

Non-native Attitudes toward Varieties of English

**A language attitude survey on Chinese postgraduate
students in the University of Edinburgh**

Exam No. B006360

MSc Applied Linguistics

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

2011

Acknowledgement

On the completion of my MSc Dissertation, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those whose suggestions and kindness have made this work possible. First of all, I am greatly indebted to my supervisor Professor John Joseph who gave me valuable instructions. His patient explanation of the knowledge and shrewd feedbacks have kept this study in the right direction. Every time I discussed with him, I got encouraged and inspired.

Secondly, I am very grateful to my Programme Director, Doctor Joseph Gafaranga, who is always helpful and kind to us, and those who have taught me during my memorable MSc year in the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, the University of Edinburgh: Professor Caroline Heycock, Professor Heinz Giegerich, Doctor Claire Cowie, Doctor Lauren Hall-Lew, Dr Peter Ackema. They have shown me into the fascinating world of linguistics and improved me in linguistic knowledge and research methodology.

My gratitude is also to my parents and friends, who constantly encourage and help me during the study, and always stand by my side: Zheng Han, Tianjiao Zeng, Yu Zhang, Yuan Xue, Shan Xue, Keran Qian, Xiaomang Wei, etc. And I am extremely grateful to the students at the University of Edinburgh who were willingly to be recorded for the verbal guise test, and those who spent their time to be the respondents of my study.

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Abstract

This study investigated the attitudes of 30 Chinese postgraduate students who were studying in the Business School, the University of Edinburgh, toward native and non-native varieties of English. In order to examine the attitudes, this study employed the verbal guise technique, in which seven varieties of English were selected for evaluation in the dimensions of status and solidarity: New York English, London English, Edinburgh English, Singapore English, Japanese English, Indian English, and Chinese English. The overall findings suggested that (1) Native varieties of English were favored by Chinese respondents, in especial the New York English and London English. (2) In terms of the solidarity dimension, the respondents held positive attitudes toward Chinese English. (3) The majority of the respondents in this study were able to identify whether the speech samples were native or non-native, however, the recognition rate of each variety of English was relatively lower.

Chapter 1 Introduction

English is used extensively and has been learned all over the world. According to Kachru (1985, 1992), China is part of the expanding circle as an 'English as Foreign Language' (EFL) country within the very influential World English Model. There is no official position for English language in China, however, English exerts substantial influence on almost all aspects of Chinese society. It is taught as a foreign language in the form of formal classroom education, has being earned widespread respect and great importance has been attached in the country's educational system. And the widespread of English language has initiated a great number of studies on language attitudes.

Most English learners in China are exposed to two regional varieties of English: British English and American English, and they may form specific language attitudes toward the two, but when the students came to an English-speaking country, being involved in a multicultural studying context and encounter many other native or non-native varieties of English, which are rarely or even never referred to in their EFL classrooms before they come to this English-speaking country, they may form certain attitudes, too, toward the varieties which are less familiar to them compared with the American English and British English, and these attitudes may have impact on their performance during their studies. According to Graddol (2006), China is expected to play a key role in the process of English as a world language, and the number of English speakers in China will rise dramatically in the next decade. Therefore, conducting research on Chinese attitudes toward varieties of English is necessary and essential for a better understanding of English being a global language.

The current study was conducted to approach the attitudes of Chinese postgraduate students, toward various varieties of English language they normally encounter when

they live and study in Edinburgh. The participants of this study were 30 Chinese students, who were doing their Master's degree in the business School of Edinburgh University. By looking at the results of the current study, the Chinese English learners' multifaceted attitudes toward varieties of English language can be accessed.

1.1 English education in China

With the process of globalization, the native speakers of English will not be the majority who speak English all over the world. As Bolton (2003:228) points out, there has been a dramatic and rapid spread of English throughout China in the last forty years. By 2010, there are over 400 million English learners in China and the number is rising fast, this makes China a country being in possession of the most English learners all over the world. English competence has become a commonly recognized yard stick for one's academic achievement, and it is believed as one of the most significant competitive power in the society. To get entrance to the universities, to find a decent job in the competitive job market, to be promoted to a better position, to travel abroad or to further one's study in a foreign country, English is undoubtedly the key point in almost every circumstance.

English is among the most commonly established curriculums in Chinese educational system, and it stretches over the longest period in one's academic career. In Chinese EFL classrooms, either British English or American English is applied as the linguistic model for studying. This is largely embodied in the English learning materials used when conducting English courses in EFL classrooms. For instance, the New Concept English, which is edited by an Englishman L. G. Alexander, has been the most popular English learning materials in China for more than 40 years. There are two English language versions of the New Concept English listening tapes: so-called 'British Standard English' and 'American Standard English'. English learners in China choose either one as their linguistic model. These two varieties of English

are quite familiar to Chinese English learners since they are extensively used as linguistic models in EFL classrooms, and hardly can other English variety, serve as the linguistic model in Chinese EFL classrooms instead of the two.

However, China is known as an EFL country where English is a mandatory curriculum but is barely applied outside the classrooms. After English classes, most Chinese English learners speak the Chinese language at home. However, with the process of the globalization and the economic change, China has been involved in the era of information explosion. Chinese English learners are exposed to more varieties of English from all kinds of information channels, such as the world Internet, the magazines, the TV programs, the radio broadcast, etc. Stereotypes of certain speech communities may be established during the exposure to such diversified cultures of different English-speaking countries.

If the information explosion endows Chinese English learners with a stimulated stage to uncover the diversified varieties of English, then for those Chinese English learners who has come to study in an English-speaking country in Chinese trend for studying abroad recent years, they are exposed to diversified varieties of English language in the real situation. In this multicultural situation, being standardized is no longer the priority of learning English than being communicative. They encounter varieties of English from all over the world, from the inner circle, outer circle and the expanding circle: from American English to London English, from European English to Asia English varieties such as Singapore English, Japanese English, Indian English, Hong Kong English, and the English variety most of the Chinese speak: Chinese English. Confronting with so many varieties of English, the Chinese English learners can form certain shared values, in other words, they form stereotypical attitudes toward these different speech communities.

The current study examined the attitudes Chinese postgraduate students formed toward seven varieties of English: New York English, London English, Edinburgh English, Singapore English, Japanese English, Indian English, and Chinese English. In the next section, relevant concepts and theories of studies on language attitudes will be introduced, and there will be a review on the relevant studies on language attitude, especially the studies on language attitude in China.

Chapter 2 Previous studies on language attitude

Overview

This chapter aims to provide a theoretical basis for the study by a review of the relevant language attitude research. At first there is a brief introduction of the concepts related to language attitude studies and the methods applied for the measurement of language attitudes. After this, the previous research on language attitudes are examined both in and out with China, special attention are put on the five recent studies on attitudes toward varieties of English in China.

2.1 Language attitude

The concept 'attitude' is of great significance in social psychology. And great importance has been attached to it in the field of sociolinguistics since Lobov's (1966) well-recognized study on speech communities' social satisfaction. Gardner and Lambert (1972) conducted the earliest study on language attitude of Canadian bilinguals. According to Lambert (1972), 'attitude has cognitive, affective and conative components and consists of an underlying psychological predisposition to act or to influence behaviors in a certain way. Attitude is linked to a person's values and beliefs and promotes or discourages the choices made in all realms of activity, whether academic or informal'.

Crystal (1992) defines language attitude as the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others. Studying language attitudes is essential for the substantial power of the attitude. On the one hand, language attitudes exert extensive influence on the development of languages. It is crucial to a language's growth, decay, restoration or destruction (Li 2005). As Crismore (1996) says, positive language attitude contributes to the acceptance and growth of language variations in a speech

community and it improves literacy levels. On the other hand, behaviors could be influenced by attitudes (Lambert 1972).

2.2 The Measurement of Attitudes

2.2.1 The matched guise technique and verbal guise technique

Matched guise technique, which is a form of indirect method of attitudinal measurement, is employed by most researchers in language attitude studies. Matched guise technique, which is first developed by Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert 1967; Lambert, Hodgson, Gardener and Fillenbaum, 1960), has been a classic and the most frequently used method in language attitude studies. The matched guise technique is often applied in combination with the semantic differential procedure, which was developed by Osgood (1964), for the measurement of attitudes. In the semantic differential procedure, opposite adjective pairs are listed in bi-polar rating scales for evaluation. According to Giles et al (1983:84), it is the "most popular technique used to elicit people's evaluate reactions", Jenkins referred matched guise technique as the standard social-psychological method used in studying people's evaluation of social groups based on their linguistic varieties (2007:66).

