

**Attitudes Towards Philippine English: A Comparative Study of Filipinos in the
Philippines and Hong Kong**

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Abstract

Although, previous research on the language perceptions of ESL speakers has demonstrated a preference for inner circle varieties of English, such as British or American English, little is known about the perception of emigrant communities on their native English variety. Studies suggest that language perception is closely tied to a sense of identity, which may be stronger among emigrants. In the Philippines, despite a high level of English proficiency, Filipinos often perceive Philippine English (PhE) as less desirable compared to native English varieties. Thus, this research explores whether a stronger sense of identity among emigrant Filipinos influences their attitudes toward PhE. Using a mixed approach, this paper conducted a survey and interviews to examine whether Filipinos in Hong Kong view PhE more positively than Filipinos in the Philippines. 56 Filipino participants living in Hong Kong and 51 Filipino participants living in the Philippines completed a questionnaire that assessed their attitudes toward speech recordings of PhE and American English (AmE). Meanwhile, 6 participants were invited for the interviews that explored the factors influencing their language perceptions. Results indicate that Filipinos in Hong Kong and the Philippines share similar attitudes toward PhE and AmE. Although highly accented PhE is perceived negatively, slightly accented PhE is preferred over native AmE. Furthermore, findings suggest that language biases may originate from compatriots within the same community. Implications for language policy and education are also discussed.

IntroductionBackground

The progressively diverse nature of societies today has resulted in a gradual increase in the positive perceptions of English as a second language (ESL) speakers towards non-native English varieties. However, despite the growing acceptance towards these varieties, some

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

ESL speakers still exhibit preferences towards specific accents (Tokumoto & Shibata, 2011). Previous research indicates that ESL speakers tend to favor inner circle varieties of English, such as American or British English (McKenzie, 2008; Snodin & Young, 2015). Several factors, including media representation, historical background and exposure, contribute to the inclination towards inner circle varieties. These preferences may highlight deeper societal issues, including discrimination even towards one's own English variety.

The Philippines has consistently ranked high in English proficiency among Asian countries. According to Education First (2023), the trend of English proficiency in the Philippines has been consistently high and has ranked second in Asia for high English proficiency levels in 2023. While Philippine English (PhE) is recognized internationally, studies have shown that Filipinos perceive PhE as less desirable when compared to native English (Tupas & Salonga, 2016; Ulla et al., 2024). Furthermore, the level of prejudice against PhE increases as the accent deviates further from the preferred American English accent (Quinto et al., 2024). Language is closely tied to identity, so the sense of belonging of ESL speakers may impact their perception on their own English variety (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). In this regard, Filipinos living overseas may feel a stronger connection towards their mother tongue as they develop a 'diasporic consciousness.' This is developed by diaspora communities that have stronger desires to preserve and promote their own culture (Brubaker, 2005). Nevertheless, there is insufficient research on how living outside their native country affects one's attitude towards a specific English variety. Therefore, this paper will compare the attitudes of Filipinos living in the Philippines and those living overseas.

Previous studies on attitudes towards English varieties

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Language attitudes, as described by Kircher and Zipp (2022), are evaluative reactions toward different language varieties and their speakers. Previous research has explored the attitudes ESL speakers have toward various English varieties which has provided valuable insights into underlying social issues (Hiraga, 2005; Snodin & Young, 2015; Tokumoto & Shibata, 2011; Zhang, 2009). These studies are relevant as language is closely linked to social beliefs and identities (Cargile & Giles, 1997; Jenkins, 2003; Lucchetti, 2023). Hence, examining language attitudes may reveal underlying social biases, hierarchies, and ideologies that shape intercultural communication and perceptions of languages.

Within the inner circle of English varieties, Hiraga (2005) found notable differences in attitudes toward regional accents among native English-speaking countries. In this study, British participants evaluated various British and American English varieties from different regions. The findings showed that rural varieties were perceived to be lower in status compared to standard varieties such as Received Pronunciation and Network American, which were often associated with higher prestige and professionalism.

Similarly, Zhang (2009) investigated the attitudes of Hong Kong residents towards English varieties. This study employed a status rating system in which participants ranked English varieties based on their perceived sophistication. The findings revealed that native English varieties were viewed as having a higher status compared to other varieties, with Asian English varieties rated notably lower. Thus, this highlights persistent biases against non-native English varieties.

Kalra and Thanavisuth (2018) also examined language attitudes, focusing on the perceptions of Thai students on Asian English varieties. The researchers surveyed participants on their

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

perceptions of recorded samples of these varieties. The findings indicated that while participants considered Asian English varieties acceptable for conversational use, they expressed a preference for not practicing non-native sounding English, reflecting a desire to conform to standard English norms.

These studies reveal the recurring trend where varieties that deviate further from standard, non-regional British or American English are often less preferred by non-native speakers. While existing studies have shed light on key patterns in language attitudes, notable gaps remain, particularly regarding attitudes toward PhE. The Philippines is distinguished by its relatively high English proficiency level within Asia and is home to a large population of overseas Filipino workers who use English more often as a tool for communication (Education First, 2023; Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024). Given its global prevalence, PhE can be likened to Asian English varieties like Singaporean English which serves as a marker of Singaporean identity and culture (Wierzbicka, 2003). Therefore, it would be relevant to conduct focused research on attitudes toward PhE and to investigate how this variety is perceived in both local and global contexts.

