleksiz, 2010). Students need extensive exposure to English to participate in English discursive activities (Wirza, 2018). If teachers aspire for their students to see themselves as proficient second language users in the future, or to spark the vision and construct an ideal second

language self, they need to enable students to involve their current selves and identities in their second language interactions with others (Ushioda, 2011).

#### 1.4.11 *Poststructuralist Theory*

Poststructuralist theory views identity as multiple, contradictory, dynamic, and changing across time and space (Norton, 2000). It rejects the notion of a fixed, unitary identity and sees identity construction as an ongoing process of negotiation through language and social interaction (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Morgan (2007) explains that poststructuralists look at language as a tool to differentiate or categorize identities such as gender and ethnicity, which are inherently “multiple, contradictory, and subject to change across settings and through interaction” (p. 949).

In addition, power always comes in between language/identity relations, and thus may bring about marginal positions. More recently, Norton and Toohey (2011) characterized identity as “fluid, context-dependent, and context-aims producing, in particular historical and cultural circumstances” (p. 419). Therefore, employing the poststructural and sociocultural framework, the present study of L2 identity (or learner identity) follows Norton (2000) to define identity as “the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future.” (p. 4)

Studies have applied poststructuralist theory to examine language learners' identity construction and negotiation. Peirce (1995) studied immigrant women in Canada and proposed the concept of investment to capture how power relations, identity and language learning are interlinked. Norton (2000) illustrated how the language learner Martina resisted marginalization by reframing her identity position. Pavlenko (2001) analyzed cross-cultural autobiographies, showing how writers negotiated new identities through language. Kinginger (2004) tracked how the learner Alice's identity evolved over four years of learning French. These studies demonstrate that language learning involves identity reconstruction as learners navigate diverse contexts and power dynamics

#### 1.4.12 *Imagined Identities and Investment*

The term “imagined identities” refers to the ideal self that second language (L2) learners aspire to become in the future (Norton & Toohey, 2011). This imagined identity is a critical factor that guides learners to make a learning investment that they believe would reward them with the social capital they yearn for (Kanno & Norton, 2003). The concept of imagined identities is linked to the notion of imagined communities proposed by Benedict Anderson. An imagined community refers to a group of people, not immediately tangible, with which one can have a sense of belonging. For language learners, imagined communities represent the communities they envision themselves as part of through their language learning (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). Learners' imagined identities are their idealized visions of themselves as future speakers of the target language within these imagined communities (Norton, 2013). These imagined identities guide learners' investment in the language practices they believe will help them achieve their desired identities and gain access to the imagined communities (Norton, 2001)

The theory “investment” is a sociological construct that connects a learner's desire and commitment to learn a language with their changing identities (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Investment highlights the socially and historically constructed relationship between the language learner and the target language. Learners invest in a language because they perceive it will help them acquire valuable symbolic and material resources that increase their cultural capital and social power. However, the extent to which learners can invest and claim legitimacy as speakers depends on how power relations are negotiated in different contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Norton argues that while learners may be highly motivated, they may resist opportunities to practice the target language in contexts where they feel marginalized or positioned unequally (Norton, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015). Investment highlights how relations of power can enable or constrain learners' access to the imagined communities they desire to join through language learning (Tamimi Sa'd, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015).

The concept of investment is closely linked to imagined identities and imagined communities. These imagined identities guide learners' investment in language practices they believe will help them achieve their desired identities and gain access to the imagined communities (Tamimi Sa'd, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015). For example, English learners may invest in the language to imagine themselves as part of global professional or academic communities (Tamimi Sa'd, 2017; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007)

Numerous studies have explored the role of investment and imagined identities in language learning across diverse contexts. For example, research by Norton (2000) with immigrant women

in Canada showed how their investment in English learning was shaped by their imagined identities as future workers, community members, or parents. In Taiwan, Wu (2017) found that English learners' imagined identities, such as becoming English teachers or experts, influenced their investment choices at different learning stages. Learners with limited imagined identities as mere English learners confined their investment to formal classroom contexts, while those with more extended imagined identities invested in both formal and informal learning opportunities. Pavlenko and Norton (2007) discussed how imagined communities and identities mediate the learning of English as an international language, considering postcolonial, global, ethnic, multilingual, and gendered identity clusters.

These studies revealed several key findings. One of them is that learners' investment in language learning is influenced by their imagined identities and desired memberships in imagined communities (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; Norton, 2001; Norton, 2000; Wu, 2017). Another one is that imagined identities are not fixed but dynamic, changing across time and space, and shaped by learners' social, cultural, and historical contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2013; Wu, 2017). Other findings include power relations and positioning in different contexts can either enable or constrain learners' investment and access to imagined communities (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2000; Wu, 2017) and that learners may resist language learning practices that conflict with their imagined identities or position them in undesired ways (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Wu, 2017).

#### 1.4.13 Identity Construction within Indonesian EFL Context

In Indonesia, English is categorized as a foreign language (EFL) since English does not hold the status of an official language and is not considered a vital medium for communication within Indonesian society. The introduction of English in Indonesia has been influenced by various factors, including the need for international communication and the influence of globalization. This has led to a situation where English is not only a tool for communication but also plays a part in shaping the identities of Indonesian learners and users of the language.

Learning a new language like English is a profound experience that involves the whole person - cognitively, emotionally, and in terms of identity construction. For Indonesian learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), this process of identity negotiation and reconstruction is complex and dynamic.

Several key points emerge from the research on how English language learning shapes learner identities in Indonesia:

1. **Early Experiences Shape Initial Identities**  
The initial phases of identity construction are marked by students' early experiences with English, often as a school subject associated with struggles, leading to a false or negative sense of identity as an English learner (Wirza, 2018; Abdusyukur, 2022).
2. **Socio-Cultural Factors Influence Identity**  
Learners' identities are shaped by the socio-cultural context, including power relations, cultural ideologies, and the perceived status of English versus local languages. Their national, ethnic, and linguistic identities interact with their identity as English learners (Wirza, 2017; Abdusyukur, 2022).
3. **Classroom as Site of Identity Negotiation**  
For many Indonesian EFL learners, the classroom is the primary site for identity construction and negotiation through interactions with teachers, peers, and materials. Learners navigate tensions between investment in English and preserving local identities (Wirza, 2018; Abdusyukur, 2022).
4. **Native Speaker Ideologies Persist**  
Despite the rise of Global Englishes perspectives, native speaker ideologies and the native/non-native dichotomy still significantly impact Indonesian EFL learners' identities and self-perceptions (Ubaidillah et al., 2023). For instance, a non-native English speaker might feel inferior to native speakers, affecting their confidence in using English.
5. **Role of Teachers and Pedagogy**  
EFL teachers play a crucial role in shaping learner identities through their own identities, ideologies, and pedagogical practices like use of L1, cultural content, and teaching materials (Abdusyukur 2022; Ubaidillah et al., 2023).
6. **Transnational Experiences Reshape Identities**  
For some learners, experiences abroad or in multilingual contexts lead to reconstructing identities in relation to English as an international language (Wirza, 2017).



#### 1.4.14 Rotenese EFL Learners

The Rotenese EFL students come from Rote Island in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, a region known for its rich cultural heritage and linguistic diversity. The Rotenese language, part of the Austronesian language family, includes several dialects such as Ringgou, Karbafo, Pada, Baa, Dengka-Oenale and Thie (Kemdikbud, n.d.). The traditional culture of the Rotenese is symbolized by the ti'i langga, a traditional hat with a horn-like protrusion, and the sasando, a musical instrument made from palm leaves (Wikipedia, 2024).

As EFL learners, Rotenese undergraduate students bring this distinct cultural and linguistic heritage to their English language learning experience. Their attitudes towards English and their identity construction as EFL learners are likely influenced by the interplay between their Rotenese background and the new language and culture they are engaging with.

However, there is currently a gap in research on the specific experiences, attitudes, and identity constructions of Rotenese EFL learners. While some studies have explored language attitudes and identity among Indonesian EFL learners more broadly, the unique context of Rotenese students remains understudied.

Investigating these learners' experiences can shed light on the complex dynamics of language, culture, and identity in the context of EFL learning for students from indigenous ethnic backgrounds in Indonesia. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing culturally responsive EFL pedagogies that cater to the diverse needs and perspectives of learners from different ethnic groups within Indonesia's multicultural society.

#### 1.4.15 Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by three main theories: Language Attitude Theory, Poststructuralist Theory, and the theory of Imagined Identities and Investments.