The main principle of matched guise technique is that, a pre-prepared passage is read by a single speaker in all the varieties required in a correct manner, and the respondents are asked to make evaluations on the personality and the status of the speaker according to a series of the recorded speech samples. Generally, the matched guise technique is based on the assumption that inside a speech community, people always share similar values toward groups of other language varieties. To be more precise, the approach of the matched guise technique is to investigate people's attitude via the stereotypes formed in their conscious toward certain contrasting groups rather than what they think of the individual speaker.

However, as such a classic method for language attitude studies, the matched guise technique has received lots of criticism until recent. In the first place, the matched guise technique only deals with attitudes toward the 'accents' of language varieties. For instance, in the classic language attitude study of Giles (1970), British attitudes toward 13 accents are investigated by using the instrument of the matched guise technique. As Giles suggests, the study of 'accent' merely focuses on the manner of pronunciation, with other grammatical, lexical, syntactical and morphological levels almost commensurate with the standard varieties (1970: 213). In the second place, the matched guise technique is criticized as an 'unnatural' or 'artificial' (Hiraga, 2005) way of testing language attitude. Simply the repetition of reading a prepared passage will not reflect the real situations of the language varieties involved. And according to Lee (1971), the repetition of a standard text is far away from the real-life context. Moreover, the repetition of the single passage may divert respondents' attention in the experiment.

The verbal guise technique, which is a modified version of matched guise technique, has been applied in more and more language attitude studies. It involves a series of different speakers who are recorded for the 'judges' to make the evaluation. Compared with matched guise technique, there are unavoidable paralinguistic variables in verbal guise technique which more or less, have impact on the results of the language attitude studies. For instance, the speed of speaking, the pitch and the tones of the speakers, the uncontrollable noises of the recording environment, will somewhat produce subtle effects on the evaluation process (Kerswill 2002, Buchstaller 2006). However, selecting several speakers of the English varieties involved makes the study much more authentic than a single speaker who disguises as different representatives of the language varieties.

2.2.2 Questionnaire and interview

The questionnaires and interviews are frequently applied in the studies on language attitudes, for they enable the researchers to approach the subjects' thoughts in a most direct and salient way (Gattet, Coupland and Williams, 2003). However, certain limitations exist for employing these two kinds of instruments. For questionnaires, non-native speakers may have difficulties on expressing their thoughts (Henerson et al., 1987) in the open-ended section. Besides, different people may have different interpretations on one particular question, which will affect the results of the studies. For the interviews, one of the obvious problems is the 'observer's paradox' (Labov, 1997), which means the interviewees are easily influenced by the interviewers.

2.3 Non-native language attitudes toward varieties of English

Beginning with the studies by Lambert and his colleagues (1967, 1960), the number of studies conducted on language attitude has been rising dramatically, especially on the measurement of the non-native language attitudes toward varieties of English. The overall findings of this kind of studies suggest that native and standard varieties were always rated positively, while non-native and non-standard speakers were often rated negatively on the dimensions of either status or solidarity (e.g. Ryan, Caranza and Moffie 1977; Ryan and Sebastian 1980; McKenzie 2008). For instance, the Received Pronunciation (RP), which is always considered as the pronunciation model for the English learners, has always obtained positive attitudes (Hiraga 2005; Zhang Qi 2009). However, not all the non-native varieties of English were regarded negatively. Gargile and Giles (1997) suggested that the perceptions of the speakers' particular group are also relevant. In their studies, University students in the US rated 'moderated-accented' English speaker lower on the solidarity dimension but highly on the status dimension. This finding was agreed by Hiraga (2005), who pointed that 'a variety rated higher of the status dimension will usually be rated lower in terms of the

solidarity dimension'. Also, Giles and Powesland (1975) and Edwards (1982) suggested that standard varieties were always ranked high on status and competence but fairly low on social attractiveness and personal integrity.

A great number of researches have been undertaken to investigate non-native English speakers' attitudes toward varieties of English. Chiba et al. (1995) examines the attitudes of Japanese university students toward varieties of spoken English, and they found the level of the participants' respect for indigenous languages have an influence on their attitudes toward non-native English accents, and their familiarity with accents affects their attitudes toward varieties of English.

A survey project was conducted by Friedrich (2000), aiming at investigating and describing the attitudes toward English language as well as learning English language in Brazil. He found that the respondents had stereotypical opinion toward English and learning. Besides, when people learned a language, they were dealing with feelings, stereotypes, expectations and prejudices.

Jennifer Jenkins (2007) conducted much significant research on current attitudes to English as Lingua Franca (EFL) and their impact on the formation of ELF speakers' identity. For instance, she conducted a survey on teachers' beliefs and attitudes by the application of the direct method: questionnaires. The participants were asked to rank various English accents. The result showed that the participants had a emotional attachment to British and American English.

McKenzie (2008), who conducted a study to evaluate the attitudes of Japanese learners toward six varieties of English, utilized the verbal guise technique in his study. McKenzie applied a specific semantic-differential scale and used it as the main method for attitudinal measurement. He concluded that Japanese informants held diversified and complicated views toward standard, non-standard, and native,

non-native varieties of English. They were particularly favored standard and non-standard varieties of UK and US English in terms of 'status'. Moreover, they expressed 'solidarity' with a heavily-accented Japanese speaker.

Tan and Daniel (2008) studied on attitudes toward non-standard English in Singapore by distributing questionnaires to 260 upper secondary pupils, and the findings suggested that subjects highly appreciated the value of Standard English, but in the mean time, Singapore English, the non-standard variety of English, played a very important role in the linguistic context. Both the standard and the non-standard varieties of English exerted great influence in this country.

2.4 Previous studies on language attitudes in China

Although attitudinal factors have attracted much attention in the fields of sociolinguistics and English language acquisition, and a number of studies on language attitudes toward varieties of English have been undertaken abroad, there are only limited studies conducted to investigate the non-native language attitudes toward varieties of English in China. A great number of studies conducted on language attitude in China focused on the comparison between attitudes toward Putonghua or Chinese dialects in a certain dialectal area (e.g. Cheng 2003; Zhang 2003; Wu 2007; Sun 2007; Xin, 2008; Li, 2010). And there are limited numbers of studies on attitudes toward English language.

2.4.1 Previous studies on language attitudes toward English in China

Language attitudes studies related to English language in China can be divided into two categories, the first category is to investigate the Chinese students' attitude toward English language learning, to be more specific, how do the Chinese English learners perceive the status, function, spread, impact and significance of English language in

China, and the influence these attitudes have to their performance in English language process. For instance, Hu Min (2009) studied non-English major college students' attitudes toward English learning; Lin Juan (2007) conducted attitude survey on EFL learners and investigate the image of English language in the eyes of college students. Wang Junming (2009) undertook similar studies on foreign college students, etc.

The other category of language attitude studies is to investigate the attitudes toward English language, for most studies, to make a comparison on the attitudes between English and Putonghua, or other local languages. For instance, Wang Zhili (2009) compared English major students' attitudes toward English with their attitudes toward Mandarin. Cao Jia (2007) investigated the college students' attitudes toward English and Chinese in Jilin province. Zhao Liming (2007) studied attitudes on English language, Putonghua and the dialect of Shenyang province in China. Similar studies were also conducted by Li Lahua (2005), etc.

2.4.2 Previous studies on language attitudes toward varieties of English in China

After dividing the studies on language attitudes in China into categories, it is found that only five recent studies have been done on language attitudes toward varieties of English in China through the last decade (Zhang Weimin et al 2008; Zhou and Chen 2008; Zhang Qi 2009; Evans 2010; Xu Wei et al 2010). All these five studies examined Chinese attitudes toward varieties of English. In the following part, these five studies will be reviewed in detail, and be compared in terms of the varieties of English chosen, research instruments, respondents, and their overall findings.

