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Attitudes Towards English Among Malaysian Undergraduates

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Abstract

There is a continuing debate on the status and use of English in Malaysia. Historically, English experienced rise and fall of its status and importance here. This is because of the change of attitudes towards the language in the passage of time. Thus, the researcher found it relevant to profile Malaysians undergraduates' contemporary attitude towards English. The purpose of this study was to investigate Malaysian undergraduates' attitudes towards English since this group of people is considered an important source of human capital in the development of the nation. Data for this study was collected through a questionnaire survey administered upon a sample of UPM (University Putra Malaysia) undergraduates and analyzed them quantitatively. The findings revealed that the respondents showed positive attitudes towards English. They also felt that Malaysian variety of English should be standardized.

Background and Rationale of the Study

Multilingualism allows people to grow up with access to two or more languages and this allows people to show different attitudes towards languages. Attitude towards languages is an important issue in any multilingual society. Attitude in general is a hypothetical psychological construct which defines or promotes certain behaviours and explains their direction and persistence. It is a convenient and efficient way of explaining consistent patterns in behaviour. It often manages to summarize, explain and predict behaviour (Baker, 1992). Thus, attitude to language is a construct that explains linguistic behaviour in particular.

The evaluation that a particular language is harsh, sweet, difficult, easy, international, local, prestigious or vernacular is due to the variation of attitudes towards the language. Therefore, attitude change is an important notion since attitudes are affected by experience. There may be both positive and negative feelings attached to a language. The major dimensions along which views about languages can vary are 'social status' and 'group solidarity' (Hohenthal, 2003). Ajzen (1988) says attitude is 'a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event' (quotes Baker, 1992: 11). It means that if a speech community shows unfavourability to a particular language, that language is unlikely to survive. Thus, in the life of a language, attitudes to that language appear to be important in restoration, preservation, decay or death (Baker, 1992). In this context Baker (1992:9) quotes Lewis (1981:262) who says

any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitude of those likely to be affected. In the long run, no policy will succeed which does not do one of three things: conform to the expressed attitudes of those involved; persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of the policy; or seek to remove the causes of the disagreement

The construction and change of attitudes to languages are seen as the outcome of influences of several factors. They are socio-cultural background, historical and geographical profile, language policy and planning, language background, language proficiency, language function, age, gender and so on. It should not be misunderstood that the influences of these factors are one way, i.e. only factors influence attitude, rather the influences can be vice versa. To illustrate, as language policy changes the attitude of the speakers towards a particular language, similarly, attitudes might change the direction and success of the implementation of a policy. For example, the change of status and attitudes to English in Malaysia from British colonial period till date can be explained as a matter of policy changes attitude and vice versa.

Nature Of Language Attitude

Language attitude varies in nature. People show attitudes of different nature such as attitude to the variation of language; attitude to minority language and dominant language; attitude to foreign and second language; attitude to a specific language etc. Whatever the nature of attitude, it has two components: instrumental and integrative (Baker, 1992). Instrumental attitude refers to showing attitude to a particular language for self-achievement and recognition. People favour a particular language when they find that the language is a tool to achieve high status, economic advantage, basic security and survival and matters related to self-orientation. Integrative attitude, on the other hand, concerns someone's attachment with a particular speech community. People show such attitude in order to be identified as a member of the desired community. However, instrumental and integrative orientation to language attitude are not necessarily opposite and alternatives rather complementary to each other.

A person may be motivated in different strengths by both orientations (Baker, 1992). The present study assumes that attitude of the people in Malaysia towards English is instrumental in orientation. It expects that people in Malaysia show favourable attitude to English and learn and use it for individual development and survival in this era of globalization. This study, thus, aims to investigate attitudes towards English among Malaysian undergraduates. This study also aims to explore if there is effect of other variables especially gender, ethnicity and language proficiency in constructing and changing their attitudes towards English in the particular multilingual ecology of Malaysia which had come about due to individual history. The next section situates the study by explaining the linguistic situation of the country.

The Linguistic Situation in Malaysia

Historically, the first European language that came to Malaysia was Portuguese, and the Dutch and then English followed this, with the British colonization. During this period, Chinese and Indian languages also set foot with the migration of Chinese and Indians to Malaysia. This, in fact, contributed in no small measure to Malaysia's growth as a multilingual country. As a British colony, the use of English occupied several formal and informal domains; it was the official language and used in court and education to a large extent. The use of English spread rapidly moulding an elite group of local users among the Malays, Chinese and Indians. As

English was the language of the 'ruler', people with knowledge of English were given privileges. This helped increase the number of English speakers leading to an increase in the corresponding number of English medium schools in Malaysia. This increase of English medium schools was linked likely to the increasing popularity of the language. English became so influential and conquered so many domains of use that it remained the official language even after ten years from gaining independence in 1957 (Ain Nadzimah and Chan, 2003). However, after independence, the English language diminished in importance as the language of education since the medium of instruction was changed to Bahasa Malaysia (BM). The status of English decreased to such a level that it became simply a subject of study like other subjects such as history, geography, and physics.