1. Language Attitude Theory provides a lens to investigate the attitudes of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners towards English. This theory will guide the formulation of semi-structured interview questions aimed at understanding the learners' feelings, motivations, and beliefs about English.
2. Poststructuralist Theory offers a perspective on the fluid and multiple identities of individuals. This study will utilize this theory to explore how EFL learners' attitudes towards English contribute to their identity construction. The learners' discourse about English, as elicited through the interviews, is viewed as a form of identity construction that is continually shaped and reshaped.
3. The theory of Imagined Identities and Investments posits that learners' investments in a language are influenced by their imagined future selves. This study will examine whether the EFL learners' attitudes towards English are shaped by their imagined identities. The interplay between attitudes, imagined identities, and investments will be explored to gain a deeper understanding of the identity construction process among EFL learners.

#### 1.4.16 Previous Studies

The field of language attitudes and identity construction among EFL learners has been explored by various researchers, each contributing unique insights and perspectives. This section provides a review of four significant studies in this area.

1. Peters (2016) conducted a case study investigating the perceptions of two multilingual and multicultural L1 attritors concerning language attitudes, emotion words, and identity construction. The study collected data through extensive discourse analysis via a video recorded Oral Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interview. The results provided qualitative evidence to the current gaps in existing literature, showing how perceptions among multilingual individuals are expressed into constructing unique individual and social identities that are constantly changing or evolving. This study is particularly relevant as it shares a similar research question with the current study, exploring how attitudes towards language influence identity construction. However, the variables differ as Peters (2016) focused on multilingual and multicultural L1 attritors, while the current study focuses on the Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners at Nusa Cendana University.
2. Abdusyukur (2022) conducted a narrative-based case study investigating how the learning of English has constructed the learner identity of two Indonesian postgraduate students who graduated from the English Education Department. The study confirmed the notion of complex, multilayered, and multifaceted identities proved by the narratives that emerged from the participants' lived English learning experiences.

3. Lou (2022) conducted a study focused on the narrative cases of two EFL students in the bilingual higher education project, revealing their identity changes throughout the project from a poststructural perspective. The study shows that identities are multiple, dynamic and contradictory, both emergent in changing sociocultural contexts and driven by individuals' own agency.
4. Ramadhan (2023) aimed to know how learners' identities formed and constructed from individuals with different sociocultural backgrounds. The study investigated how Indonesian undergraduate students' sociocultural background constructed their identities as English language learners. The study found that the participant learner's identity was constructed not only by the assumed one part of identity (Institutional identity), but all four identities are interconnected (Nature, Institutional, Discourse, and Affinity Identity).

Despite the valuable contributions of existing studies, gaps in the literature remain. These studies have explored the construction of identities, but they have not sufficiently focused on how these identities are influenced by changing attitudes towards English. This study aims to address these gaps by focusing on the Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners, exploring the language attitudes and their dynamic nature of identity construction.

This research addresses a gap in the literature by focusing on the attitudes and identity construction of Rotenese EFL learners, an underexplored group in Indonesian EFL studies. The findings aim to contribute to the development of culturally responsive teaching strategies and provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by learners with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Understanding the dynamics of language attitudes and identity is crucial for enhancing language education practices. For Rotenese learners, these aspects are intertwined with their cultural identity and personal aspirations, making it essential to consider them when designing instructional methods. This study also has implications for fostering positive attitudes and identity development in multilingual and multicultural settings.

This study focuses on undergraduate Rotenese students in the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University. It examines their attitudes toward English and how these attitudes shape their identity construction. The study employs a qualitative research design with semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection.

However, the study is limited by its small sample size, consisting of five participants, which may not represent all Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners. Additionally, the findings are context-specific and may not be generalizable to broader populations.

## **2 Research Method (bold, 12 pt)**

This study employed a mixed-method research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the attitudes of Rotenese undergraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners from the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University and explore how these attitudes influence their identity construction. Specifically, the case study approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of the learners' experiences within their real-life educational context. Quantitative data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire, which assessed the cognitive, affective, and conative components of the learners' attitudes toward English. The questionnaire also covered identity construction themes, including self-perception, cultural identity, and imagined identities and investment.

Qualitative data were obtained using semi-structured interviews, conducted individually with the participants. These interviews delved deeper into the learners' attitudes, motivations, and identity construction processes, complementing the quantitative findings with richer, context-specific insights. Both offline and online interview formats were used, depending on the availability and preferences of the participants. The interviews were recorded (with consent) and transcribed for thematic analysis.

The research was conducted at the English Education Study Program at Nusa Cendana University in Kupang, Indonesia. This location was chosen for its relevance to the study and the researcher's familiarity with the environment, enabling more nuanced data collection and analysis. The participants consisted of five undergraduate students of Rotenese ethnicity, each representing different academic years in the program to capture a range of perspectives. A first-year student

contributed insights as a new learner, while second-, third-, and fourth-year students provided perspectives shaped by their varying levels of experience in the program.

The selection of five participants followed Nielsen's (1993) assertion that five subjects are sufficient to uncover the majority of key insights in qualitative research. Adding more participants often results in diminishing returns, where additional insights become fewer and less significant relative to the increased effort and resources required. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of each participant's experiences while maintaining the study's focus and manageability.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data from the Likert scale were analyzed by calculating percentages for each response type, providing a measurable overview of the learners' attitudes. For negative statements in the questionnaire, responses such as "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" were interpreted as indicators of positive attitudes due to reverse polarity. Qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved familiarization with the data, coding, and identifying patterns to generate meaningful themes related to the research questions.

The research procedure began with the preparation of instruments, including the Likert scale questionnaire and interview guide. Following participant selection, data collection was carried out through the administration of the questionnaire and interviews. The analysis phase integrated findings from both methods, enabling a triangulated understanding of the learners' attitudes and identity construction. While the study provided detailed insights into the experiences of the five Rotenese learners, its findings are context-specific and may not be generalizable to all EFL learners.

### 3 Research Findings and Discussion (bold, 12 pt)

#### 3.1 Research Findings (Times New Romance Font Size 12, Bold)

##### 3.1.1 *Learners' Attitudes Toward English*

This section explores the participants' attitudes toward learning English, focusing on their beliefs, feelings, and actions related to the language. Attitudes are categorized into three components: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive component reflects the participants' perceptions of the importance and benefits of learning English. The affective component captures their emotional responses, such as enjoyment and pride in learning English. The conative component evaluates their behavioral tendencies, including their efforts to use and practice English.

Table 3.1 summarizes the participants' responses to a Likert scale questionnaire designed to assess these components. By examining their attitudes holistically, this section aims to provide insights into how their perceptions, emotions, and actions shape their overall language learning experience.

Table 3.1 Participants' Responses of Likert Scale Questionnaire on Language Attitude

No	Statement	Nick	Angel	Allan	Mirma	Endang
<b>Cognitive Component</b>						
1	I believe that mastering English can provide advantages in the era of globalization.	A	SA	SA	SA	SA
2	I think that knowing English will help me in my future career.	SA	A	SA	SA	A
3	I believe that English is a valuable skill for international communication.	A	A	SA	SA	SA
4	I think that English is an interesting language to learn.	A	N	SA	SA	SA
5	I believe that mastering English will enhance my social status.	A	N	SA	D	SA
<b>Affective Component</b>						
6	I enjoy learning English.	A	N	A	A	A
7	I feel happy when I attend English classes.	A	N	SA	N	A
8	I feel proud when I can speak English.	SA	SA	SA	A	SA

9	I feel anxious when I have to speak English in public.	N	A	D	N	A
10	I am motivated to learn English because I like the culture of English-speaking countries.	D	D	N	N	N
<b>Conative Component</b>						
11	I often use English in my daily conversations.	A	N	A	N	D
12	I actively seek opportunities to practice English outside the classroom.	A	N	SA	A	N
13	I participate actively in English class activities.	A	N	A	N	N
14	I use various resources, such as movies, music, and other media, to improve my English skills.	A	SA	SA	SA	SA
15	I plan to continue learning English even after I graduate.	A	A	SA	SA	SA

Based on the Likert scale results, the participants exhibit varying levels of engagement and motivation towards learning English. To calculate the percentage for each Likert scale category, the formula used was:

$$\text{Percentage} = \left( \frac{\text{Number of responses in a category}}{\text{Total number of responses}} \right) \times 100$$

In the cognitive component, Nick holds positive beliefs about the utility of English, with 80% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing. Angel's beliefs are more mixed, with 40% agreeing, 40% neutral, and 20% strongly agreeing. Allan strongly agrees 100% with the cognitive value of English, showing no disagreement. Mirma largely believes in English's utility, with 80% strongly agreeing but 20% disagreeing. Endang also shares strong beliefs, with 80% strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing.

In terms of the affective component, Nick shows a positive but somewhat distanced emotional connection to English, with 40% agreeing, 20% strongly agreeing, 20% neutral, and 20% disagreeing. Angel's emotional involvement is low, with 20% strongly agreeing, 20% agreeing, 40% neutral, and 20% disagreeing. Allan is highly positive emotionally towards English, with 40% strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing, his response to Q9 indicates no public speaking anxiety (20% disagreeing in Q9 is interpreted positively). Mirma's emotional response is mostly neutral, with 40% agreeing and 60% neutral. Endang exhibits strong emotional positivity towards English, with 20% strongly agreeing and 60% agreeing, though there is some neutral response as well.