2.4.2.1 Varieties of English chosen

As to the varieties of English language the previous studies have selected, it is quite obvious that native and standard varieties of English were the main focus of the language attitude studies in China. Both the research conducted by Zhou and Chen (2008) and Zhang Weimin et al (2008) considered three regional varieties of English: British English, American English, and Australian English. These three varieties of English are regarded by the majority of the Chinese EFL learners as the three regional standards. Evans (2010) considered four standard varieties of English, in addition to the three regional standard in the previous two studies, Evans added English variety spoken in New Zealand. Only Zhang Qi (2009) and Xu Wei et al. (2010) referred to non-native and non-standard as well as native and standard varieties of English in their studies. Zhang Qi (2009) included eight English varieties: Received Pronunciation, Tyneside English, General American English, Australian English, Philippine English, Mandarin-accented English, and two Hong Kong varieties of English, one with a Broad accent and the other with an educated one. And Xu Wei et al. (2010) investigated six varieties: New York English, American English spoken in Seattle, British English spoken in Glasgow, British English spoken in Birmingham, Mandarin-accented English, and Cantonese-accented English.

2.4.2.2 Research instrument

The research instrument these five studies applied was mainly matched guise technique or its modified version: the verbal-guise technique. Zhang Weimin et al. (2008) applied the verbal-guise technique in their research. Participants were required to listen to three speech samples in which three female speakers spoke a 69-word passage of each variety, and made evaluations on the bi-polar semantic differential scales for 20 pairs of adjectives which were divided into three categories: 6 language-related qualities, 12 person-related qualities, and 2 teaching-related qualities.

It should be noted that all the speech samples were chosen from a speech accent archive website <http://classweb.gmu.edu/accent/> created by George Mason University. By applying these ready-recorded speech samples of the representative speakers on this website, the controversial point of whether the speakers chosen are suitable and representative enough can be avoided in a certain degree. Besides the verbal-guise technique, Zhang Weimin et al. (2008) also conducted a semi-structured interview to each participant upon the completion of the verbal-guise experiment. Two open-ended questions were asked: 1) what do you think about the survey? 2) What do you think of the three English varieties ---- American English, British English, or Australian English? However, certain limitations existed in this study. The results of the two questions were not displayed in detail in the discussion part, and the aim and significance of asking the first question were quite obscure. According to Henerson et al. (1987), non-native speakers may have difficulties in understanding the right direction of the question and in expressing their real thoughts in the open-ended question session. Moreover, there was no indication for the reasons of choosing and categorizing the 20 pairs of adjectives as the evaluation traits in this research.

In a similar way, Zhou and Chen (2008) also utilized the verbal-guise technique, and the speech samples were also selected from the ready-recorded materials of language varieties made by Bayard et al. (2001), instead of doing recording works on the selected speakers. The application of the ready-recorded speech samples could definitely improve the subjectiveness of the study, but this may evoke a debate on whether the experiment is 'empirical' or not.

The verbal-guise technique was also applied by Zhang Qi (2009), who selected two female speakers for each variety of English to ensure that the attitudes remain constant. All the speakers were required to read a factually neutral pre-selected text. The participants were asked to identify the speech samples before evaluating the speakers on the 5-point scale. The selection of traits in Zhang Qi's study (2009) was

through two focus group interviews and a pilot study. In the group interviews, in order to obtain native speakers' general reaction to the stimuli and choose the appropriate adjectives for the evaluation, Hong Kong students were required to describe the speakers in the stimuli, especially the Hong Kong English speakers. After this step, the students were asked to pick out the most appropriate and relevant adjectives from the 30 traits collected from the focus group interviews. In this way, the traits for evaluation were selected in this study. Given non-native speakers the rights to choose the traits for evaluation is quite important and meaningful, for the reason that they always have the most appropriate and relevant words for describing their own language varieties. This conforms to what McKenzie (2008) says, the final traits selected should be meaningful and salient for the investigated community.

Xu (2011) combined the verbal-guise technique and an informal retrospective interview together for the attitudinal measurement. Similar with the study conducted by Zhang Weimin et al. (2008), six recordings were chosen from the George Mason University's speech accent archive website <http://classweb.gmu.edu/accent/>. Compared with the other four studies on language attitudes in China, the speech samples chosen were all from male speakers instead of female speakers. The ten traits in this study were selected from the previous research (Hiraga 2005; McKenzie 2008). On the one hand, there was no further detailed explanation of how these 10 adjectives were chosen among a great number of adjectives in Hiraga (2005) and McKenzie's (2008) studies. On the other hand, non-native English speakers often have different interpretations from the native English speakers, thus it is necessary for the native speakers to choose the appropriate and relevant adjectives to their speech community according to their own understanding. In Zhang Qi's study (2009) which is mentioned above, two focus group interviews and a pilot study were applied for selecting the appropriate traits, through these steps, the traits chosen are meaningful and salient for the investigated community.

The instrument Evans (2010) used was different from the other four studies, Evans conducted the research via simply an open-ended questionnaire in Chinese. There were only two questions to the respondents: 1) 'Name countries around the world where you know English is spoken as a native language'; 2) 'What kind of impression do you get when you hear these varieties?' By applying questionnaires with open-ended questions, spontaneous emotional and cognitive responses can be perceived in a direct way (Cargile, 2002), and according to the author, this method could significantly avoid the inherent restrictions of the matched guise and verbal guise technique. Besides the matched guise and verbal guise techniques, the conceptual techniques Evans (2010) used had been accepted as a productive approach to the research on language attitudes (e.g. Giles 1970; Preston 1999). The questionnaires were analyzed using a content analysis (Krippendorf 2004) in which the key words were noted and categorized for further discussions. By the application of the open-ended questionnaires, the respondents' real thoughts could be approached directly by the researcher. Although the method achieved the final aim of this study, it can only be applied in studies which aim to investigate the respondents' impressions of the language varieties in quite a general way, in most circumstances, to investigate attitudes toward regional standard languages. To be more specific, a Chinese respondent who knows British Standard English does not necessarily know English spoken in Glasgow. Therefore, the method in Evans's (2010) study may not be an appropriate one for the studies which including non-standard varieties of English.

2.4.2.3 Respondents

Among the five studies, the overwhelming majority of the respondents were university students studying in Chinese universities. Zhou et al. (2008) selected 101 third-year college students who were majoring in English language from a Normal university, 9 males and 92 females were included. The respondents of Zhang's study (2009) were from two universities in Hong Kong, for the reason that the author aimed

to investigate the students with different academic profiles. Xu (2011) selected 108 second year college students majoring in software technology as the respondents, including 7 males and 101 females. And Evans (2010) made a survey on 241 university students at Dalian University of Technology in China, with 97 males and 144 females and 6 gave no response about gender. Different from others, only the respondents in the research conducted by Zhang et al. (2008) were Chinese students who were studying in a English native-speaking country. They were 30 Chinese students who were pursuing Masters or Doctoral degrees in a southern US university.

2.4.4.4 Overall findings

The overall findings of the five studies on language attitudes in China demonstrated the respondents' overwhelmingly preference for native and standard varieties of English, British English and American English in particular. The study of Zhang (2009) showed that the 'inner circle varieties': RP, General American and Australian were more favored than either of the local varieties in Hong Kong. However, the two local varieties in Hong Kong were not ranked higher on either the dimension of status or solidarity. Similarly, the verbal guise experiment conducted by Xu et al. (2010) showed that the respondents preferred native varieties to non-native ones, and standard varieties to non-standard ones. The respondents' attitudes were influenced by their learning environment and the 'entrenched native models' in their English teaching materials. Besides, Xu et al. (2010) found most of the respondents were aware of the diversified forms of English language all over the world. Zhang et al. (2011) concluded that second-language learners had an overwhelming preference to the varieties of English they have been exposed to, that is, American English and British English. However, their attitudes did not relate to the understandability of the passage in the speech samples.

Zhou et al. (2008) suggested that although the respondents' English pronunciation had much more features in common with the British English, they rated higher on American English than British English, and they would prefer American English as their linguistic model in EFL classrooms. On the contrary, Evans's research (2009) indicated that the British English was preferred to be a model for a 'standard' variety of world English compared to the American English. This finding was consistent with the research conducted by Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006), and was similar with the results of Marr's (2005) research, in which respondents valued the British English for its ability to project properties of 'correctness' and 'tradition', and they valued the American English for its ability to project properties of 'trendness' or 'coolness'. In Evans's research (2009), the American English was considered as a pleasant variety but it had lower status than the British English. Moreover, the respondents in this study found it difficult to rate Australian English and New Zealand English because these two varieties were unfamiliar to them.