Diverse views towards PhE

There is a growing acceptance towards PhE as a legitimate variety in the Philippines (Tayao, 2004). Filipinos generally accept PhE in the context of communication and prefer to use PhE unless required to speak in more native forms of English like American English (Bautista, 2001; Umayam et al., 2022). However, some still see the variety as linguistic “mistakes,” viewing it less favorably (Chureson, 2013; Tupas, 2004). Furthermore, positive attitudes towards PhE notably came from those least exposed to English, suggesting a link between the use of more standardized English forms and higher social status. Within the education sector,

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

mixed opinions exist on the recognition of PhE in formal schools and institutions (Gustilo & Dimaculangan, 2018; Hernandez, 2020). A study by Tan and Tan (2008) on attitudes towards Singaporean English revealed that Singaporeans also positively view their English variety. However, in formal contexts such as in school, “Standard English” or formal native-like English is much preferred. This sheds light on the stigma revolving the preference for English over mother tongues, emphasizing the need to challenge biases towards PhE and English varieties. (Borlongan, 2009).

Meanwhile, other ESL speakers have displayed a more neutral stance towards PhE. A study conducted with Thai students (Wattananukij & Crabtree, 2020) found that PhE received slightly higher ratings in terms of proficiency and social attractiveness. This aligns with a common perception that Filipinos are hospitable and friendly (Vicente, 2022). Meanwhile, Zhang (2009) revealed that the social status of Filipinos in Hong Kong highly impacts the perception of others towards PhE. Due to the large population of Filipino domestic workers, they are often perceived to have lower social status (Loper, 2001). Research suggests that people tend to modify their English variety to sound less accented and avoid discrimination (Dovchin, 2022; Masztalerz, 2021; Sener, 2021). Perceptions are biased and the language attitudes of PhE speakers may vary depending on their sense of identity and willingness to assimilate. Thus, this paper will analyze the diverse attitudes of Filipinos in Hong Kong towards PhE and explore potential factors and biases behind these attitudes.

Research questions and hypotheses

The main research question of this paper is whether Filipinos in Hong Kong would view PhE more positively than Filipinos in the Philippines. The study aims to explore any disparities in attitudes towards PhE and identify potential factors that may influence these differences.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

The first hypothesis (H1) is that Filipinos living in Hong Kong would prefer to sound more like PhE speakers compared to those living in the Philippines. Studies have shown that Filipinos in the Philippines have mixed attitudes towards the use of PhE (Bautista, 2001; Gustilo & Dimaculangan, 2018; Hernandez, 2020; Umayam et al., 2022). While some accept PhE in casual conversations, the variety is not fully legitimized, particularly in formal contexts. In comparison, Filipinos living overseas might feel a higher sense of diasporic consciousness and display a stronger preference for PhE to foster solidarity (Brubaker, 2005; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

The second hypothesis (H2) suggests that Filipinos living in the Philippines would prefer native English varieties more than Filipinos living in Hong Kong. As shown in previous research, Filipinos in the Philippines generally view native Englishes as more desirable than PhE, while PhE is not generally accepted as a legitimate variety of English in all contexts in the Philippines (Gustilo & Dimaculangan, 2018; Hernandez, 2020; Tupas & Salonga, 2016; Ulla et al., 2024). Taking the possibility that Filipinos in Hong Kong feel a stronger sense of identity into account, Filipinos in the Philippines might perceive native varieties in a more positive light as demonstrated in previous studies (Tupas & Salonga, 2016; Ulla et al., 2024).

Methods

Participants

A total of 107 participants participated in an online questionnaire. Of these, 56 participants were Filipinos currently living in Hong Kong, and 51 were currently living in the Philippines. A total of 6 participants were chosen for an interview at random. Half of the interview participants were living in Hong Kong, and the other half were living in the Philippines.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Previous research has also made use of a small number of interview participants to represent their groups (Kalra & Thanavisuth, 2018; Zhang, 2009).

To have a more focused study, specific variables were established as prerequisites for participation. All participants were 16 years old or above and had studied English during their years of schooling. Similar variables were also adapted in previous language attitude research (Alonso-Herrero & Herrarte, 2019; Brdarević-Čeljo, 2024; Chien, 2018). Additionally, all participants had a Filipino language as their first language (L1). This ensures that the participants shared a relatively similar background in using Filipino and English.

Materials

Language attitudes could be shown implicitly and explicitly (Chien, 2018). Thus, this study adopted a mixed approach, combining direct questions and verbal-guise tests. To enhance the validity of the research, methodological triangulation was used (Merriam, 1998). The study consisted of two parts: a quantitative element using an online questionnaire and a qualitative element through individual interviews.

For the quantitative section, an online Google Form questionnaire was used since questionnaires are commonly used to collect data on language (Mackey & Gass, 2015). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section aimed to obtain information about the participant and ensure that the participants met the requirements for the study (Survey Part 1).

The second section examined the attitudes of participants by using speech recordings of PhE and AmE sourced from the International Dialects of English Archive (Survey Part 2). This

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

method was based on the verbal-guise technique by Lambert et al. (1960) which may yield more realistic findings (Zhang, 2009). Among the recordings in the archive, six of them were selected with the assistance of another Filipino with a background in linguistic training. The first two recordings featured heavily accented PhE speakers, the next two featured slightly accented PhE speakers, and the last two were native AmE speakers from California. To control the variables that might influence the speech of the speakers, half of the speakers were female and the other half male. Additionally, all speakers were within the age range of 20 to 40.

The first question assessed the inclination of participants to sound like the speakers in the recording using a Likert scale, drawing inspiration from a study by Kalra and Thanavisuth (2018). The second question assessed how accented participants thought the recordings were using a Likert scale. This was adapted from a study on accents by Lan et al. (2023). The final question prompted participants to share preferences towards the recording. Participants were given six traits to rate their perceptions on the accent: warm, friendly, highly educated, wealthy, pleasant and attractive. These were based on a similar method employed by Zhang (2009) to assess language perception. These traits were rated with a numerical rating scale.