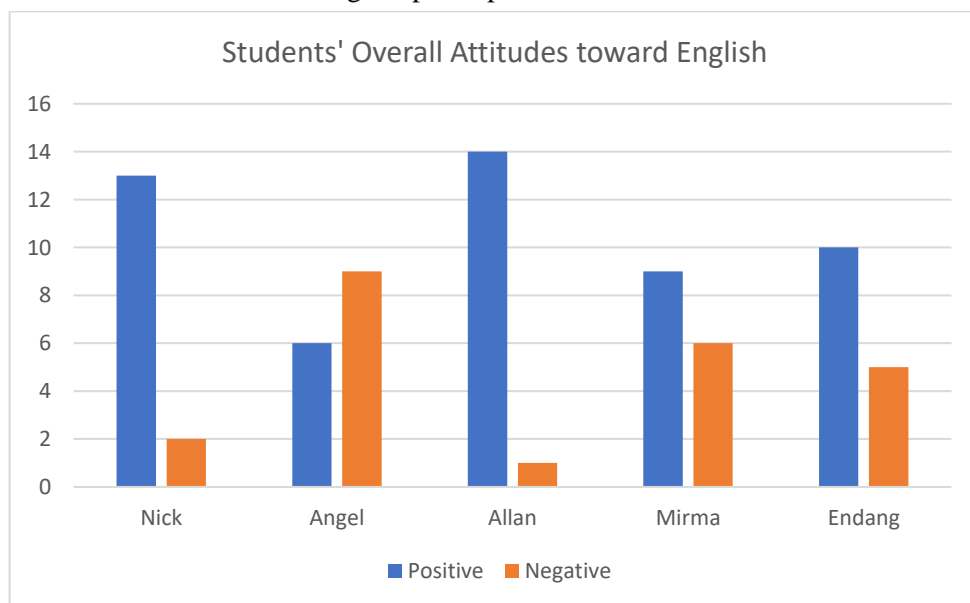
Regarding the conative component, Nick shows complete engagement in practicing and using English, with 100% agreeing. Angel demonstrates low active participation, with 60% neutral and 20% agreeing and strongly agreeing, respectively. Allan is highly engaged, with 60% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing, showing strong involvement. Mirma has partial engagement, with 40% strongly agreeing, 20% agreeing, and 40% neutral. Endang shows moderate engagement, with 40% strongly agreeing, 40% neutral, and 20% disagreeing, indicating limited daily use of English.

Allan demonstrates the strongest engagement across all components of language learning, followed by Nick. Both have very positive attitudes towards English, with Allan showing the most confidence and engagement. Endang, while not as strong as Allan or Nick, still shows a high level of positive engagement, particularly in the cognitive component, where she strongly agrees 80% of the time. However, her emotional involvement and active participation are mixed, with moderate levels of agreement and some neutral responses. The three women—Angel, Mirma, and Endang—show more varied or mixed responses, particularly in emotional involvement and active



participation, with Angel and Mirma displaying lower levels of engagement compared to Endang, who remains more consistent in her responses.

To summarize the learners' attitudes toward English language learning, their responses align with various positive and negative indicators. A positive attitude is characterized by high motivation, positive beliefs about the benefits of English, interest and enjoyment in learning, active classroom engagement, and confidence in their ability to use the language. Conversely, a negative attitude is marked by a lack of motivation, negative beliefs about the importance of English, anxiety or discomfort when learning or using it, avoidance of participation, and a perception of the language as irrelevant to personal goals. The following chart presents a clear division of the overall attitudes among the participants.



After conducting interviews as a follow-up to the questionnaire, the learners' attitudes toward English reveal a spectrum of perspectives:

1. Nick (1st year student): Nick views English positively, seeing it as valuable for his studies and career. Although he disagrees that his motivation comes from an interest in English-speaking cultures, his active efforts to practice and improve his skills reflect his positive outlook and determination.
2. Angel (2nd-year student)  
Angel has mixed feelings. She knows English is helpful but feels less excited because of poor teaching methods and peer pressure. This makes her less confident.
3. Allan (3rd-year student)  
Allan has a positive attitude. He believes English is important for his career. He enjoys learning and joins class activities actively.
4. Mirma (4th-year student)  
Mirma has mixed feelings. She knows English is important but feels shy when compared to others who are better. This stops her from joining activities confidently.
5. Endang (4th-year student)  
Endang also has mixed feelings. She understands the benefits of English but feels nervous using it in public. She is careful in class and daily conversations.

### 3.1.2 Identity Construction Based on Attitudes

This section explores how learning English influences participants' self-perception and cultural identity. Table 3.2 highlights their responses to a Likert scale questionnaire, examining how English impacts their confidence, sense of belonging, and future aspirations. The findings reveal varying degrees of identity shifts and cultural integration as participants engage with the language.

**Table 3.2 Participants' Responses of Likert Scale Questionnaire on Identity Construction**

No	Statement	Nick	Angel	Allan	Mirma	Endang
<b>Self-Perception</b>						
1	Learning English has changed the way I see myself.	A	A	SA	A	SA
2	I feel like a different person when I speak English.	A	SA	SA	N	N
3	I feel more confident in my abilities when I use English.	A	N	SA	N	N
<b>Cultural Identity</b>						
4	Learning English has influenced my cultural identity.	A	A	SA	D	A
5	I see myself as part of the global community because I can speak English.	A	A	SA	A	A
6	I feel a sense of belonging to the English-speaking community.	A	N	SA	A	A
7	I am starting to see myself as an English speaker now compared to the past.	A	N	SA	N	A
8	Speaking English allows me to stand out as a global-minded Rotenese person.	A	N	SA	A	A
9	No matter how my English develops, my core Rotenese identity remains constant.	SA	SA	SA	SA	SA
<b>Imagined Identity and Investment</b>						
10	I imagine myself as a fluent English speaker in the future.	A	SA	SA	A	A
11	I have a clear idea of the kind of English user I want to become.	A	A	SA	SA	A
12	I spend time and effort learning English to reach my future goals	A	N	SA	A	A
13	I keep learning English even when it's hard because it's important for my future.	A	A	SA	SA	SA
14	The social and cultural contexts I am in shape how much I invest in learning English.	A	A	N	A	SA
15	I see learning English as a way to change my identity and future opportunities.	SA	SA	SA	SA	SA

Based on the Likert scale results, Nick consistently agrees (100%) that learning English has improved how he sees himself. Angel has mixed responses, with 33.3% Strongly Agree, 33.3% Agree, and 33.3% Neutral, showing some uncertainty about English's impact on her self-perception. Allan strongly agrees 100%, showing full confidence in the positive effect of English on his self-view. Mirma is mostly neutral (66.7%) and agrees 33.3%, suggesting limited impact on her self-perception. Endang has a mix of responses, with 33.3% Strongly Agree and 66.7% Neutral, showing moderate influence on her confidence.

In the Cultural Identity theme, Nick's responses are mostly positive, with 16.67% Strongly Agree and 83.3% Agree, indicating a strong connection between English and his cultural identity. Angel's answers are more varied, with 16.67% Strongly Agree, 33.3% Agree, and 50% Neutral, showing moderate impact. Allan strongly agrees 100%, indicating full alignment with how English shapes his cultural identity. Mirma has mixed opinions, with 16.67% Strongly Agree,

50% Agree, 16.67% Neutral, and 16.67% Disagree, reflecting some uncertainty. Endang mostly agrees, with 16.67% Strongly Agree and 83.3% Agree, showing a strong influence of English on her cultural identity.

For Imagined Identity and Investment, Nick is highly positive, with 16.67% Strongly Agree and 83.3% Agree, showing clear goals to improve his English. Angel has mixed but mostly positive responses, with 33.33% Strongly Agree, 50% Agree, and 16.67% Neutral, reflecting some uncertainty about her future identity as an English speaker. Allan strongly agrees 83.3% and agrees 16.67%, showing high commitment to improving his English. Mirma evenly splits between Strongly Agree (50%) and Agree (50%), showing strong engagement. Endang has 50% Strongly Agree and 50% Agree, reflecting clear motivation to reach her English-learning goals.

Allan shows the strongest results, with 100% Strongly Agree in both self-perception and cultural identity, and 83.3% Strongly Agree in imagined identity and investment. Nick follows, with full agreement in self-perception (100%) and high agreement (83.3%) in the other two categories. Among the female participants, Endang displays stronger positivity, especially in cultural identity (83.3% Agree) and imagined identity (50% Strongly Agree). Angel and Mirma show more mixed responses. Angel has Neutral answers ranging from 33.3% to 50%, while Mirma is mostly Neutral (66.7%) in self-perception but shows stronger agreement in imagined identity. Overall, Allan stands out as the most confident and invested participant, followed by Nick and then Endang, with Angel and Mirma showing more variability in their responses.