2.4.4.5 Conclusions on the review of previous studies on language attitudes in China

To sum up, the previous five studies on language attitudes toward varieties of English in China mainly investigated Chinese university students' attitudes toward native varieties of English by applying the verbal guise technique, with some studies combined this indirect method with direct ones such as interviews. However, there are certain points that these five recent studies have not referred to, and much research should be done to investigate Chinese attitudes toward varieties of English in a comprehensive way. The gaps of the previous studies on language attitudes toward varieties of English in China are indicated as the following:

In the first place, all the five studies investigate attitudes toward varieties of English on the level of 'accents' but not 'dialects' according to Giles's (1970) definition on

'accent' and 'dialect', for besides the manner of pronunciation, other elements of the speech should be studied as well, for example, grammar, lexicon, syntax and morphology of the speech are all embodied in the speech samples. In all the verbal guise experiments conducted in China, the researchers recorded pre-prepared texts instead of the spontaneous speeches.

In the second place, non-native and non-standard varieties of English were not studied fully since the focus of language attitude studies in China was often on native and standard varieties of English. Only Zhang (2009) and Xu et al. (2010) paid attention on non-standard English in the 'inner circle', and the non-native English in the 'outer circle' and the 'expanding circle', whereas researchers abroad have conducted much research on non-native language attitudes (e.g. Jenkins 2000; Lindemann 2003; McKenzie 2008).

Furthermore, most respondents in these studies were Chinese university students. The research contexts were all based on Chinese English learning environment except Zhang et al. (2008), they investigated Chinese students who were studying in the United States and the average length of their residence in the United States were four years. This experience of living and studying in a English-speaking country gave the respondents real exposure to the language environment which was distinctive from those who were living in a non-native English speaking country. Compared with the respondents in Evans's (2009) research, these respondents who have been living abroad were more familiar with the language varieties being investigated.

Besides, in the aspect of the methods they applied, three studies out of the five selected the ready-recorded speech samples from speech accent archive websites instead of doing the recording works. This may guarantee the representativeness of the speech samples, but in the meantime, may raise the question of whether the study is empirical or not.

Last but not least, most studies chose the traits on the basis of previous language attitude studies abroad, except Zhang (2009), who did two group interviews and one pilot study, letting the local speakers to choose the most appropriate adjectives to their own society. The traits which were directly chosen from the previous studies abroad may not be salient and meaningful in the application of Chinese context, since different speech communities always hold diversified attitudes toward their own society, and they may have different interpretations on the adjectives.

From what have discussed above, and in order to overcome the limitations of the previous studies in China, the current study investigated the attitudes toward native and non-native, standard and non-standard of English on the level of 'dialect' instead of 'accent'. The respondents were 30 Chinese postgraduate students who were doing their Master's degree in the Business School of the University of Edinburgh. The research method applied was the verbal guise technique. In the next chapter, the methodology of the current study will be illustrated in detail.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Overview

This chapter illustrates how this study was designed. At first the objectives of the study is outlined. Then the instrument applied in the current study is demonstrated in detail. After that there is a detailed account of the rationale and the procedure of conducting the verbal guise experiment, which includes the selection of the respondents, the speakers and the personality traits for evaluation.

3.1 The objectives of the study

As described in the previous chapters, the relevant studies on language attitudes in China were mainly focused on the native and standard varieties of English on the aspect of 'accent'. With an attempt to filling the gap of investigating dialectal differences on non-native and non-standard varieties of English as well as native and standard varieties, this study aims at investigating non-native language attitudes in a native English-speaking context: Chinese postgraduate students' attitudes toward varieties of English in Edinburgh University.

3.1.1 Research questions

According to the objective of this study, the research questions are listed as follows:

- a. Are Chinese postgraduate students who are studying in Edinburgh able to identify the varieties of English investigated in this study?
- b. What are Chinese postgraduate students' attitudes toward native and non-native varieties of English language, or to be more specific, what are their attitudes toward varieties of English from the three circles of Kachru's World English Model (1985, 1992): the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle?

3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in the current study was the verbal guise technique (Ball and Giles, 1982). According to what have been discussed above on the limitations of the matched guise technique and the objectives of this study, it is inappropriate to utilize the matched guise technique here although it is the classic and most frequently applied indirect method on language attitude studies. The reasons for using verbal guise technique are displayed as follows:

First, the current study paid attention on 'dialects' rather than 'accents', therefore, it was inappropriate to use the matched guise technique for the simple reason that the leading direction of the method is divergent from the focus of the current study, since besides the manner of pronunciation, other elements of the speeches such as grammatical, lexical, syntactical and morphological levels will all be embodied in the speech samples. This study required the speakers to make spontaneous speeches upon a given topic. Besides, it was a challenge to choose a speaker who could speak all the English varieties correctly for the current study, since the study involved seven varieties of English which were across the national boundaries. Hardly could I find a speaker in Edinburgh who could perform not only native but also non-native varieties of English in a accurate level.

In the session of the verbal guise test, this study utilized a semantic-differential scale for the measurement of attitudes. The bi-polar adjectives used in this scale were selected through a pilot study, which will be described in part 3.5 of this chapter. The semantic-differential scale used in this study is presented as the following table:

Table 1 Verbal guise study: the semantic-differential scale

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(Score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

In the next section, I will introduce how to select the speakers and the detailed procedure of conducting this study, because for the verbal guise technique, how to minimize the potential influence of the differences among the speakers is of great significance, for the authenticity of such a research design as well as the final results of the study.

3.3 The selection of the varieties of English

As this study aimed at evaluating Chinese postgraduates' attitudes toward native and non-native varieties of English speech from the three circles of Kachru's World English Model (1985, 1992), seven varieties of English were chosen. The seven varieties included: three varieties from the inner circle: New York English, London English, Edinburgh English; two varieties from the expanding circle: Singapore English and Indian English; and two varieties from the outer circle: Japanese English

and Chinese English. The descriptions of the speech varieties chosen are illustrated in the following table:

Table 2: Varieties of English chosen in this study and their descriptions

Speaker	Speech Variety	Description
1	New York English	Native Inner circle English
2	London English	Native Inner circle English
3	Edinburgh English	Native Inner circle English
4	Singapore English	Non-native Outer circle English
5	Indian English	Non-native Outer circle English
6	Japanese English	Non-native Expanding circle English
7	Chinese English	Non-native Expanding circle English

Due to the internationalization of Edinburgh University, all these varieties were commonly encountered by Chinese postgraduate students in their studying and living in Edinburgh. By comparing the results of the former and latter three English varieties, the participants' attitudes toward native and non-native varieties of English speech can be observed. And by comparing the first three varieties with the following two varieties and the last two varieties, the respondents' attitudes toward the varieties of English from the three circles of the World English Model can be approached.

New York English represents a variety of English in the United States. Most of Chinese English learners were familiar with this variety because of the development of the media such as the TV programs, the radio broadcasting, and the prevalence of the soap operas from American, etc. Both London English and Edinburgh English are

varieties of English from the United Kingdom. The former was chosen to represent a nearly 'standard' variety of English, for the majority of Chinese English learners, London English was regarded as a quite 'standard' variety. While the Edinburgh English represents a variety which the Chinese respondents commonly encountered in Edinburgh, and which was different from London English. All these three varieties of English mentioned above are native varieties of English speech in the inner circle of Kachru's World English Model (1985, 1992).

Singapore English and Indian English were selected to represent non-native varieties of English from the outer circle of the World English Model. The study of Singapore English and Indian English is rather significant for its multilingual culture, many studies were conducted on Singapore English (e.g. Tan et al. 2008; Fang and Yuan 2009), and on Indian English (e.g. Lindemann 2003; Kim 2007). Japanese English was a typical variety of English which is involved in the expanding circle, and researchers have studied on the Japanese attitudes toward varieties of English and have made salient contributions to the area of non-native language attitudes (e.g. Chiba et al. 1995; McKenzie 2008).