The third section assessed their personal views on their English accent and their perception on native-like accents compared to their own (Survey Part 3). The answers were more personal and were designed to draw implications behind the attitudes of participants. This section consisted of six questions, including short-answer and Likert scale ratings. Overall, the questionnaire took 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

For the qualitative part, individual interviews were conducted to fill the gaps of the questionnaire and identify possible factors that influence language attitudes of the participants. The individual interview had 10 questions (Interview). The questions asked the participants about their view and feelings towards PhE and native English varieties. These questions aimed to identify the general attitude of the participants. Then, they were asked about their experiences with PhE such as miscommunications and stereotypes that might have affected their view towards PhE. These examined whether their attitudes were influenced by personal experiences. Afterwards, participants were asked to share their opinions on the relationship between accents, identity and proficiency. Lastly, they were asked about whether Filipinos should strive to adopt native-like English accents or retain their PhE. The interview lasted between 10 to 20 minutes.

Procedure

Participants for the questionnaire were recruited via personal connections and social media platforms. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were presented with an information sheet outlining the research aims, process, data protection measures and potential risks associated with participation. This document also emphasized that participation was entirely voluntary and that participants retained the right to withdraw from the study at any time. All questionnaire responses were analyzed to identify emerging patterns and inform the discussion.

After acquiring the minimum number of 100 participants, six individuals were selected for follow-up interviews conducted either online or in person, depending on their availability and preference. Prior to the interviews, participants were asked for their consent to record the sessions for reference and analysis. They were assured that their data and recordings would

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

be handled confidentially and used solely for research purposes. Interviewees were able to decline to participate at any time. Upon giving permission to record, interviewees were encouraged to respond to questions and share their opinions openly, with prompts designed to facilitate discussion and explore their attitudes in depth. Data collected from the interviews were transcribed and analyzed for subsequent discussion.

Results

Questionnaire

The results for Q1 in Part 2 reveal similar opinions between the participants living in Hong Kong and the Philippines (Questionnaire Responses – Q1). In response to the heavily accented PhE recording (R1), neither the Hong Kong participants ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.26$) nor the Philippine participants ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.14$) expressed a desire to sound like the speaker ($t(105) = -0.608$, $p > .05$). Responses for the other heavily accented PhE speaker (R2) were slightly more positive. Both Hong Kong ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.16$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.05$) shared similar views ($t(105) = -1.341$, $p > .05$). These results show that neither Filipinos in Hong Kong nor the Philippines want to sound like a heavily accented PhE speaker.

Meanwhile, for the slightly accented PhE recording (R3), both Hong Kong participants ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.16$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.99$) had neutral views on sounding like the speaker ($t(105) = -0.719$, $p > .05$). Similarly, the Hong Kong ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.08$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.08$) had neutral views on the other slightly accented PhE speaker (R4) ($t(105) = -1.530$, $p > .05$). In comparison, the participants from Hong Kong and the Philippines generally wanted to sound more like the slightly accented PhE speaker than the heavily accented one.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Responses for the native AmE recording (R5) showed that both groups wanted to sound like the speaker, with Philippine participants ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.07$) expressing a slightly stronger preference than Hong Kong participants ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.30$). However, the results were not strong enough to indicate a notable difference between the attitudes of the two groups ($t(105) = -1.665$, $p > .05$). Contrary to R5, Hong Kong ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.24$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.09$) had slightly less positive responses to the other AmE speaker (R6) ($t(105) = -.874$, $p > .05$). Overall, while the participants generally wanted to sound most like the native AmE speaker, the difference between their responses for the slightly accented PhE and AmE are minimal. Furthermore, the responses for Q1 reveal that the two groups of Filipino participants share similar opinions regarding their desire to sound like the speakers.

The responses for Q3 also demonstrated similar views between the two groups, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. A majority of participants from both groups did not find heavily accented PhE (R1) preferable, with 29 of 56 Hong Kong participants (51%) and 29 of 51 Philippine participants (57%) expressing disapproval. Meanwhile, 43 Hong Kong participants (76%) and 39 Philippine participants (76%) equally preferred the other heavily accented PhE recording (R2) slightly more than R1.

In contrast, majority from both groups preferred slightly accented PhE (R3), with 52 Hong Kong participants (93%) and 49 Philippine participants (96%) rating it favorably. They also highly preferred the other slightly accented PhE recording (R4). However, only 42 Philippine participants (82%) preferred the recording compared to 51 Hong Kong participants (91%) who preferred it.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

On the other hand, 50 Hong Kong participants (89%) and 46 Philippine participants (90%) showed a preference for native AmE (R5). Regarding the other AmE recording (R6), 51 Hong Kong participants (91%) and 49 Philippine participants (96%) preferred the recording, which is highly similar to ratings for R3. These results suggest that both groups preferred slightly accented PhE over heavily accented PhE, although native AmE was also strongly favored.