1. Nick (1st Year Student): Nick has a positive attitude towards English. He thinks English is important for learning and future careers. He enjoys learning the language and finds ways to practice it in his daily life. For example, he likes speaking in English, watching English movies, and joining discussions in class. Nick works hard because he believes that English will help him achieve success and personal growth.
  - a. Perceived Benefits and Future Opportunities: Nick thinks English is important for his future career. This belief strengthens his identity as someone who is ambitious and focused on success.
  - b. Personal Enjoyment and Pride: Nick finds learning English enjoyable. He feels proud of the progress he has made, which makes him confident as a learner.
  - c. Active Engagement and Usage: Nick actively uses English in different situations, showing his identity as someone who is eager to learn and improve.
2. Angel (2nd Year Student): Angel has mixed feelings about English. She understands that knowing English is helpful, but her interest has decreased. This is because of teaching methods she does not like and peer pressure that affects her motivation. Angel practices English only sometimes and often feels nervous when using it in unfamiliar situations. These challenges affect her confidence as an English learner.
  - a. Perceived Benefits and Future Opportunities: Angel understands that being good at English can help her in the future, but she finds it hard to stay motivated.
  - b. Social Status and Identity: Even though she feels unsure, Angel knows that being good at English is important socially. This shapes her identity as someone who wants to be better but faces challenges.
  - c. Anxiety and Overcoming Challenges: Angel's hesitation and lack of confidence show that she struggles with seeing herself as a capable English learner.
3. Allan (3rd Year Student): Allan has a strong and positive attitude towards English. He believes it is important for his career and future success. He enjoys learning English and takes

part in many activities that help him practice, like speaking in class. Allan sees English as a tool for achieving his goals, and he actively works to improve his skills.

- a. Perceived Benefits and Future Opportunities: Allan believes that learning English will help him have a successful career, which strengthens his identity as someone determined and goal-oriented.
  - b. Personal Enjoyment and Pride: He enjoys learning English and feels proud of what he has achieved. This builds his identity as a confident and motivated learner.
  - c. Active Engagement and Usage: Allan's regular participation in English-related activities shows his identity as a committed and hardworking student.
4. Mirma (4th Year Student): Mirma has mixed feelings about English. She knows it is important for her future, but she feels insecure when comparing herself to classmates who are more fluent. This insecurity makes her hesitant to join English activities or speak confidently in class. These feelings affect her progress and participation.
- a. Perceived Benefits and Future Opportunities: Mirma understands that English is important for her future, but her self-doubt stops her from fully engaging with it.
  - b. Social Status and Identity: When she compares herself to others, she feels less confident, which affects her identity as an English learner.
  - c. Anxiety and Overcoming Challenges: Her lack of confidence and hesitation limit her participation and make it harder for her to develop a strong learner identity.
5. Endang (4th Year Student): Endang also has mixed feelings about English. She knows that English is useful, but she often feels anxious when speaking it in public. This anxiety makes her avoid using English in her daily life, even though she understands its importance. Endang feels conflicted because she is interested in English-speaking cultures but struggles to practice the language.
- a. Perceived Benefits and Future Opportunities: Endang understands that English can help her in the future, but her anxiety holds her back from fully embracing it.
  - b. Anxiety and Overcoming Challenges: Endang feels nervous when speaking English, which makes it hard for her to see herself as a confident learner.
  - c. Motivation from Cultural Interest: Although she struggles, Endang shows some interest in English-speaking cultures. This adds another layer to her identity, even if it is not very visible due to her discomfort.

### **3.2 Discussion (Times New Romance Font Size 12, Bold)**

This section discusses the findings from the questionnaire and interviews, focusing on the language attitudes of Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners and their impact on identity construction. It examines the cognitive (beliefs), affective (feelings), and conative (actions) components of language attitudes. The section also explores the influence of external factors, such as the prestige of English, social influences, and learning challenges. Finally, it highlights how these attitudes shape learners' self-perception, cultural identity, imagined future selves and investment.

#### **3.2.1 Language Attitude**

Language attitude consists of cognitive, affective, and conative components (Baker, 1992) and is shaped by factors such as the language's prestige, social context, historical background, and internal system (Jendra, 2010 as cited in Alfian, 2021). The cognitive component refers to the participants' perceptions of the language's importance and relevance. The affective component refers to the participants' emotional responses to the language, such as feelings of pride and



accomplishment. The conative component refers to the participants' willingness to learn and use the language.

### 3.2.2 Cognitive Component

The cognitive component of language attitude refers to the participants' beliefs and opinions about the value and importance of English. The results show that all participants agree that mastering English can provide advantages in the era of globalization (Statement 1) and that English is a valuable skill for international communication (Statement 3). Additionally, they believe that knowing English will help them in their future careers (Statement 2). These findings suggest that the participants recognize the significance of English in the globalized world and its potential benefits for their professional development.

From the interviews, students shared more about the benefits they see in learning English. Nick, a first-year student, highlighted practical advantages like watching Hollywood films without subtitles and accessing English educational materials. Angel, a second-year student, noted the personal and social benefits of English, such as gaining confidence, cultural awareness, and better communication skills. Allan, a third-year student, appreciated the ability to access information globally, interact with people worldwide, and boost his self-esteem through learning English. Fourth-year students Mirma and Endang focused on making friends with foreigners and felt motivated by peers who are also learning English. They also emphasized how English can help them secure jobs and pursue higher education. These reflections align with the cognitive aspect of language attitudes, as students recognize the practical and personal growth opportunities English offers in a globalized world.

However, differences exist in their beliefs about English. While all students find it interesting to learn, Angel, the second-year student, expressed mixed feelings. She enjoys learning English through modern tools like movies and apps but struggles with grammar, understanding the British accent in listening exercises, and finding resources that fit her learning style. These challenges influence her neutral stance on the language.

For Statement 5, about English enhancing social status, opinions were varied. Allan, a third-year student, and Endang, a fourth-year student, strongly agreed that speaking English makes them appear smarter and more attractive, earning respect and admiration. Their views come from observing how others respond to fluent English speakers. Nick agreed but with less enthusiasm, viewing English as a way to show openness to other cultures and develop additional skills that others would respect. He also connected English to better career opportunities. In contrast, Mirma disagreed with this statement, seeing English as a practical tool rather than a means to enhance social status. She is more focused on identifying suitable jobs and advancing her career than on social recognition.

In line with Jendra's theory (2010), the students' attitudes reflect the prestige and power associated with English. The language is often linked to economic success, social recognition, and global communication. This explains Allan and Endang's strong agreement, as they see English as a way to gain respect and admiration. Nick's belief that English offers career opportunities also reflects this view. On the other hand, Mirma's focus on personal growth and skepticism about its role in social status highlights a different perspective, where practical goals take precedence over social prestige.

**Table 3.3 Comparative Analysis of Students' Cognitive Component**

Student	Year	Cognitive component
Nick	1 <sup>st</sup>	Nick sees English as a tool that can enhance his cognitive abilities and open up career opportunities. He believes that English will help his career in the future, particularly

		in his goal of becoming an English teacher and pursuing further studies. Nick believes mastering English can enhance his social status. He perceives that proficiency in English signals openness to other cultures and possession of additional skills.
<b>Angel</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Angel believes that knowing English can provide opportunities for studying abroad and improve job prospects. Despite her struggles with grammar and the British accent, she finds learning resources through movies and apps. She believes that proficiency in English can influence her social status as she shares an experience where her English skills led to an internship opportunity at a resort.
<b>Allan</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Allan believes that English proficiency is crucial for career advancement and significantly boosts job prospects. He notes that English is a global language, used in many countries, facilitating international communication and providing access to knowledge and research. He believes that proficiency in English significantly influences social status, as others perceive English speakers as capable and intelligent.
<b>Endang</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Endang believes that English proficiency is crucial for career advancement and significantly boosts job prospects. She notes that English is a global language, used in many countries, facilitating international communication and providing access to knowledge and research. She believes that proficiency in English significantly influences social status, as others perceive English speakers as capable and intelligent.
<b>Mirma</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Mirma believes that English proficiency can significantly boost her career prospects and provide job opportunities. She recognizes the benefits of English proficiency, such as gaining new knowledge, making friends, and expanding her network. Her goal is to prepare herself for a future with suitable and supportive career opportunities, not to gain social recognition.

So far, the analysis has shown that students recognize the significance of English in the globalized world and its potential benefits for their professional development. However, there are differences in their beliefs about the importance of English, influenced by various factors such as challenges in learning and personal motivations.