Chinese English, or Mandarin-accented English is attracting increasing attention of linguists, researchers and educators recently (e.g. Wang Rongpei 1991; Jiang Yajun 1995; Li Wenzhong 1993), and according to Jenkins (2009), China English will become the most common variety of English spoken in Asia. Although there is always a debate on whether Chinese English should be considered as a variety of English, it was chosen in the current study for the significance of the study on it. Besides British Standard English and American Standard English, Chinese English exerts great influence to Chinese postgraduate students, not only because it is the English they speak, but also what they encounter most in the process of their English learning. Thus it is necessary to investigate Chinese English learners' attitudes toward Chinese English.

3.4 The selection of the speakers

Seven female speakers were involved in the study, with each represented one variety of English. All speakers chosen were students from Edinburgh University via the method of friend of a friend. To minimize the potential influence of the paralinguistic variables, all the speakers chosen were females. They were carefully selected for native speakers of their respective codes, and non-native English speakers at an advanced level in English speaking, and overall, they were in possession of fairly good voice qualities. In order to collect appropriate speech samples of the selected varieties, I asked several people to do the reviewing and the identification works of the recorded speech samples: one British native speaker from the university for the British standard English and Edinburgh English; one of my classmate, who was a Chinese college lecturer, for the reviewing of Chinese English; and one research student in linguistic department for other varieties of English. All of them were quite sensitive to language varieties, for the reason that all of them were involved in studies concerning language or linguistic in the University of Edinburgh. They agreed that the speech samples can reflect the features of the varieties of English to a great extent, and they could hardly tell the age differences of the speakers. This procedure is of great importance, for the deciding influence the speech samples might have on the final result of the study. The details of the speakers were illustrated in table 3:

Table 3: Background information of the selected speakers

Speaker	Age	Nationality	Hometown	Program (in the University of Edinburgh)
New York English	23	American	North Cornway, New Hampshire	MA Art History
London English	23	The United Kingdom	London, UK	MA Chinese and Russian
Edinburgh English	24	The United Kingdom	Edinburgh, UK	MSc Exploration Geophysics

Singapore English	30	Singaporean	Singapore	MSc Applied Linguistics
Indian English	25	Indian	New Deli, India	MSc Genetics
Japanese English	24	Japanese	Kyoto, Japan	MSc Developmental Linguistics
Chinese English	23	Chinese	Shaanxi Province, China	MSc Education

Before doing the actual recording works, I conducted a very quick interview to each selected speaker, and these small interviews mainly focus on the speakers' ethnographic information. On the other side, these kinds of small question and answer conversations may relax and then speak in a more natural manner in the recording process. The questions for examples included: how old are you? What is your mother tongue? Where did you grow up and how long have you stay there? How often do you speak the language variety in your daily life? After this section, all speakers were required to make a short speech on the same topic: 'what is your favorite movie? And please illustrate the reasons.' The speakers were given two minutes for preparing the content of the speech. And the length of each speech was controlled within 90 seconds.

3.5 The transcript of the speakers

Speaker 1: New York English

So my favorite movie is the Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, and I really like it because first it's a love story. And second because, I think it's Jim Carrey's role after, em... I think it's a famous series role. Em... Maybe it's quite strange half surrounded from places in his mind I kind of like that it goes, and em the real world, and it reminds me a lot of the relationship I want to have I guess that's why em I kind of like it as well. And the music is really good, the song tracks are my favorite's. Em now I

guess I also like it because I can relate to the main female character, just a kind of... yeah, I kind of relate to her in that way, but the movie is shot really well, it's em very artistically done, and all the colors are really beautiful, the animation is excellent, and yeah, I guess that's why it's my favorite movie.

Speaker 2: London English

My favorite movie is em... Kong Fu Panda, you know, I watched Kong Fu Panda 2 in cinema recently, I really love it! Actually I love both of them, but...I would say I love the first one more, yeah, coz I watched it first, haha. Em... The story's really good, the voice acting is excellent, especially that by Jack Black. And the CG animation is amazing, probably the best of DreamWorks. And em... This movie also inspires some lessons in life. You can think of someone who has dream of doing something impossible, just like PO. The movie tells us that... If you believe in yourself, you can actually do anything. Yeah, I think that's why I love this movie.

Speaker 3: Edinburgh English

Well my favorite movie is, em...has to be, the Star Wars Movies, em... I watched all of them, and I watched it since I was really young, I watched it very recently and you know, it's fantastic, there are all things great set on that movies, the original three are by far the best ones, the classic story line, and corruption, love. It is not what I was expected, I guess, I think it is a fantastic movie for going to see in the cinema when it first came out. The original, em the new ones, the new three, em I don't like that much, while the last one is pretty good, with the must-see battle scene, I really don't like the character J, he's a kind of being short, and trying to keep younger, keeps happy during the movie, and I don't think it works that well. Seeing that three movies the new ones are, are quite good, but I don't know the, the old ones. They have the same story line. Watching back the six movies, they all have a really good story. And the first three ones, the new ones, do give good backdrops to the older ones a good storyline.

Speaker 4: Singapore English

One of my favorite movies is the famous French movie called Leon. It mainly depicts the subtle interactions between a lonely killer and a little girl who has complicated life experience and... a strong personality. Though the killer Leon seems from appearance to be quite cold and... He, in fact, has quite innocent and genuine inner feelings and temperament. They cooperate in accomplishing many tasks and offer emotional supports to each other. Finally, Leon satisfied himself in order to save the sharp contrast between the killer's cold appearance and kind inner heart makes the film quite attractive.

Speaker 5: Indian English

Em, my favorite movies is, are basically, comedy movies, things which are very humorous, light-hearted, reach happy endings. So I don't know the certain very word, or this is a sad face, that is a happy face in the movie, just...fun. I also like movies about love, that's again the same genre, coz... it's simple, it's again happy, there's no sad... That's, so that's the kind of movies I like, some of these movies are Princess's diaries, and... Best Friend's Wedding, em...the, there is another movie I don't remember, what's the movie...ah.. I forget the name of the movie, yeah, basically movies of that genre, which are very light-hearted, very simple. And I like a lot of cartoon movies.

Speaker 6: Japanese English

Ok, well... my favorite movie is a Japanese movie called NANA. Indeed I watched it several times and every time I watched it, I cried. It is really a touching Japanese film. The story is about em... two girls, whose names are the same, called NANA, they live together, trying to know each other, and there are lots of stories happened between them. At first the story seems em... A little bit boring, but it turns out to be different, I mean, if you watch this movie, you will understanding the characters' real feelings, from their angles, then it turns to be interesting and em... touching.

Speaker 7: Chinese English

Em, my favorite movie is, a kind of movie, is a type of movie... yeah I like romantic movies, and action movies. And what impresses me most, in the action movie recently is Ip Man. It's about a Chinese Kongfu master who had a fight with the Japanese. And I think it shows a lot of patriotism. And I was really moved by that movie. And...em...another type of movie is, movie which is about love, and the most recent one I have watched called Revolutionary Road, because I love, I like the actor. It was casted by Leonardo DiCaprio. He's really handsome and I think he's a good actor who can act the character into his own personalities.

3.6 The selection of traits

Before conducting the experiment, it is necessary to decide what kind of traits should be selected. According to McKenzie (2008), it is of crucial significance to examine the traits used and to make sure that the traits chosen are meaningful and salient for the community involved in the research. The current research studies Chinese postgraduate students' attitudes toward a range of varieties of English in the dimensions of status and solidarity. Therefore, equal numbers of adjectives in each dimension were considered in this study.

A small separate pilot study was carried out to select the most appropriate traits. Before this pilot study, I listed the candidates of the adjectives on the questionnaire sheet based on the previous studies on language attitude. The adjectives were mainly chosen from Lambert et al. (1960, 1965), Lambert (1967), Giles (1970), Giles and Powesland(1975), Hiraga (2005), McKenzie (2008), etc. The candidate adjectives were: honest, sociable, kind, friendly, intelligent, clear, confident, sophisticated, careful, skilled, fluent, elegant, reliable, considerate, funny, pleasant, modest, gentle, affectionate, sincere, religious, comforting, trustworthy, warm, cold, calm, and helpful. The participants of this pilot study were my colleagues including six from MSc Applied Linguistics, three from MSc English Language and three from MSc TESOL

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), all of them were Chinese native speakers. The reason why I chose them as participants in this pilot study is that first, they could understand and select the most appropriate and relevant adjectives to their own speech community. Second, they were quite sensitive and familiar to the connotations of these adjectives as their studies were concerned with English language knowledge. According to the result, I selected five most selected traits for the status content: intelligent, confident, fluent, clear, sociable; and five most selected traits for the solidarity: pleasant, funny, modest, friendly, sincere. These ten adjectives along with their opposites were selected and put on the bi-polar semantic-differential scale (table 1).