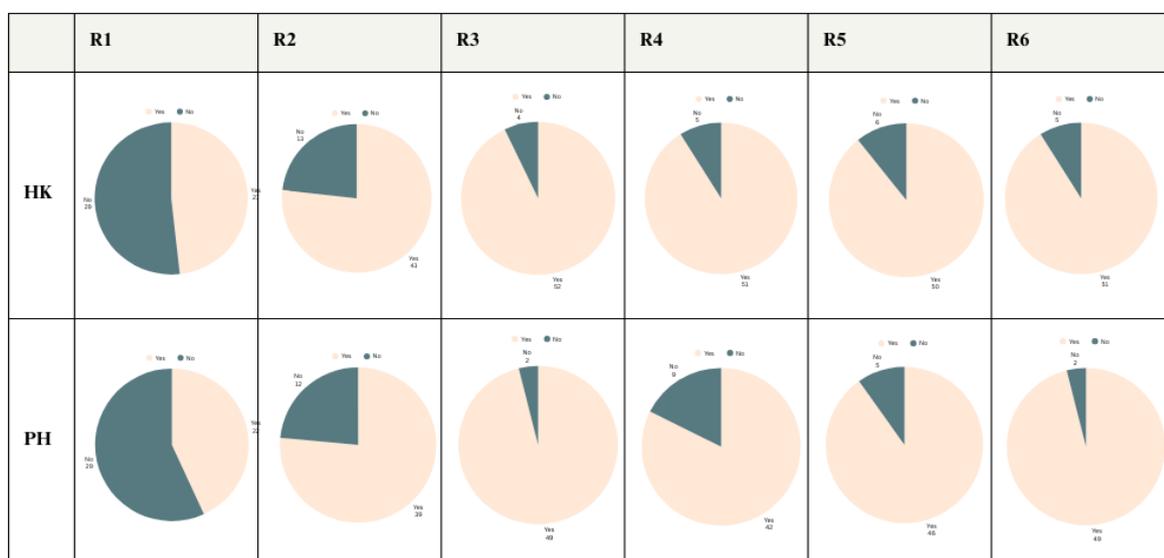


Figure 1: Participants' preferences towards speech recordings

The participants' perceptions of the recordings revealed some consistent patterns (Questionnaire Responses – Q3 Perceptions). Both groups gave low ratings to the heavily accented PhE speaker (R1) (Figure 2). Specifically, Hong Kong participants ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.08$) and Philippine participants ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 0.98$) rated the speaker low on warmth ($t(105) = -0.281$, $p > .05$). Similarly, for friendliness, Hong Kong participants ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.09$) and Philippine participants ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.01$) also provided low ratings ($t(105) = -1.349$, $p > .05$). In response to the second heavily accented PhE recording (R2), participants

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

from Hong Kong ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.90$; $M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.99$) and the Philippines ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.92$; $M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.87$) also gave low ratings for warmth and friendliness respectively ($t(105) = -1.084$, $p > .05$; $t(105) = -1.317$, $p > .05$). In general, both groups of participants had more negative perceptions towards heavily accented PhE.

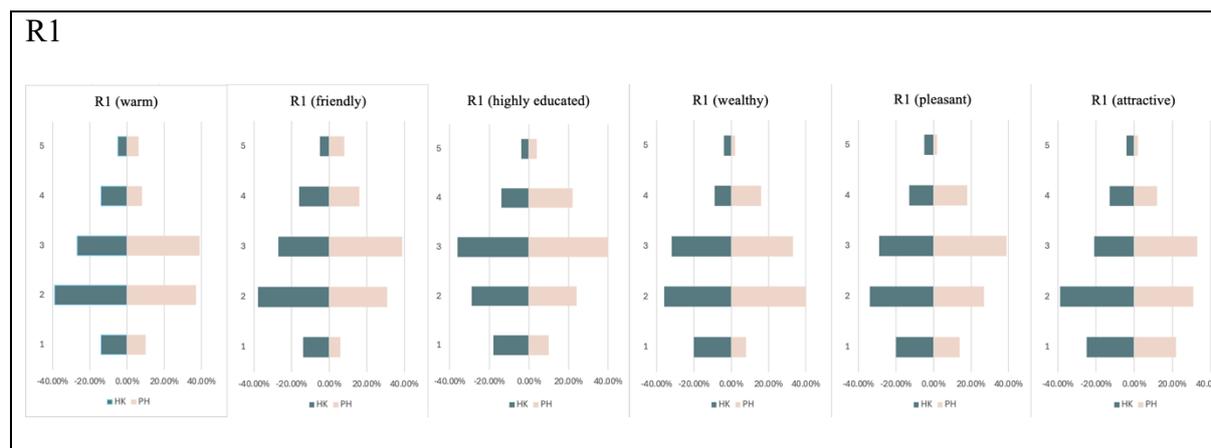


Figure 2: Participants' perceptions on R1

Neutral ratings were given for the slightly accented PhE (R3) speaker. For warmth, both Hong Kong participants ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.90$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.99$) rated the speaker similarly ($t(105) = -0.621$, $p > .05$). In the category of friendliness, Hong Kong ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.89$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.84$) also showed neutral perceptions ($t(105) = -0.344$, $p > .05$). Both groups of participants gave similar ratings to the other slightly accented PhE speaker. Hong Kong ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.03$; $M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.10$) and Philippine participants ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.03$; $M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.97$) had neutral ratings for warmth and friendliness respectively, and their ratings for friendliness were statistically significant ($t(105) = -1.720$, $p > .05$; $t(105) = -2.966$, $p < .05$).

For both native AmE recordings, both groups again gave neutral ratings in terms of warmth and friendliness. In response to R5, Hong Kong participants ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 1.02$; $M = 3.34$,

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

SD = 1.15) rated the speaker similarly to Philippine participants (M = 3.51, SD = 1.24; M = 3.67, SD = 0.97) ($t(105) = -0.535, p > .05$; $t(105) = -1.583, p > .05$). However, R5 was rated more positively overall (Figure 3), with Philippine participants (M = 4.06, SD = 0.95) giving slightly higher ratings in the "highly educated" category compared to Hong Kong participants (M = 3.71, SD = 0.93) ($t(105) = -1.899, p > .05$). In comparison, the second AmE speaker had slightly lower ratings from Hong Kong (M = 3.52, SD = 0.97) and Philippine participants (M = 3.92, SD = 0.98). These ratings were statistically significant ($t(105) = -2.141, p < .05$).