### 3.2.3 *Affective Component*

The affective component of language attitude explores participants' emotions and feelings about English. Most participants enjoy learning English (Statement 1) and feel proud when they can speak it (Statement 3). However, there are differences in their feelings about attending English classes (Statement 2), speaking English in public (Statement 4), and being motivated by the culture of English-speaking countries (Statement 5).

Regarding Statement 2, those with neutral responses, Mirma and Angel, have mixed feelings about English class. Mirma explains that her experience depends on the lecturer and classmates. A supportive lecturer and positive class atmosphere make her feel motivated and confident, but an unsupportive lecturer or dull atmosphere leaves her stressed and insecure. Similarly, Angel mentions that her mood is influenced by her lecturer and classmates, both positively and negatively.

Endang and Nick, who agree with the statement, have generally positive feelings about English class. Endang enjoys classes where her classmates are friendly and humble, and the teacher creates an engaging atmosphere. Nick feels happy when he answers questions correctly and is praised by the teacher. For him, teacher encouragement significantly boosts his enjoyment of the class.

Allan, who strongly agrees, has a different perspective. He does not rely on teacher or classmate influence to feel happy in class. Instead, his commitment to learning drives his positive feelings. As long as he remains dedicated to his goals, the teaching environment has little impact on his emotions.

For Statement 4, Allan disagrees with feeling anxious when speaking English in public. He finds English enjoyable and considers it a second language, which gives him confidence and comfort in public speaking. His relaxed approach demonstrates his high comfort level with English, aligning with theories suggesting that positive emotions enhance language use.

Mirma and Nick hold a neutral stance. Mirma's anxiety is situational; she feels nervous in public due to concerns about making mistakes in grammar or vocabulary. However, this anxiety does not occur consistently. Nick also experiences occasional anxiety, particularly during presentations, which he manages by preparing in advance and staying calm through prayer. Both show how specific contexts influence their emotional responses and coping strategies.

Endang and Angel agree with the statement, expressing greater anxiety. Endang compares herself to peers with better grammar and pronunciation, which undermines her confidence. Angel feels nervous, especially in large groups, fearing she might make mistakes. Their anxiety stems from self-doubt and fear of being judged, creating significant barriers to using English publicly.

For Statement 5, no participants agree that they are motivated to learn English because they like the culture of English-speaking countries. Nick and Angel, who disagree, prioritize the practical benefits of English. Nick views it as essential for career success, while Angel focuses on its utility for her future goals. Both see English as a tool for achieving aspirations, with minimal interest in cultural aspects.

Allan, Mirma, and Endang remain neutral. Allan recognizes that learning English provides exposure to other cultures but views this as a secondary benefit. His primary motivation is career advancement. Mirma's interest lies more in connecting with her idols than exploring English-speaking cultures. Endang appreciates the uniqueness of the English language itself but does not feel strongly about the cultures associated with it. Their neutrality suggests they acknowledge cultural aspects but do not consider them central to their motivation for learning English.

**Table 3.4 Comparative Analysis of Students' Affective Component**

Student	Year	Affective Component
Nick	1 <sup>st</sup>	Has positive feelings about English class, motivated by teacher's support and praise. His attitude towards English learning in class can be affected by lazy or disruptive classmates. Does not feel anxious most of the time, but does feel anxious when presenting in class.
Angel	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Has mixed feelings about English class, influenced by lecturer and classmates. Feels motivated and confident when the class atmosphere is pleasant, but stressed and insecure when it is not.
Allan	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Has a positive attitude towards English, but does not mention the role of teachers and classmates in his feelings. Believes that his own commitment to learning is what matters. Does not feel anxious about speaking English in public.
Endang	4 <sup>th</sup>	Has positive feelings about English class, motivated by friendly classmates and supportive teachers. Feels anxious because she feels like her friends are more proficient in English.
Mirma	4 <sup>th</sup>	Has mixed feelings about English class, influenced by lecturer and classmates. Feels motivated and confident when the class atmosphere is pleasant, but stressed and insecure when it is not. Does not feel anxious most of the time, but does feel anxious depending on the situation.

### 3.2.4 Conative Component

The conative component of language attitude refers to the participants' intentions and behaviors towards English. For Statement 4 ("I use various resources, such as movies, music, and other media, to improve my English skills.") and Statement 5 ("I plan to continue learning English even after I graduate"), all the participants agree. The participants use a variety of learning

resources, including films, music, social media, and educational apps. Each student employs a mix of traditional and modern tools to enhance their English proficiency. They also plan to continue learning English after graduation. Nick intends to study English on his own to maintain fluency since English is not commonly used in Indonesia. Angel plans to pursue further education, possibly abroad, and will keep studying English regardless of whether she continues her studies, as it will be useful for her career. Allan aims to pursue a master's degree to deepen his understanding of English. Mirma feels her English is insufficient and plans to self-study and practice speaking with native speakers. Endang plans to become an English teacher and continue improving her skills by practicing speaking with native speakers to perfect her pronunciation.

However, Statement 1 ("I often use English in my daily conversations."), Statement 2 ("I actively seek opportunities to practice English outside the classroom."), and Statement 3 ("I participate actively in English class activities.") receive various responses.

Regarding Statement 1, Endang disagrees with using English in daily conversations. She thinks English should only be used in specific situations, like when speaking internationally. This shows that she feels it is unnecessary for regular interactions. Mirma and Angel are neutral about this. Mirma says she does not use English much because most people around her do not speak it. Angel uses English with a close friend but only in specific settings, such as on campus. Their views show that they decide how often to use English based on their personal routines and the people or situations around them.

Allan and Nick, however, agree with using English daily. Allan practices with tourists in his area and joins group calls on WhatsApp. Nick often practices by watching movies, listening to music, and speaking with friends or even to himself. Both have a positive outlook on using English in daily life, motivated by the benefits it brings.

For Statement 2, about seeking opportunities to practice English, Angel and Endang are neutral. Angel says she sometimes feels shy and lacks confidence in unfamiliar settings. She prefers practicing in a classroom and often prioritizes other activities over English practice because of her busy schedule. Endang feels that online resources make it unnecessary to look for specific opportunities, as they provide easy access to learning materials. These neutral responses reflect their individual learning styles and personal circumstances.

On the other hand, Mirma and Nick agree that actively seeking opportunities is important. Mirma finds chances to use English in work-related situations and on social media with foreigners. Nick actively seeks interactions with international friends online. Allan strongly agrees and frequently joins WhatsApp groups and connects with international friends to practice. Their actions show a strong belief in the value of looking for ways to improve English outside of class, especially for career and personal growth.

For Statement 3, about active participation in class, Endang, Mirma, and Angel have neutral feelings. Endang prefers studying on her own and thinks participating in class is not always the best way to learn. Mirma feels insecure about her English and avoids speaking up in class. Angel feels more comfortable as a passive student, taking notes instead of asking or answering questions because she lacks confidence. These neutral attitudes are linked to personal preferences, insecurities, and comfort levels.

Nick and Allan, however, agree on the importance of active participation. Nick feels that participating in class discussions helps boost his confidence and improves his English. Allan enjoys being involved in class because of his passion for the language and believes students



should engage fully in classroom activities. Their positive attitudes reflect how they see active participation as key to building skills and confidence.

In summary, while their behaviors and plans vary, all participants show dedication to improving their English. They use various resources and have clear goals for their future language learning, reflecting their unique motivations and attitudes toward the language.

**Table 3.5 Comparative Analysis of Students' Conative Component**

Student	Year	Conative Component
Nick	1 <sup>st</sup>	Uses various resources, including movies, music, and social media, to improve English skills. Plans to continue learning English after graduation. Actively seeks opportunities to practice English and participates actively in class activities.
Angel	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Uses English only with a close friend and in specific contexts. Plans to continue learning English for career purposes. Actively seeks opportunities to practice English but sometimes feels shy or lacks confidence. Participates neutrally in class activities.
Allan	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Practices English regularly with tourists and through group calls. Plans to pursue a master's degree to deepen understanding of English. Actively seeks opportunities to practice English and participates actively in class activities.
Endang	4 <sup>th</sup>	Disagrees with using English daily, believing it should be reserved for specific situations. Plans to become an English teacher and continue improving skills. Actively seeks opportunities to practice English but prefers self-study. Participates neutrally in class activities.
Mirma	4 <sup>th</sup>	Plans to self-study and practice speaking with native speakers. Actively seeks opportunities to practice English and uses various resources. Participates neutrally in class activities due to insecurity about English skills.