3.7 The selection of respondents

According to Alford and Strother (1990), the international students, who have only been in the native English-speaking country for several months, have enough time to 'surface-level value judgments' about the area in which they were living, in this study, Edinburgh, and they have much less time to form complicated values about the individual characteristics of the interrelationships among parts of the country. Therefore, for the above reasons, the international students' attitudes toward the varieties of English in this study are much more meaningful. In my experiment, the participants selected were 30 Chinese students who were doing their Master's degree in the Business School of Edinburgh University, and all of them were from the three Programmes: MSc Management, MSc International Business and Emerging Market, and MSc Accounting and Finance. This guarantees that none of these students were involved in linguistics or any subjects related to language.

Before respondents' listening to the speech samples, they were required to fill in the first part of the verbal guise questionnaire, which was about their personal information including their age, English language studying history, length of exposure

in English speaking countries, etc. In total, there were 30 valid questionnaires returned with the equal number of male and female respondents.

3.8 Procedure

The data collection was undertaken in the University of Edinburgh over a period of two weeks from June to July 2011. And the verbal guise experiment mainly took place in the small meeting rooms of Dugald Stewart Building, others in the ground floor studying rooms of the Business School. In total, 30 respondents from the Business School of Edinburgh University participated in the main experiment. Considering the respondents' time availability, I separated the respondents into small groups, with two to three respondents a group for the listening and evaluation, and due to the respondents' different time arrangement, some of them did it in individual. Under the small groups, I was able to observe and make sure that each respondent fill in the questionnaire sheet completely. Besides, the small groups ensured that each respondent could listen to the recordings clearly without too many distractions.

At the very beginning, the respondents were welcomed and informed of the general procedures of the study. After that, the respondents were required to fill in the first part of the verbal guise questionnaire (see Appendix): Personal Information. This part included their age, gender, English learning history, and length of exposure to English language in the English-speaking country or countries, etc. In the second part, the six speech samples were played to the respondents by a Lenovo computer which had a fairly good sound system, this ensured that all the respondents could hear the recordings clearly. In the meantime, they were asked to make evaluation and identification on each of the speech sample they had heard on a seven-point scale on the two dimensions of status and solidarity. In the end of the experiment, the respondents were told the nature of the study was to investigate their attitudes toward

varieties of English they had encountered in the English-speaking country. Also they were informed of their rights of knowing the results of this study.

Overall, there were two parts for the respondents in the verbal guise experiment. In the first part, filling their personal information. And in the second part, rating the seven speech samples on the seven-point scale and doing the identification of where the speakers were from. Afterwards, the average judgment was calculated for each combination of trait and guise. In the next chapter, the collected data will be coded and analyzed in strict statistical procedures.

Chapter 4 Findings and Interpretation

Overview

Chapter 4 presents the statistical findings from the verbal guise experiment illustrated in Chapter 3. The data was analyzed in three parts. First, the overall ratings of the seven varieties by Chinese students; second, the separate ratings of the varieties in terms of two dimensions: status and solidarity; last, the recognition rate in the identification stage.

4.1 Respondents personal information

From the first part of the questionnaire, the respondents' personal information were obtained. The respondents included equal numbers of males and females, their age ranged from 23 to 27. For 28 respondents, the United Kingdom was the only English-speaking country they have been to, only 2 respondents had been to other native English-speaking countries, with one to Philippines and the other Australia. All the respondents have been lived in Edinburgh, the United Kingdom from 10 months to 12 months when the data was collected on June. 29 out of the 30 respondents claimed that they have been learning English language for more than 10 years, from 10 years to 16 years. Only 1 respondent have been learning English for 7 years. Of all the 30 respondents, the average length of learning English was 13.2 years.

4.2 Respondents' evaluation on ten personality traits

Table 4 Mean ratings of the seven speakers on ten traits (N=30)

speaker	Trait									
	intelligent	confident	fluent	sociable	clear	funny	friendly	pleasant	modest	sincere
NyE	<i>2.57</i>	<i>1.67</i>	<i>1.23</i>	<i>1.40</i>	<i>1.53</i>	3.07	<i>1.47</i>	<i>1.87</i>	3.07	2.23
LdE	2.60	1.90	1.37	2.20	1.67	4.00	1.93	1.90	<i>2.60</i>	<i>1.80</i>
EdE	3.27	2.73	1.90	2.67	3.97	3.23	1.97	3.27	2.87	2.13
SiE	3.97	3.87	3.83	4.10	4.70	3.70	3.67	4.47	2.67	2.47
InE	4.40	3.93	2.80	3.57	5.30	2.87	3.27	5.50	4.23	4.30
JaE	3.60	3.57	2.80	2.77	3.87	3.23	2.93	3.87	3.37	2.43
ChE	3.60	3.90	3.70	3.27	2.10	4.40	2.10	2.20	2.23	1.87

(Score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

The first stage of the data analysis was to look at the overall evaluations of the seven speakers on the ten traits. The mean ratings of the seven speakers on each trait were calculated by the software EXCEL. Scores are from a range of 1 to 7, where lower scores refer to the evaluatively positive end of the continuum.

Table 4 is a descriptive presentation of the respondents' overall ratings of the seven speakers on the ten traits. In each category, the lowest rating is italicized, as a rating of 1 being the most positive and favorable evaluation. Generally speaking, there were a overwhelmingly preference of New York English and London English. Except the two traits funny and modest, London English and New York English were rated at the first two most favored varieties of all the other eight traits. The American speaker representing New York English was preferred by the Chinese students as the most favorable variety on the traits: intelligent, confident, fluent, sociable, clear, friendly, and the most pleasant one. New York English received the highest rankings on seven

of the ten traits, while London English were rated as the most modest and sincere one, and it was also ranked second on the traits intelligent, confident, fluent, sociable, clear, friendly, and pleasant, though for many traits, the mean ratings of London English and New York English were quite approximate.

Compared with London English, Edinburgh English was rated after it on each of the ten traits. Although statistics shows that in terms of friendliness, modesty and sincerity, the ratings of the two varieties of English were approximate, overall, the respondents were more favored of London English than Edinburgh English. Meanwhile, by comparing the former three inner circle varieties of English with the other four varieties in outer and expanding circles, it can be found that in terms of intelligence, confidence, fluency, sociability and friendliness, the New York English, London English and Edinburgh English were all rated as the first three varieties. As seen from the table, the native speakers of English were more favored and preferred than all the non-native speakers, although this was not the case in every trait, for instance, Indian English was regarded as the funniest variety of the seven.

Besides the overall favorable inner circle varieties of English, Chinese English was preferred on certain traits. On the evaluation of the traits clear and pleasant, Chinese English was more favored than other varieties of English except the New York English and London English. What is more, Chinese English was regarded as the most modest varieties of all the seven varieties, and it was ranked the second most sincere variety following London English. However, Chinese English was considered as not funny compared with other varieties, and the Chinese speaker was not confident according to the respondents. The other English variety in the expanding circle Japanese English was always ranked in a moderately middle place. As for the varieties of English involved in the outer circle countries, Singapore English was rated as not fluent, sociable, funny and friendly. Indian English was regarded to be not

intelligent, confident, clear, pleasant, modest and sincere, but it was the funniest variety in Chinese students' eyes.

Table 5 Meaning ratings and standard deviations of the seven varieties

Ranking	Speech variety	Mean	Standard deviation	N
1	NyE	2.011	.68693	30
2	LdE	2.197	.74017	30
3	EdE	2.801	.66417	30
4	ChE	2.937	.92993	30
5	JaE	3.244	.49619	30
6	SiE	3.745	.70127	30
7	InE	4.017	.92374	30

(Score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Table 5 given above demonstrates the rankings of the attitude differences among the seven varieties as a whole. The respondents' evaluation of the ten traits has not been categorized into two dimensions of status and solidarity. The standard deviations suggest the Chinese respondents' attitudes were in consistency. When the overall differences of the respondents' ratings are compared, a clear hierarchy appears, where Chinese respondents rated inner circle varieties of English more positively than the varieties from the expanding circle, and varieties from the outer circle was rated the lowest. What is more, Chinese students had a particular preference toward New York English, this is in conformity with the study of Zhou et al. (2008), in which English-major university students in China held more favorable attitudes toward American English than British English.