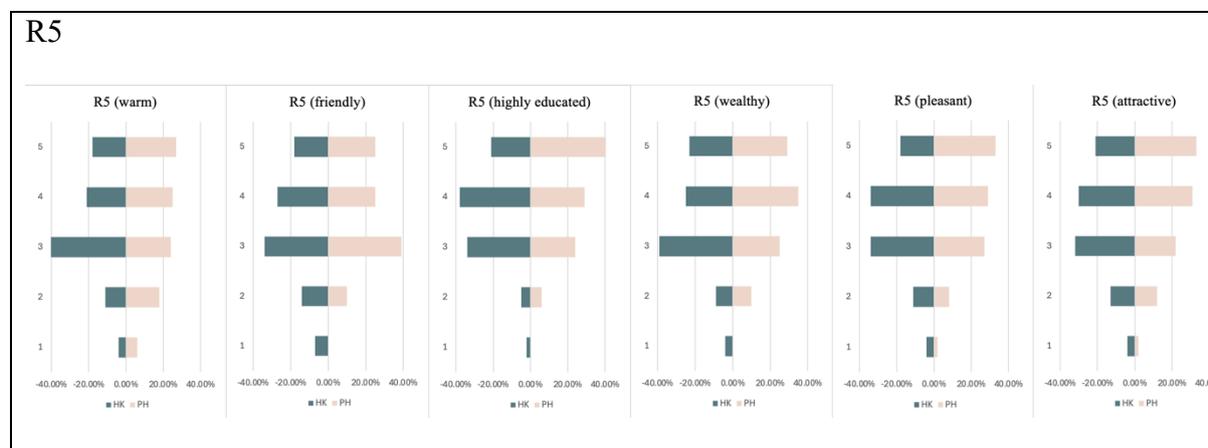


Figure 3: Participants' perceptions on R5

Regarding satisfaction with their own English accent, both groups displayed neutral responses. Hong Kong participants (M = 3.13, SD = 1.08) and Philippine participants (M = 3.39, SD = 0.83) shared similar views in this area ($t(105) = 1.426, p > .05$). Likewise, both Hong Kong participants (M = 3.38, SD = 1.24) and Philippine participants (M = 3.59, SD = 1.10) responded neutrally about retaining their English accent ($t(105) = 0.9369, p > .05$). Lastly, when asked about their ideal accent, 39 of 56 Hong Kong participants (69%) and 34 of 51 Philippine participants (66%) indicated a preference for a native English accent, namely American and British English. This finding points to a strong association between native English accents and idealized notions of prestige and status.

Interview

The interviews provided qualitative insights that complemented the questionnaire findings (Interview Responses). A notable theme was the opinions of participants on the importance of a native-like accent. Both groups generally did not consider having a native-like accent crucial for being a better English speaker, emphasizing effective "communication" as being more important. However, participants acknowledged that in "public," formal, or "international settings," a native-like accent could provide advantages.

The majority of participants also did not believe that Filipinos should adopt more native-like English accents. One Hong Kong participant emphasized the importance of accurate "grammar" over accent, while another highlighted the value of using PhE to express their "identity" and build "connections." Conversely, participants who supported adopting a native-like accent cited reasons such as gaining "more opportunities" and achieving "better communication."

Additionally, participants who reported feeling inclined to sound less Filipino shared specific motivations. For example, some said it was to "garner more authority" in an "academic setup" or to improve communication with native English speakers. One Hong Kong participant recounted encountering stereotypes linked to PhE, noting that PhE speakers are often associated with coming from a "poor background." Another participant shared experiences of being treated "differently" by fellow Filipinos due to their use of PhE, rather than by non-Filipino English speakers.

Discussion

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PhE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Overall, the findings of this study reveal that Filipinos living in the Philippines and Hong Kong share highly similar perceptions towards PhE. This study set out to test two hypotheses: Filipinos living in Hong Kong would prefer to sound more like PhE speakers compared to those living in the Philippines (H1) and Filipinos living in the Philippines would prefer native English varieties more than Filipinos living in Hong Kong (H2). The results from the questionnaire did not support either H1 or H2. Both groups equally preferred not to sound like heavily accented PhE speakers and similarly preferred native English varieties. The interview results also failed to validate either hypothesis. However, mixed responses regarding the adoption of native English varieties indicate that the preference for native English might be decreasing in favor of PhE, as suggested by a previous study (Tayao, 2004).

H1

The first hypothesis (H1) proposed that Filipinos living in Hong Kong would exhibit a stronger preference for sounding like PhE speakers compared to their counterparts in the Philippines. However, this was not supported by the data. Both groups expressed a reluctance to sound like heavily accented PhE speakers, highlighting shared linguistic attitudes that transcend geographic location. This finding aligns with previous studies that suggest a general tendency among Filipinos to associate heavily accented PhE with negative stereotypes, such as a lack of fluency, professionalism, or global competence (Quinto et al., 2024; Tupas & Salonga, 2016).

A notable insight from the interviews was the role of internalized bias within the Filipino community. While literature on linguistic discrimination focus on external pressures from dominant English-speaking countries (Dovchin, 2022), this study found that negative perceptions of PhE often originate from within. This suggests that stigmas revolving PhE is

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

less about external discrimination and more about internalized biases within members of the same community. This internalized bias potentially influences how PhE is valued and perceived. Filipinos might have internalized the idea that sounding "too Filipino" when speaking English reflects poorly on their social standing. This is consistent with previous research that demonstrates the link between language perception and social identity (Cargile & Giles, 1997; Jenkins, 2003; Lucchetti, 2023). Such internalized biases have implications of perpetuating a cycle where Filipinos undervalue their own linguistic identity in favor of conforming to external standards, albeit its growing recognition as a legitimate variety of English.

Despite the reluctance to sound like PhE speakers, both groups of participants displayed neutral views toward retaining their own accents. This suggests that while negative perceptions of PhE exist, they are not strong enough for participants to actively change their accents. This also indicates a degree of acceptance for PhE as a legitimate form of communication. Previous studies have also shown that there is generally greater acceptance of language varieties as long as they do not impede communication (Bautista, 2001; Umayam et al., 2022). This underscores the importance of promoting PhE as a functional and effective means of communication.