### 3.2.5 Factors Shaping the Larners' Language Attitudes

The findings of this study reveal that the language attitudes of Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners are shaped by a combination of factors identified in Jendra's (2010) framework. The analysis highlights the following dimensions:

#### 1. The Prestige and Power of English

English is perceived as a global language with significant social and economic value, influencing learners' attitudes positively:

- **Global Status:** Students recognize the role of English as a bridge to global opportunities. For instance, Nick views English as a tool for international communication, enabling him to connect with diverse people and cultures. Similarly, Mirma finds learning English exciting due to its potential for expanding global relationships.
- **Career and Education Opportunities:** English is linked to career advancement and access to higher education. Endang emphasizes that proficiency in English is crucial for securing jobs in international sectors, especially as a teacher. Angel sees English as a stepping stone for pursuing postgraduate studies abroad.
- **Access to Resources:** Many students, such as Nick and Endang, appreciate the access English provides to global knowledge through academic resources, online content, and media.

#### 2. Social Factors

Social influences significantly contribute to shaping learners' attitudes:

- **Family Support:** Families play a crucial role in fostering positive attitudes. Nick mentions his parents' encouragement, highlighting the emphasis on education and English as vital for future success. Angel also credits her sibling for motivating her to learn English due to its local relevance in the tourism industry.

- Peer Influence: Participation in supportive communities like "Duta Bahasa," as noted by Endang, fosters a positive learning environment and encourages English proficiency. However, some learners experience insecurity in peer interactions, particularly when surrounded by more proficient classmates. Mirma admits to feeling less confident in class due to comparisons with more advanced peers, which hinders her participation. Similarly, Endang notes her struggle with self-doubt in competitive learning settings.
- Social Recognition: Speaking English is associated with increased social prestige. Allan shares how using English makes him feel confident and respected, while Angel notes that it often changes how others perceive her, reinforcing its social value.

### 3. Historical Background of Nations

Unlike languages with colonial connotations, such as Dutch or Japanese, English is viewed as a practical and neutral global language in the Rotenese context:

- Learners, such as Nick and Mirma, focus on the benefits of English for global engagement rather than associating it with any negative historical or cultural aspects.

### 4. The Language Internal System

The internal characteristics of English also influence learners' attitudes:

- Ease of Learning: The relative accessibility of English is acknowledged. Nick appreciates how media exposure helps him practice and understand English effectively.
- Challenges in Mastery: Some students, like Angel and Mirma, struggle with grammar and pronunciation but remain motivated to overcome these difficulties through consistent practice.

These findings show that language attitudes are shaped by many factors, including the global importance of English, social influences, and practical reasons. While learners are motivated to learn English, challenges like peer insecurity, grammar, and pronunciation need attention. Providing focused support can help build their confidence and improve their skills, leading to stronger positive attitudes and better learning outcomes.

#### 3.2.6 Overall Attitude of the Learners

The learners' attitudes towards English reflect a combination of positive and negative indicators, as outlined in the literature on EFL attitudes ((Ahmed, 2015; Getie, 2020; Imsa-Ard, 2020; Le & Le, 2022; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010; Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). These include cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components, which vary across students.

#### 1. Nick (1st-Year Student)

Nick shows many positive signs of a good attitude toward English. He is highly motivated to learn, both because he values English for global communication and sees it as helpful for his future career (Ahmed, 2015; Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). He enjoys learning through activities like watching movies, talking in English, and taking part in class discussions (Getie, 2020). Nick also feels confident in his ability to improve his skills, which keeps him committed and engaged (Le & Le, 2022).

#### 2. Angel (2nd-Year Student)

Angel's feelings about English are mixed. She started with strong motivation, recognizing its benefits for work and study (Ahmed, 2015), but her interest has faded over time. Teaching styles and peer pressure have made her less enthusiastic. Angel avoids using English in unfamiliar situations, which reflects a negative attitude (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010). However, she still enjoys speaking English in

comfortable settings, showing she has some interest and a desire to interact when she feels supported (Imsa-Ard, 2020).

### 3. Allan (3rd-Year Student)

Allan has a very positive attitude toward English. He is motivated and believes English is crucial for his future career (Ahmed, 2015; Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). Allan actively practices English, both in class and in daily life, which are clear signs of a positive attitude (Getie, 2020). His confidence and enthusiasm show that he values English and sees it as a way to achieve his goals (Imsa-Ard, 2020).

### 4. Mirma (4th-Year Student)

Mirma's attitude includes both positive and negative elements. She knows English is important for her future (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012), but she feels insecure when comparing herself to classmates who are more fluent. This insecurity makes her hesitant to speak or participate in class, which are signs of a negative attitude (Le & Le, 2022; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010). Still, her understanding of English's value shows she has some motivation to improve, even if she lacks confidence (Getie, 2020).

### 5. Endang (4th-Year Student)

Endang's attitude is also mixed. She values English for its usefulness and understands its importance for her career (Zainol Abidin et al., 2012). However, she often feels nervous speaking in public, and she avoids using English in her daily life. These are signs of anxiety and negative beliefs (Imsa-Ard, 2020). Despite this, her cautious participation in class shows that she is willing to learn and improve if given the right encouragement (Getie, 2020).

#### 3.2.7 Identity Construction

The results from the Likert scale questionnaire show how identity construction is influenced by different types of identity, as explained by Bichani (2015). The analysis is organized into three major themes: self-perception, cultural identity, and imagined identity and investment. Self-perception, linked to personal identity, reflects how learners see themselves based on their language skills. Cultural identity, connected to ethnic identity, reveals how learners balance their local culture with a global perspective. Imagined identity and social identity show how learners view themselves as part of the global community, using English to achieve personal and professional goals. These themes demonstrate how language attitudes shape personal, cultural, and social identities. Each theme will be followed by insights from the follow-up semi-structured interviews with the participants.

#### 3.2.8 Self Perception

The self-perception of the participants is significantly influenced by learning English. Nick, Angel, Allan, Mirma, and Endang all agree that learning English has changed how they see themselves, with Allan and Endang strongly agreeing. This indicates a substantial impact of English learning on their self-view. However, the feeling of being a different person when speaking English varies. Nick and Angel agree, and Allan strongly agrees, while Mirma and Endang are neutral, suggesting that this transformation is more pronounced in the earlier stages of English learning. Confidence in abilities when using English shows mixed responses. Nick agrees, Allan strongly agrees, but Angel, Mirma, and Endang are neutral, indicating varying levels of confidence among more advanced students.

#### Follow-Up Interview Insights:

##### 1. Nick (1<sup>st</sup> Year Student)

Nick shared insightful perspectives during his interview, showing how learning English has changed how he sees himself and his place in the world. He described it as

putting on a new pair of glasses that let him see a much bigger picture. This analogy captures how learning English has boosted Nick's confidence and opened up new possibilities for him to connect with different cultures through media and communication. When it comes to his identity, Nick sees himself as both a Rote or Indonesian person and someone who speaks English fluently. He does not see these identities as conflicting; instead, he embraces them both, blending his cultural heritage with his language skills, even though some of his friends might find it unusual. Nick also mentioned that speaking English makes him feel different, more confident, and more connected to the global community while staying true to his roots. Despite his proficiency, Nick sometimes struggles with self-confidence when comparing his skills to those of fluent speakers. This reflects a common challenge that non-native speakers often face.

## **2. Angel (2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student)**

Angel shared her thoughts on how learning English has affected her self-image and social interactions. She said learning English has made her feel more confident and helped her connect with people from different cultures. For her, English has become a way to bridge gaps between her world and others. However, Angel also talked about some of the challenges she faces. In her local community, some people think that speaking English is a way of showing off, which makes her feel uncomfortable at times. To handle this, she switches between English and her local language depending on who she's talking to, trying to make others feel comfortable while still staying true to herself. Angel explained that she sees herself positively as someone learning English, and she values what it has taught her about diversity and culture. She also talked about how using different languages changes how she expresses her thoughts and feelings. Even though she enjoys learning English, Angel admitted that her confidence can go up and down depending on how others see her. When speaking with native English speakers, Angel sometimes feels nervous. She worries about making mistakes or not understanding them, which can make communication harder. Despite these struggles, Angel tries to stay open to learning and improving her English skills.

## **3. Allan (3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student)**

Allan shared openly about how learning English has shaped the way he sees himself and the world. He enjoys learning about different cultures through English and has even adopted some Western habits he finds interesting. He said these influences have helped him see himself as part of a global community while still holding on to his cultural roots. Allan also spoke about some of the challenges he has faced, like staying motivated and dealing with financial limits when it comes to improving his English. Even so, he continues to find a balance between his enthusiasm for learning English and staying connected to his Indonesian identity. When it comes to confidence, Allan said he feels very different depending on where and with whom he's speaking English. In public, he often feels empowered when using English, while in class, he is more focused on learning and improving. His confidence also changes based on how fluent his audience is. For example, he prefers speaking English with people who are at the same level as him, where he does not feel judged. But he also seeks out chances to practice with more fluent speakers to improve. Allan said he feels more comfortable speaking English with native speakers in casual situations, like chatting about everyday topics. However, in formal settings, he sometimes feels nervous and unsure of himself. This shows how his confidence depends on the environment and who he is talking to.