As is shown in table 5, New York English was assigned as the most favored variety, following by London English. In addition with Edinburgh English, these three inner circle varieties of English were rated as the first three preferred varieties. These were followed by Chinese English and Japanese English. Indian English was seen as the lowest ranking variety. Singapore English was rated relatively low in the ranking, just before Indian English, for the reason that some of the respondents were not very familiar with Singapore English.

4.2.1 Status and Solidarity

In this section, the respondents' attitudes toward each dimension of status and solidarity are reviewed separately.

4.2.1.1 The status rating of each variety of English

In the current study, the traits of status dimension were intelligent, confident, fluent, clear, and sociable. The status rating was thus generated from the ratings of these five traits. The status rating of the seven varieties of English are displayed in the following table:

Table 6 Status rating and standard deviations of the seven varieties of English

Ranking	Speech variety	Mean	Standard deviation	N
1	NyE	1.680	0.52335	30
2	LdE	1.948	0.47494	30
3	EdE	2.908	0.76865	30
4	ChE	3.314	0.71588	30
5	JaE	3.322	0.50405	30
6	InE	4.000	0.93271	30

7	SiE	4.094	0.35444	30
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(Score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

From the table above, it can be seen from the standard deviations that the respondents did not hold divergent attitudes in terms of status dimension, New York English was still ranked as the highest one among all the seven varieties, this was followed by London English. The result is similar to McKenzie's (2008) research on Japanese attitudes toward varieties of English, where Japanese English learners were in particular favor of UK and US English in terms of 'status'. Edinburgh English was ranked as the third. From this, it is clear that the three inner circle English varieties received the highest rankings in the perspective of status. Chinese English and Japanese English, which are varieties of English in the expanding circle, were rated as the fourth and fifth. Indian English was ranked higher than Singapore English, which was ranked as the lowest variety in terms of 'status'.

4.2.1.2 The solidarity rating of each variety of English

This part will illustrate the result collected from the perspective of solidarity. The result was generated from the other five traits selected in this study: funny, friendly, pleasant, modest, and sincere.

Table 7 Solidarity rating and standard deviations of the seven varieties

Ranking	Speech variety	Mean	Standard deviation	N
1	NyE	2.342	0.71688	30
2	LdE	2.446	0.92471	30
3	ChE	2.560	1.03824	30
4	EdE	2.694	0.61080	30
5	JaE	3.166	0.53355	30

6	SiE	3.396	0.82242	30
7	InE	4.034	1.02432	30

(Score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Table 7 demonstrates the ratings of the seven varieties in the dimension of solidarity. With regard to the dimension of solidarity, New York English and London English were ranked as the highest, while the Indian English received the lowest ranking. In comparison with the ranking of status (see table 6 in 4.2.1), New York English and London English were still ranked as the first two varieties on solidarity rating. This is contradictory to Hiraga's (2005) point 'a variety rated higher of the status dimension will usually be rated lower in terms of the solidarity dimension'.

However, it is worth noticing that the Chinese English, a variety of English in the expanding circle, was rated as the third on the dimension of solidarity. And it is followed by Edinburgh English, which is involved in the inner circle English-speaking countries. Japanese English was still ranked in the middle. Indian English was rated the lowest in the ranking on solidarity, while Singapore English, which was rated as the lowest in the dimension of status in table 6, ranked before Indian English in the dimension of solidarity.

4.3 The respondents' identification of the varieties of English

Table 8 Listeners' identification rate of the speakers (N=30)

Speaker	Rate of identification (percentage)						
	New York	London	Edinburgh	Singapore	India	Japan	China
NyE	56.7	6.7	0.0	10.0	3.3	6.7	7.0
LdE	23.3	43.3	13.3	6.7	3.3	0.0	10.0
EdE	6.7	6.7	53.3	13.3	10.0	6.7	3.3

SiE	6.7	10.0	20.0	26.7	6.7	13.3	16.7
InE	6.7	0.0	10.0	3.3	73.3	6.7	0.0
JaE	20.0	10.0	6.7	6.7	0.0	23.3	10.0
ChE	3.3	13.3	3.3	10.0	0.0	3.3	66.7

Respondents were required to identify where the speaker was from after the evaluation of each speaker in the verbal guise experiment. As is illustrated in table 8, Indian English received the highest accuracy rate (73.3%) of all the seven varieties. The respondents identified their own variety Chinese English as the second correct one (66.7%), which was followed by New York English (56.7%), Edinburgh English (53.3%), and London English (43.3%). It can be observed that Japanese English (23.3%), was the most unidentifiable variety, which was after Singapore English (26.7%).

Table 9 Identification of native and non-native speakers (N=30)

Speaker	Rate of identification (percentage)	
	Native variety	Non-native variety
NyE	63.2	26.8
LdE	80.0	20.0
EdE	66.7	23.3
SiE	36.7	63.3
InE	16.7	83.3
JaE	36.7	63.3
ChE	20.0	80.0

From table 8, the respondents' identification of native and non-native varieties of English can be calculated, the results are shown in table 9. As in table 9, the majority of the respondents could identify native or non-native varieties of English correctly,

but in the mean time, some of the respondents were less aware of distinguishing the native and non-native varieties.

Several previous studies have involved the identification tasks after the matched guise or verbal guise session (e.g. Williams et al. 1999; Bayard et al. 2001). According to Preston (1989, 1993), the studies in which information on listeners' beliefs about the speakers' social groups may be misleading, because the respondents may believe one speaker is from another speech community and thus make evaluations on the speech community instead of the intended group to be investigated. However, in the studies conducted by Milroy and McClenaghan (1977), although the listeners failed to identify the accents correctly, the predicted evaluations of the varieties ---- Scottish, southern Irish, Ulster and RP ---- were all found. Milroy and McClenaghan (1977:9) concluded that 'accents may directly evoke stereotyped responses without the listener first consciously assigning speaker to a particular reference group'. Similarly, Irvine and Gal (2000:37) pointed out that 'a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence'.

Therefore, in the current study, the accuracy rate of the listeners' identification of where the speaker was from does not affect the final results of the study. As Lindemann (2003) suggested, language ideologies function without correct identification of the actual variety.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Overview

Based on the statistical findings in chapter 4, chapter 5 presents the findings with a further discussion of the research questions introduced earlier in this study. The two research questions are interpreted one by one in this chapter.

5.1 Research question 1: Are Chinese students able to identify the varieties of English investigated in this study?

There was an identification section after the evaluation of each variety of English, to investigate whether the Chinese students were able to identify the seven varieties: New York English, London English, Edinburgh English, Singapore English, Japanese English, Indian English, and Chinese English. The results of the identification session in table 8 reveals that the majority of the respondents were able to identify Indian English (73.3%), Chinese English (66.7%), New York English (56.7%) and Edinburgh English (53.3%) given correctly. The recognition rates of other varieties of English were relatively lower: London English (43.3%), Singapore English (26.7%), and Japanese English (23.3%).

The potential explanation for the high recognition rates of Indian English (73.3%) may be the Indian people's distinctive manner of pronunciation, which is quite easy to be recognized. For instance, the voiceless plosives /p/, /t/, /k/ are always unaspirated in Indian English, while in Received Pronunciation, General American and most other varieties of English they are aspirated in word-initial or stressed syllables (Pingali 2009). In the Indian English speech sample of this study, the pronunciation of a consonant by the Indian speaker was always without an aspirate, such as the word 'kind', 'cartoon', etc. Chinese English was ranked as the second by the recognition rate

(66.7%), which was higher than New York English (56.7%). This reflects the excessive exposure of the Chinese English. Although in Chinese EFL classrooms, the linguistic models are either American English or British English, the overwhelmingly majority of the English teachers are Chinese, who speak Chinese English. Moreover, Chinese students are familiar with the variety of English they themselves speak. Due to the prevalence of American culture in China, especially for the respondents' age, Hollywood movies, soap operas have gained great exposure to Chinese English learners, thus they are quite familiar with the variety of English spoken in American. Similarly, studying and living in Edinburgh, it is normal that the respondents often encounter the local people who speak Edinburgh English, this might be the major reason why most Chinese students could identify Edinburgh English in the verbal guise test.