H2

The hypothesis that Filipinos in the Philippines would prefer native English varieties more than Filipinos in Hong Kong was also refuted. Contrary to the claim that immigrants would feel a greater sense of identity while Filipinos in the Philippines would prefer native English more, both groups showed a strong preference for native English varieties (Brubaker, 2005; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Over half of the participants favored native English accents as ideal,

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

which reflects broader research findings on the preference of other ESL speakers for native English varieties (McKenzie, 2008; Snodin & Young, 2015).

Participants have also rated native AmE as more warm and friendly, despite the image of Filipinos traditionally being associated with qualities such as “friendliness” and “hospitality” (Vicente, 2022). This suggests that participants may unconsciously associate likability and social value with native English speakers, while qualities tied to Filipino identity are overshadowed. On top of that, there is a higher preference for native English in professional and academic settings, which highlights the association of native English with higher status and prestige (Tan & Tan, 2008).

However, the findings of this study also revealed that the participants prefer slightly accented PhE accent over heavily accented PhE and native AmE. This suggests that even though there is an appreciation for PhE, it is moderated by the degree of accentedness, which aligns with a study by Quinto et al. (2024). At the same time, it also challenges previous claims of Filipinos preferring native English over PhE (Tupas & Salonga, 2016; Ulla et al., 2024). This nuanced preference might imply that Filipinos prefer having a balance between the social prestige of native English and the familiarity of PhE. Interview responses further highlighted this balance. Participants expressed a preference for native English when engaging in global communication, as it provides a social and professional advantage. However, PhE was valued for its cultural identity, which resonates with many Filipinos. This dual preference demonstrates the complex relationship between language, identity, and social status in a multilingual context.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

The findings of this study carry important implications for language policy and education in the Philippines, particularly in balancing the role of native English and PhE. The preference for native English in professional and academic settings highlights the necessity for English education to focus on developing global communicative competence. At the same time, the growing appreciation for PhE suggests that more attention should be placed on promoting cultural identity and appreciation, embodying the unique identity of PhE speakers. Efforts to standardize PhE and raise awareness of its legitimacy as an English variety could help address internalized biases and foster greater acceptance of diverse PhE accents. This could involve revising curricula to include features of PhE and highlighting its role in global communication. Additionally, media representations of PhE could play a crucial role in normalizing its use and challenging negative stereotypes.

Limitations and prospects

One of the limitations of this study was its narrow research focus. The scope of the study was limited to examining the potential differences in the language perception of Filipino immigrants towards Philippine English (PhE). While this allowed an in-depth analysis on the connection between language and migration, it overlooked other possible factors that may influence changes in language perception. For instance, differences in the perceptions of the Hong Kong participants might not be due to geographical factors alone. Nevertheless, the decision to limit the scope was necessary given the constraints of time and resources.

Another limitation in this research was the lack of broad participant representation in terms of demographics. While participants were selected from a range of social backgrounds, the sample may not fully reflect the diversity of the Filipino population across various regions inside and outside of the Philippines. Regional linguistic and cultural variations in the

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Philippines may influence perceptions of PhE. Additionally, the recruitment process relied on personal connections and social media platforms, which may have introduced a degree of sampling bias. Nevertheless, due to logistical constraints and a lack of resources, involving a broader range of Filipino populations for this research was not feasible. The limited timeframe also meant that participant selection had to be less controlled in order to gather substantial responses within the given time.

Finally, the self-reported data from the participants collected through questionnaires and interviews is subject to biases. When giving responses, participants might have provided socially acceptable answers rather than expressing their true opinions. This possibility might have affected the accuracy and reliability of the findings. However, the limited resources available for this study prevented the use of more experimental designs. Thus, this study had to rely on the methods used to observe language perceptions

Although the findings from this study validate previous research on language preferences and perceptions, they also highlight a shift from a preference for native English varieties to a growing acceptance of slightly accented PhE. Despite this trend, harmful stigmas and biases within the Filipino community continue to challenge the legitimacy of PhE and must be addressed further. In addition, this study did not identify notable connections between immigration and language perceptions. However, more in-depth research could explore possible influences on the language perceptions of other immigrant populations.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Part 1
Q1: Where are you currently living in?
How long have you been living here for?
Q2: How old are you?
Q3: Did you study English in your years of schooling?
Were you taught by a native English-speaking teacher?
Q4: What is your first language?
Q5: How often do you use English to communicate? (1=never; 5=always)

Part 2 (x6)
Q1: To what extent would you want to sound like the speaker? (1=do not sound like the speaker; 5=completely sound like the speaker)
Q2: To what extent was the recording accented? (1=not accented; 5=completely accented)
<p>Q3: Do you think the accent in the recording is preferable? What are your perceptions towards the recording (1=lowest; 5=highest):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm (1-5) - Friendly (1-5) - Highly educated (1-5) - Wealthy (1-5) - Pleasant (1-5) - Attractive (1-5)

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

Part 3
Q1: What is your accent when speaking English?
Q2: How satisfied are you with your English accent? (1=not satisfied; 5=completely satisfied)
Q3: To what extent do you wish to retain your English accent? (1=retain PhE accent; 5=adopt native-like accent)
Q4: What is your ideal accent?
Q5: To what extent do you think accent reflects English ability? (1=irrelevant; 5=completely relevant)
Q6: To what extent do you believe that all English accents are equal in status? (1=not equal; 5=completely equal)

Interview

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your view of Philippine English? 2. What is your view of native English varieties like American English? 3. What do you personally feel about using Philippine English? Do you feel confident or comfortable using it? 4. How do you personally feel when you hear someone speaking in a native-like English accent? Do you feel impressed, intimidated or indifferent? 5. Have you encountered situations of miscommunication because of your use of Philippine English? If so, could you share your experience? 6. Have you encountered any stereotypes associated with Philippine English? If so, could you share your experience?