**4. Mirma (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)**

In her interview, Mirma shared thoughtful reflections on how learning English has influenced her life and shaped her sense of self. At first, she found it challenging to balance her Indonesian heritage with her growing English skills. Over time, though, she learned to embrace both sides of her identity, blending her local culture with a global perspective. While she has faced social challenges, like being teased or doubted by others, she remains positive about how English has improved her self-image. For her, using English has become a natural part of daily life, not something unusual or out of place. Mirma spoke about her mixed feelings when using English. She worries about making grammar mistakes, but she also finds that speaking the language boosts her confidence. Even though she sometimes struggles with having a limited vocabulary or needing to think quickly while speaking, she does not give up. She actively pushes herself to communicate with native speakers, showing her strong determination to grow and improve her skills.

**5. Endang (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)**

Endang spoke about how learning English has changed her perspective and helped her grow as a person. She said it has expanded her worldview, made her more confident, and given her pride in being able to communicate with people from different cultures. Reading books and watching media in English have also played a big part in helping her learn and see herself as bilingual. However, she admitted that balancing her Indonesian identity with learning English has not always been easy. There is pressure to speak English perfectly, and when she does not, it sometimes makes her feel inadequate. Still, Endang said she stays true to herself. Learning English has made her feel more confident, but she also sees herself as the same person no matter what language she speaks. Endang shared that speaking English with native speakers can make her nervous, which is something many non-native speakers experience. She believes this shared challenge shows that it's normal to feel less confident in such situations. Her perspective reflects both her realistic view of these difficulties and her determination to overcome them.

**3.2.9 Cultural Identity**

The participants generally agree that English influences their cultural identity. Nick, Angel, Allan, and Endang feel that learning English has impacted their cultural identity, but Mirma disagrees. This shows how English affects students differently. However, all participants, including Mirma, see themselves as part of a global community because they can speak English. Most participants feel a sense of belonging to the English-speaking community, though Angel is neutral. Nick, Allan, and Endang believe they now see themselves more as English speakers compared to before, but Angel and Mirma are neutral. Speaking English makes them stand out as globally minded Rotenese individuals. Nick, Allan, Mirma, and Endang agree with this idea, while Angel feels neutral. Despite these changes, all participants strongly agree that their core Rotenese identity stays the same. This shows that their cultural foundation is solid despite English's influence.

**Follow-Up Interview Insights:****1. Nick (1<sup>st</sup> Year Student)**

Nick feels that learning English has made him appreciate both his Indonesian and Rotenese cultures even more. At the same time, it helps him understand other cultures, like American or British ones. He believes learning English makes his cultural identity stronger, not weaker.

Nick's ability to communicate in English helps him feel connected to a global community, especially through social media. This connection strengthens his identity as part of the global audience. Since he started learning English in elementary school, he feels it has become an important part of his cultural identity.

Nick remembers feeling awkward when using English in the past, but now he is comfortable and sees himself as an English speaker. Speaking English helps him stand out as a globally minded Rotenese individual. It allows him to connect with people worldwide and access new opportunities. Even though he is skilled in English, Nick balances his English-speaking identity with his Rotenese roots by using his native language in appropriate situations.

**2. Angel (2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student)**

Angel notices that knowing English has influenced her lifestyle. She enjoys Western music, movies, and clothing, which has expanded her view beyond Indonesian culture. Her English skills also give her access to international information, keeping her aware of global events.

Angel uses English only in certain situations, depending on who she is speaking to. This limits her sense of belonging to the English-speaking community. For Angel, learning English feels stable and routine, as it is simply part of her studies.

Despite using English, Angel's Rotenese identity stays strong. Her cultural experiences and traditions, like attending ceremonies and speaking her native language, keep her connected to her roots. This ensures her cultural identity remains vibrant and unchanged.

**3. Allan (3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student)**

Allan, a 3rd-year student, has adopted positive habits from English-speaking cultures, such as being mindful of noise in public spaces. Engaging with English on social media contributes to his sense of global citizenship, that makes him feel connected to a broader community. Learning English alongside others also gives him a sense of belonging to a community with a shared goal—achieving fluency.

His motivation to learn English stems from the belief in its global importance, a value instilled by his teachers. Mixing languages like Indonesian, Kupang, and English gives him a sense of pride in being multilingual and feeling "cool." Allan switches between English and Rotenese depending on the situation. This balance allows him to maintain both his English-speaking identity and his Rotenese cultural identity.

**4. Mirma (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)**

Mirma strongly connects to her Rotenese identity while learning English. She enjoys learning about other cultures but stays true to her own. Using English helps her connect with people globally and make new friends, which adds to her identity as part of the English-speaking community.

Her continuous efforts to improve her English give her a sense of belonging to this community. She feels motivated by her progress, which strengthens her identity as a dedicated learner. English helps Mirma stand out as a globally minded individual. She uses it to share global ideas locally while staying connected to her Rotenese roots. However, she emphasizes the need to balance her English skills with her cultural roots, to ensure that both identities coexist equally.

**5. Endang (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)**

Endang feels that learning English has helped her engage in cross-cultural conversations, making her open to different perspectives. Speaking English gives her a

sense of belonging to the global community and allows her to communicate across cultures.

Her participation in activities like Duta Bahasa strengthens her connection to the English-speaking community. Endang's journey from feeling nervous to becoming confident in English shows her growth as a language learner.

English helps Endang stand out as a globally minded individual, giving her access to international opportunities. She balances this by using English for global interactions and Rotenese for local communication. This approach lets her navigate different linguistic contexts while maintaining a strong link to her cultural identity.

### 3.2.10 *Imagined Identity and Investment*

Participants express a strong investment in learning English, with a clear vision of becoming fluent speakers and using English to achieve future goals. Nick, Angel, Allan, Mirma, and Endang all agree or strongly agree that they imagine themselves as fluent English speakers in the future. They have a clear idea of the kind of English user they want to become, with Allan and Mirma strongly agreeing and the others agreeing. Time and effort spent learning English to reach future goals are evident, with Nick, Allan, Mirma, and Endang agreeing, and Angel feeling neutral. The commitment to learning English despite challenges is strong, with Nick, Angel, Allan, Mirma, and Endang agreeing or strongly agreeing. The role of social and cultural contexts in shaping their investment is recognized by Nick, Angel, Mirma, and Endang, with Allan feeling neutral. Finally, all participants strongly agree that learning English is seen as a way to change their identity and future opportunities, which indicates a profound motivation to integrate English proficiency into their personal and professional aspirations.

#### **Follow-Up Interview Insights:**

##### **1. Nick (1<sup>st</sup> Year Student)**

Nick actively engages with English media, such as movies and songs, and practices speaking English independently. His self-driven practice reflects his strong commitment to becoming fluent.

Nick has clear career goals linked to English, aiming to become a professional English teacher at an international school. His ambition motivates him to achieve fluency while keeping his cultural identity through his accent. His dedication to his future career highlights his investment in learning English.

Although Nick finds some aspects of learning English challenging, he stays motivated because he knows English is vital for his future success. Family support plays an important role in his learning journey, as his family encourages him and values education.

Nick sees English proficiency as a key to better job opportunities and higher education. His confidence in the benefits of English strengthens his determination to achieve fluency and use his skills for future success.

##### **2. Angel (2<sup>nd</sup> Year Student)**

Angel includes English in her daily life through regular practice and engaging with English media. This shows her commitment to improving her language skills.

Angel has clear professional goals, such as becoming a lecturer, which require strong English proficiency. She views learning English as a necessary step to reach her goals but does not feel deeply emotionally invested in the process.

Angel faces challenges with pronunciation and confidence but uses strategies to improve, showing her dedication to mastering English. Support from her older sibling and the practical benefits of English in her local context motivate her to keep learning.

Angel views English as a way to unlock educational and professional opportunities. This vision of an expanded future drives her investment in learning English.

### 3. Allan (3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student)

Allan focuses on structured language learning, such as studying TOEFL materials and grammar. This approach shows his dedication to achieving measurable goals, like good TOEFL scores.

Allan's career goal is to work as a frontliner in an export-import company, which motivates his investment in English. His desire for social recognition and better job opportunities further fuels his learning efforts.

Allan remains committed to learning English despite challenges. He believes in its importance for his future and continues to invest his time and energy. His neutral stance on the role of social contexts shows he relies mainly on personal motivation to stay committed.

Allan understands that English proficiency opens doors to global opportunities, which strengthens his motivation to keep learning.

### 4. Mirma (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)

Mirma is determined to improve her English by taking extra courses and practicing conversations with native speakers. Her proactive approach shows her commitment to enhancing her skills.

Her dream of studying or traveling abroad motivates her deeply, driving her efforts to learn English. Even though grammar is challenging for her, she stays focused on improving, showing resilience and dedication.