In contrast, London English (43.3%) received a lower recognition rate, from table 8, 23.3 percent of the respondents considered the London English speaker was from New York. And the misidentification of Singapore English and Japanese English may lie in Chinese students' less exposure to these two varieties of English. The main difficulty of distinguishing native varieties of English was on the identification of New York English and London English: 23.3 percent of the respondents could not distinguish English spoken in London and English spoken in New York. Moreover, some of the respondents were not able to identify non-native varieties of English: 16.7 percent of the respondents misidentified Singapore English as Chinese English. And some of the respondents had difficulties on distinguishing native varieties from non-native varieties: 20 percent of the respondents confused Singapore English with Edinburgh English; and the Japanese speaker was considered to be from New York by 20 percent of the respondents.

When it turns to the identification of native and non-native varieties of English, the majority of the respondents were able to identify the varieties; New York English

(63.2%), London English (80.0%), Edinburgh English (66.7%) as native varieties, and Singapore English (63.3%), Indian English (83.3%), Japanese English (63.3%), and Chinese English (80.0%) as non-native varieties. Interestingly from these statistics, although only 43.3 percent of the respondents correctly identified where the London English speaker was from, 80 percent of the respondents recognized the speaker was from native English-speaking countries.

From what have been discussed above, the majority of the Chinese respondents were able to identify whether the speakers were from native or non-native English-speaking countries. However, they have certain difficulties on distinguishing different varieties of English, for instance, New York English and London English, or Singapore English and Edinburgh English, etc.

5.2 Research question 2: What are Chinese postgraduate students' attitudes toward native and non-native varieties of English, or to the varieties of English from the three circles of the World English Model?

To investigate the Chinese English learners' attitudes of the selected seven varieties of English, the verbal guise technique was employed in the current study. In this way, the Chinese respondents' attitudes toward native and non-native varieties of English were also confirmed. The overall result indicates that, among the seven varieties of English, New York English, London English and Edinburgh English were ranked as the first three favorable varieties, they were preferred by the Chinese respondents to the other four non-native varieties ---- Chinese English, Japanese English, Singapore English and Indian English.

To be more specific, two dimensions for the respondents' evaluation ---- status and solidarity---- were further analyzed in this study as separate scales to the ratings. The rankings of the two dimensions are summarized as follows:

Status

American English

British English

Edinburgh English

Chinese English

Japanese English

Singapore English

Indian English

Solidarity

American English

British English

Chinese English

Edinburgh English

Japanese English

Singapore English

Indian English

From the rankings above, it can be seen that in term of status dimension, New York English, London English and Edinburgh English were ranked the first three varieties. However, from the perspective of solidarity dimension, Chinese English was preferred as the third favorable variety, following New York English and London English. The inner circle English, Edinburgh English, was rated lower than the Chinese English.

It should be noted that the New York English was ranked the highest in both the dimensions of status and solidarity, this suggests that Chinese respondents were particularly in favor of variety of English spoken in New York. And it is obvious that the respondents preferred varieties of English from inner circle to those from outer or expanding circles. In addition, in the current study, Chinese English and Japanese English were ranked higher than Singapore English and Indian English. This indicates that the respondents in this study preferred the varieties from outer circle to those from the expanding circles in any of the two dimensions.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Overview

By the analysis and discussion of the data collected, the tentative conclusions according to each research question can be researched. This chapter summarizes the research findings and puts forward the limitations of the current study and the suggestions for future research.

6.1 Overall findings

This study attempted to investigate the Chinese attitudes toward seven varieties of English: New York English, London English, Edinburgh English, Singapore English, Japanese English, Indian English, and Chinese English, with three varieties of inner circle, two varieties of outer circle and two varieties of expanding circle of Kachru's other four varieties of (1985, 1992) World English Model, through the application of the verbal guise technique together with the use of a semantic-differential scale. The respondents were 30 Chinese postgraduate students from the Business School of Edinburgh University, they were also required to identify where the speakers were from after the verbal guise experiment.

The overall results suggests that native and standard varieties of English were favored by Chinese respondents, in especial the New York English and London English, which were ranked as the first two preferred varieties of English in every ranking including the general mean rating, the rating of status and solidarity. Edinburgh English was ranked the third in terms of the general rating and the rating of status. However, In terms of solidarity, the respondents held more positive attitudes toward Chinese English, which was rated as the third one, higher than the Scottish-accented variety. There were no marked differences of the ranking of the English. The varieties

from the expanding circle: Japanese English and Chinese English were preferred than the varieties from the outer circle: Singapore English and Indian English. The overall findings in this study embodied a clear hierarchy: varieties from the inner circle English-speaking countries were most favored by the respondents, whereas the varieties from the outer circle were rated the lowest, and those varieties from the expanding circle were put in a middle position.

As for the identification of the speech varieties, the majority of the respondents in this study were able to identify whether the speech samples were from native English-speaking countries or non-native English-speaking countries, but many respondents had difficulties on distinguishing varieties of English. This finding suggests that the awareness of the varieties of English was not fully emphasized in Chinese EFL classrooms.

6.2 Limitations of the study

Although the current study have examined the Chinese English learners' attitudes toward varieties of English by undertaking a quantitative experiment, certain limitations exist, and more works in this area should be done.

Firstly, the selected respondents were assumed to represent the group of Chinese English learners who were doing their Master's degree in Edinburgh, the United Kingdom, for approximately one year. By reducing the scope to the Chinese postgraduate students in Business School of Edinburgh University, the number of respondents was relatively small. It would be desirable to enlarge the scope and number of Chinese respondents in the further studies.

Secondly, in the verbal guise experiment, there were unavoidable non-linguistic factors which might have influence on respondents' evaluation. For instance, the

speed, pitch and volume of speaking in the speech samples, the environment of conducting the verbal guise test, the respondents' unfamiliarity of the verbal guise test and its procedures, may all have impact on the respondents' evaluation.

Thirdly, there was only one speaker recorded for each variety of English in this study, however, one single speaker may not be enough to represent a variety. For example, there are heavily Chinese-accented English and moderately-accented Chinese English, and people's attitudes may differ toward the two. Therefore, in the further studies, more speech samples could be collected for a more comprehensive study.

Last but not least, to control the variables, the speakers selected in this study were females on their 20s to 30s, it might be intriguing to record male speakers, or speakers of other ages for further evaluation.

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Appendix

Verbal Guise Questionnaire

This questionnaire is for my MSc dissertation. The data collected will be treated anonymously and all information which can identify your privacy will be avoided. You are endowed with the right of acknowledging the results of the study and any suggestions throughout the research are welcomed. Thank you for your cooperation!

Part 1 Personal information

1 Sex

A male

B female

2 Age _____

3 Programme in Edinburgh University _____

4 Have you ever been to a English-speaking country except the United Kingdom?

A yes

B no

5 If the answer to Question 2 is 'yes', please state the name(s) of the country/countries.

6 How long have you lived in Edinburgh?

7 How long have you studied English?

Part 2 Verbal guise test

Please Listen to the recordings and circle the number that indicates your impression of the speaker.

Speaker 1

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

A New York

B London

C Edinburgh

D Singapore

E India

F Japan

G China

Speaker 2

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable

clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

- A New York B London C Edinburgh D Singapore
E India F Japan G China

Speaker 3

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

- A New York B London C Edinburgh D Singapore
E India F Japan G China

Speaker 4

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

A New York

B London

C Edinburgh

D Singapore

E India

F Japan

G China

Speaker 5

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest

sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere
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(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

- A New York B London C Edinburgh D Singapore
E India F Japan G China

Speaker 6

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident
fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

- A New York B London C Edinburgh D Singapore
E India F Japan G China

Speaker 7

intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not intelligent
confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not confident

fluent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not fluent
sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unsociable
clear	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unclear
funny	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not funny
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	not pleasant
modest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	immodest
sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	insincere

(score 1.00 = the most favorable evaluation)

Please guess where the speaker is from:

- A New York B London C Edinburgh D Singapore
E India F Japan G China

Please guess where the speaker is from:

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Thank you very much!