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

7. Have you encountered situations where you feel inclined to sound less Filipino? If so, could you share your experience?
8. In your opinion, does having an accent contribute to a person's sense of identity? Why or why not?
9. In your opinion, is having a native-like accent important in being a better English speaker? Why or why not?
10. What are your thoughts on whether Filipinos should adopt more native-like English accents?

Questionnaire Responses – Q1

R1 Q1						
Group Statistics						
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
VAR00004	HK	56	2.6429	1.25667	.16793	
	PH	51	2.7843	1.13690	.15920	
Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance One-Sided p
VAR00004	Equal variances assumed	.539	.465	-.608	105	.272
	Equal variances not assumed			-.611	104.997	.271
R2 Q1						
Group Statistics						
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
VAR00002	HK	56	3.1786	1.19251	.15936	
	PH	51	3.4706	1.04600	.14647	
Independent Samples Test						

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance One-Sided p
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed	1.236	.269	-1.341	105	.091
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.349	104.860	.090
R3 Q1						
Group Statistics						
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
VAR00002	HK	56	3.5357	1.15938	.15493	
	PH	51	3.6863	.98975	.13859	
Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance One-Sided p
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed	2.111	.149	-.719	105	.237
	Equal variances not assumed			-.724	104.579	.235
R4 Q1						
Group Statistics						
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
VAR00002	HK	56	3.4643	1.07812	.14407	
	PH	51	3.7843	1.08284	.15163	
Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance One-Sided p
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed	.344	.559	-1.530	105	.064
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.530	103.984	.065

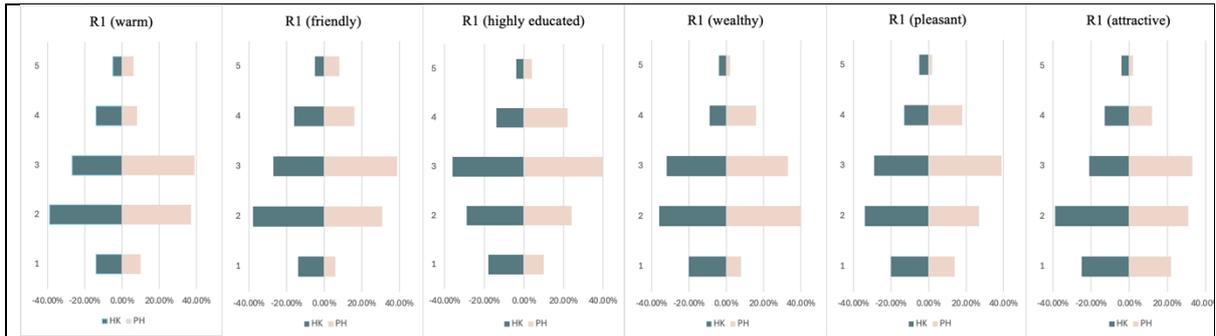
ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

R5 Q1							
Group Statistics							
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
VAR00002	HK	56	3.7321	1.30022	.17375		
	PH	51	4.1176	1.07046	.14989		
Independent Samples Test							
			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
			F	Sig.	t	df	
			Significance One-Sided p				
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed		2.129	.148	-1.665	105	.049
	Equal variances not assumed				-1.680	103.979	.048
R6 Q1							
Group Statistics							
	VAR00005	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
VAR00002	HK	56	3.6250	1.24408	.16625		
	PH	51	3.8235	1.09006	.15264		
Independent Samples Test							
			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
			F	Sig.	t	df	
			Significance One-Sided p				
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed		2.022	.158	-.874	105	.192
	Equal variances not assumed				-.880	104.852	.191

Questionnaire Responses – Q3 Perceptions

R1

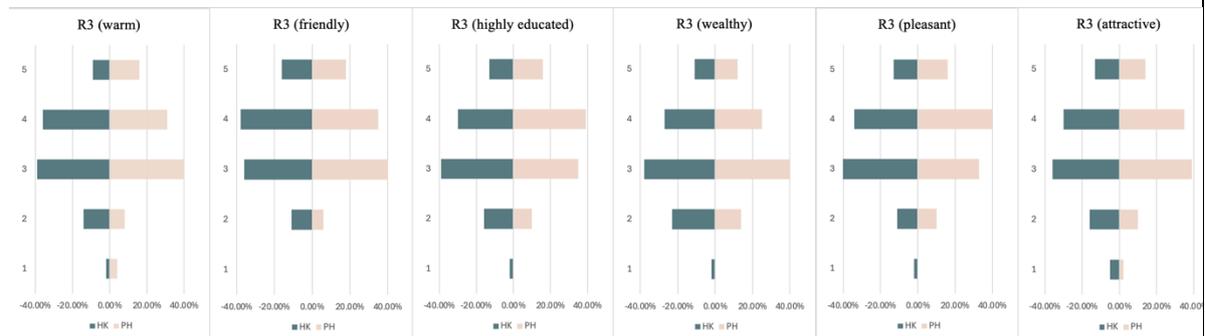
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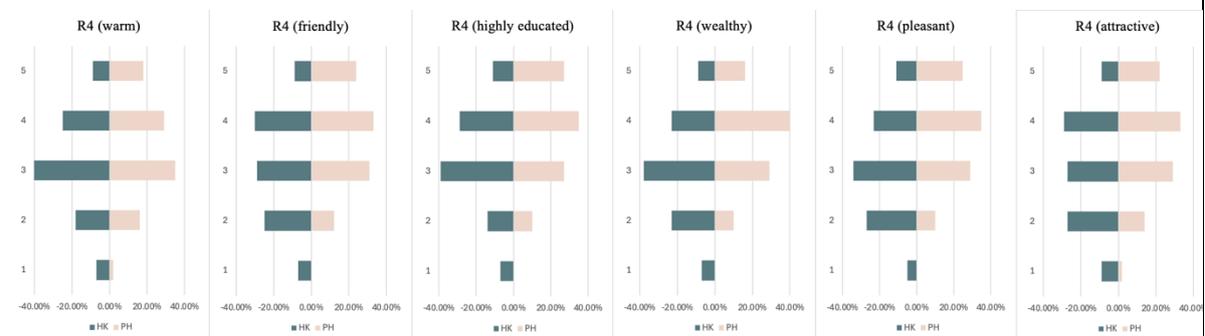
R2