Support from her family and social environment plays a big role in her learning journey. This supportive atmosphere encourages her to stay committed to reaching her goals.

Mirma sees English proficiency as a tool to transform her identity and open future opportunities. Her dedication reflects her belief in the benefits of English for her career and personal growth.

### 5. Endang (4<sup>th</sup> Year Student)

Endang uses diverse methods, like social media, music, and tutoring, to improve her English skills. Her varied approach shows her proactive strategy for language learning. Endang's career aspirations include global travel, which motivates her to achieve fluency. She sees English as a gateway to various career paths and international opportunities.

Motivation is a significant factor in Endang's journey. It is driven by a recognition of the importance of English for professional advancement and global communication. Despite her dedication, Endang faces challenges with vocabulary and listening comprehension, particularly with different accents. However, she remains dedicated to improving through consistent practice and exposure.

Her involvement in supportive language communities highlights the social aspect of her learning journey, which encourages her progress. Endang sees learning English as a way to transform her identity and open doors to new opportunities while maintaining her cultural identity.

Endang balances her self-worth, appreciating both her English skills and her cultural identity. This balance allows her to embrace her identity while pursuing her goals.

#### 3.2.11 Conflicts and Negotiations in Identity Construction

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, learners often experience conflicts between their emerging identities as English speakers and their existing cultural identities. These conflicts stem from various social, cultural, and personal factors, such as societal expectations, peer perception, and the internal struggle to balance the use of English with their native language and cultural values.

The following table provides a summary of the key conflicts faced by the Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners at Nusa Cendana University and the strategies they employ to negotiate these conflicts. The data is based on interviews conducted during this research.

**Table 3.6 Students' Conflicts and Negotiations in Identity Construction**

<b>Students</b>	<b>Conflicts</b>	<b>Negotiations</b>
<b>Nick (1st Year)</b>	Faced criticism for using English often, being seen as "too Westernized" by peers.	Explains that learning English does not negate his Rote or Indonesian identity but adds to his sense of self, seeing himself as a global citizen who is both Rotenese and capable of speaking English. He balances this by using English in relevant settings and maintaining his cultural identity.
<b>Angel (2nd Year)</b>	Perceived by others as showing off when speaking English, and struggles with pronunciation and confidence in public speaking.	Practices self-confidence by repeatedly practicing pronunciation. Switches languages depending on the comfort of others, using Kupang or Rote when necessary and English when appropriate. Believes she can be multilingual and multicultural without losing her native identity.
<b>Allan (3rd Year)</b>	Minimal conflict from social pressures; self-doubts about the long-term value of studying English in a country where job prospects in teaching seem limited.	Sees himself as a global citizen, with English enhancing his professional and personal identity. He practices English to improve and overcome his doubts by focusing on his broader career goals, such as working in tourism or international industries.
<b>Mirma (4th Year)</b>	Experienced mixed reactions from peers, sometimes feeling insecure about her English proficiency. Struggles between identifying as an Indonesian and an English learner.	Learns to accept both identities, realizing she does not have to choose between them. She maintains her Indonesian and Rote roots while embracing English as a tool for communication with the world. Participates in local cultural events while using English in academic and professional settings.
<b>Endang (4th Year)</b>	Faces self-doubt regarding her pronunciation and grammar compared to native speakers or advanced learners. Balances between traditional Rotenese culture and global identity.	Aims to improve by accepting that learning is a process. She sees bilingualism as a strength that allows her to engage with the global community while staying rooted in her culture. Her strategy involves practicing English regularly, especially through interactions with native speakers and balancing her Rote heritage.

The table reveals that each student faces a unique set of conflicts related to their language learning journey, largely centered around the social perceptions of speaking English and the tension between embracing English and maintaining their native cultural identity. These challenges highlight the wider issues of building an identity in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, where learners must manage the pressure to conform to global language standards while staying true to their own cultural roots.



### 3.2.12 Language Attitude and Identity Construction

Language attitude significantly influences identity construction in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This paper examines the experiences of five EFL students—Nick, Angel, Allan, Mirma, and Endang—to explore how their attitudes towards English shape their identities. Analyzing their perspectives and engagement reveals the interplay of imagined identities, investment, and socio-cultural interactions in their language learning and identity formation.

1. Nick (1<sup>st</sup> year student):

Nick's positive attitude towards English, viewing it as a tool for cognitive enhancement and career advancement, reflects a proactive and enthusiastic approach. He actively seeks opportunities to practice, indicating a strong investment in the language. This aligns with Norton and Toohey's (2011) concept of "imagined identities," where Nick envisions a future self that benefits from English proficiency, driving his commitment to learning. His identity construction is influenced by his perceived future opportunities, reinforcing his active engagement and positive attitude towards English.

2. Angel (2<sup>nd</sup> year student):

Angel's mixed attitude towards English, with diminishing enthusiasm, highlights how external factors such as teaching methods and peer influence can impact identity construction. Despite recognizing the advantages of English, her limited use and lack of confidence indicate a struggle with investment in the language. This resonates with Norton's (2000) assertion that identity is fluid and context-dependent, influenced by socio-cultural interactions and power dynamics. Angel's sporadic engagement and hesitation reflect a conflict between her recognition of English's importance and her current learning environment.

3. Allan (3<sup>rd</sup> year student):

Allan maintains a positive attitude towards English, similar to Nick, viewing it as essential for career advancement. His enthusiastic participation and use of English in various aspects of life suggest a strong investment and a clear imagined identity where English proficiency plays a significant role. This aligns with the theory of imagined identities, where his vision of future success drives his active engagement and positive attitude. Allan's proactive approach underscores his belief in the transformative power of English for his future.

4. Mirma (4<sup>th</sup> year student):

Mirma's mixed attitude towards English, marked by insecurity and comparison with more fluent classmates, illustrates the impact of self-perception on identity construction. Her hesitation and lack of confidence hinder her active participation, reflecting a limited investment in the language. According to poststructuralist theory, identity is multiple and contradictory, shaped by interactions and power dynamics. Mirma's experience shows how perceived inadequacies can constrain her engagement with English, affecting her overall identity as an English learner.

5. Endang (4<sup>th</sup> year student):

Endang's mixed attitude and anxiety about using English in public highlight the emotional aspects of identity construction. Her reluctance to incorporate English into daily life and neutral participation in classes indicate a cautious approach to language learning. This is consistent with Norton's (2013) concept of investment, where learners' engagement with a language is influenced by their perceived ability to gain symbolic and material resources. Endang's internal conflict between understanding English's

importance and feeling uncomfortable using it reflects the complexities of identity negotiation in language learning.

The EFL learners construct their identities based on their attitudes towards English through a complex interplay of imagined identities, investment, and socio-cultural interactions. Those with positive attitudes and proactive engagement, like Nick and Allan, show a strong investment in English, driven by their envisioned future selves where English proficiency is a valuable asset. This investment is supported by the concept of imagined identities, where their current efforts are aligned with their future aspirations.

Conversely, learners with mixed attitudes, such as Angel, Mirma, and Endang, demonstrate how external factors, self-perception, and emotional responses can impact their investment and identity construction. These learners experience fluctuating engagement and confidence, highlighting the fluid and dynamic nature of identity as posited by poststructuralist theory. Their experiences underscore the importance of supportive learning environments and positive reinforcement to foster stronger investment and more stable identity construction.

The identities of EFL learners are constructed through their attitudes towards English, influenced by their imagined identities and the extent of their investment in the language. Positive attitudes and proactive engagement lead to stronger investment and clearer identity construction, while mixed attitudes reflect the challenges of navigating socio-cultural contexts and personal insecurities.

#### **4 Conclusion (bold, 12 pt)**

The study examined how Rotenese undergraduate EFL learners' attitudes toward English influenced their identity construction. The findings highlighted that:

1. **Language Attitudes:** Participants' attitudes varied, ranging from highly positive to mixed. Learners like Nick and Allan demonstrated strong motivation and active engagement, viewing English as essential for career and personal growth. Meanwhile, Angel, Mirma, and Endang faced challenges such as anxiety, peer pressure, and self-doubt, which hindered their engagement.
2. **Identity Construction:** Learners constructed their identities based on their attitudes and interactions with English. Positive attitudes fostered confident, proactive identities aligned with their imagined future selves as fluent English users. Mixed attitudes reflected struggles in balancing local cultural identities with global aspirations, leading to fragile or conflicted learner identities.

Family support, social dynamics, career goals, and cultural contexts played a significant role in shaping both language attitudes and identity construction among EFL learners. Positive reinforcement and supportive learning environments were crucial in fostering strong language attitudes, overcoming emotional barriers, and promoting stable identity development. The study concluded that these factors are essential to enhancing learners' investment in English and their overall identity as confident English users.

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