Teaching English in Multiethnic Classroom:  
* A case study on phonemic variation of secondary school students in Central Kalimantan  

**Iwan Fauzi**  
English Education Study Programme  
FKIP of Palangka Raya University  
Indonesia  

*Abstract*—Teaching English in multicultural or in multiethnics situation presents a unique challenge as the question is often raised by English teachers as to which variety of English phonemes or pronunciation should be accurately accepted. Indonesia has approximately 757 languages to be spoken by the same number of their ethnic groups. Multicultural education is a very challenging issue to all aspects of study today, which has no exception in linguistics, where multiethnic students bear a unique perspective in the language repertoire, especially in the aspect of phonology. This paper (from the perspective of sociolinguistics) is the result of a case study in teaching English of speaking class to secondary school students in multiethnics classroom where English phonetic transcription used as the data comparison to find phonemic variations among students’ pronunciation. There were twenty students taken as the subject of the study which represented four ethnic groups of Indonesian; Dayak Ngaju, Banjar, Javanese, and Ma’anyan. The results showed that (1) the mother tongue accents of those ethnic groups influenced the way to pronounce phonemes of English; (2) those five ethnic groups had phonemic variation in speaking English in terms of vowel and consonant sounds.

*Keywords: multicultural education; English teaching; multiethnic classroom; speech sounds.*