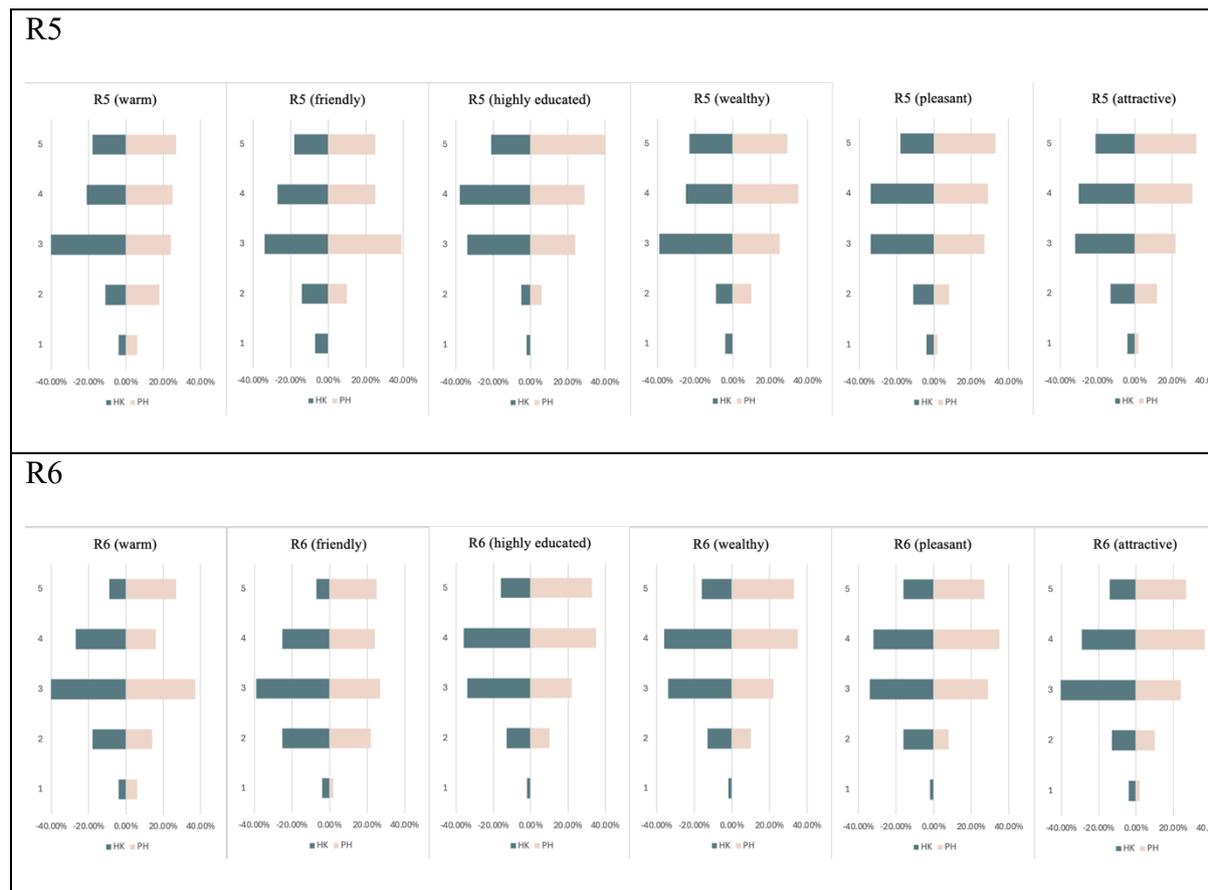
R3



R4



ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK



Interview Responses

Q: In your opinion, is having a native-like accent important in being a better English speaker? Why or why not?	
HK Participants	PH Participants
“It don’t think...so as long as you can communicate well and send your message clearly...”	“It doesn’t matter...as long as communication moves freely or successfully.”
“I don’t think so...as long as you...can understand each other...”	“It helps...in an international setting.”
“...yes...when you want to speak...in public”	(in a job interview setting) “Yes...because it appeals more to the interviewee”

Q: What are your thoughts on whether Filipinos should adopt more native-like English accents?	
HK Participants	PH Participants
“As long as the grammar is okay,...and the sentence structure is good...[the accent] doesn’t matter...”	“I don’t think we have to...but if I would adopt...[it] would be for better communication.”
“I think it’s nice to retain our Filipino accent because...you get to share your identity...and it breeds connections to other people...”	“...I don’t need to change my accent for as long as I live [in the Philippines].”

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHE: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FILIPINOS IN PH AND HK

“...personally,...yes [they should]”	“If they adopt more [native-like English accent], I think they will have more...opportunities.”
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Q: Have you ever encountered situations where you feel inclined to sound less Filipino?	
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In a more “academic setup” to “garner more...authority” - To communicate better with native English speakers

Q: Have you encountered any stereotypes associated with PhE?	
HK Participant	“Yes,...they kinda associate it with someone from a poor background.”

Q: Have you ever had an experience where someone treated you differently because they heard your PhE accent?	
HK Participant	“I think it's not by [someone with a] different nationality. Usually it will be the same. Like a Filipino will be the one treating you differently because of your English.”