By the mid 1990s, tremendous changes impacted education. The government of Malaysia felt it necessary to give new emphasis on the learning of English, which was and still is increasingly seen as crucial in the advancement of trade and commerce as well as giving the country a competitive edge. A milestone change is the green light given by the government to start teaching scientific and technical subjects in English at tertiary education (Ridge, 2004). In addition, the then Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mohathir Mohamad made it public in 2002 that mathematics and sciences will henceforth be taught in English from the first year of primary school. This unexpected announcement brought a drastic change in attitude among the people towards languages and the linguistic situation in Malaysia.

The preceding discussion reveals that bilingualism and multilingualism in Malaysia did not happen overnight. Rather it took place through several phases with the changes of language planning and policy in the passage of time. With Malaysia being a multilingual nation, it is expected that people in Malaysia show different attitudes towards different languages. What is their attitude towards English and what influences their attitudes constitute the focus of the study.

Statement of the Problem

Attitude to languages in multilingual societies is an important issue of sociolinguistic discussion since it determines the growth, spread, development as well as decay and death of languages. Attitude being a conceptual phenomenon varies from favorability to unavailability or vice versa due to a number of factors which includes language planning and policy, instrumental and integrative values of languages, language proficiency, ethnic and speech community identity etc.

In Malaysia, there exists a continuing debate on the status and use of English. It is because that English experienced rise and fall of its status because of language planning and policy in the country. People had to change their attitudes towards English in the passage of time. When the values of English have been recognized as a lingua franca, an instrument of global network in this era of globalization, what is the attitude of Malaysians towards English?

This paper sets out to investigate the Malaysian undergraduates' attitudes towards the use of English in general and their view of the local variety of Malaysian English in particular. It is of relevance to profile the attitude of this group of people as they are considered an important source of human capital that provides the engine of national growth and development.

Research Questions

The study put forward the following specific research questions:

- (1) What are the Malaysian undergraduates' attitudes towards English?
- (2) What are their perceptions regarding the Malaysian variety of English?
- (3) What are the effects of gender, ethnicity and proficiency on their attitudes towards English?

Literature Review

Language attitude in bi-/multilingual settings has been a major concern of sociolinguists for many years. Many studies are available that conducted investigation into the issue of language and attitude. Hogan-Brun and Ramoniene (2005) showed that the state's inclusive language and citizenship policies in Lithuania have led to the consolidation of society which has positively affected attitudes amongst the minority communities to learn the state language and to integrate. Another study of the same authors (2004) also suggested that in their pragmatic attitude, the parents perceive integrative learning as being of instrumental value and favour their children's accommodation to the majority society as a necessary process for success in life in today's changed environment.

Al-Abed Al-Haq (2000) conducted a study to investigate changes in the attitudes of Jordanian university students to the Hebrew language. He found that motivation towards learning Hebrew among the Jordanian university students is apparently instrumentally-oriented, i.e. they are religiously and nationally motivated.

Hohenthal (2003) also found similar result in her study. She identified that attitude to English in India is instrumental: English is perceived as a useful language to know mostly because of job opportunities and for education. Ting (2003) showed that in Sarawak of Malaysia, while people were already embracing Bahasa Malaysia as official language, they still held on to the previous role of English as an official language. Where wider communication was concerned, the usefulness of English as a common language was clear but other languages were also important. The participants' favourable attitudes to the sharing of language function between Bahasa Malaysia and English indicates that they would still like English to perform the functions officially designated for Bahasa Malaysia.

When we understand that attitude plays a very important role in the life of a language, determinants of attitude to a language are important in the discussion of language and attitude. There are a number of factors that may be influential in construction and change of attitude to a language. No model or even a list of factors that make up attitude to a language has been drawn up. However, based on the previous studies on attitudes towards language this study considers gender, ethnicity and language proficiency as important determinants of attitude towards English among the Malaysian undergraduates. Gender was found to play significant role in constructing attitude to Welsh. W. R. Jones (1949, 1950), Sharp et al. (1973) and E.P. Jones (1982) all found that girls had more favourable attitudes to Welsh than boys. Like gender, language background

also affects language attitude. Sharp et al. (1973) found that the higher the number of Welsh speakers in a neighbourhood, the more favourable the attitude. Effect of proficiency on language attitude has also been studied extensively. Hakuta (1991) investigated the relationships of language choice, proficiency and attitude in a Puerto Rican bilingual education programme in New Haven, Connecticut. She reported that language shift in the Hispanic communities in the United States is usually characterized by a combination of processes related to proficiency, choice and attitude. Similarly, influences of ethnicity on attitudes was found in a number of study (e.g. Ferrer and Sankoff, 2003; Sayahi, 2005). With reference to influence of ethnicity on attitudes it is stated that people show their preference to languages through the exercise of maintaining, shifting, or switching among languages which can be attributed no less to the ethnic configuration of attitudes towards language use.

In the research of language attitude, two theoretical approaches are used and they are 'behaviourist view' and 'mentalist view' (Fasold, 1984). According to behaviorist view, the attitudes are dependent variables which must be studied by observing users' responses to certain languages, i.e. their use in actual interactions whereas according to mentalist view, attitudes are internal mental state which cannot be observed directly but have to be inferred from users' behaviour or their self reported data. This study aims to investigate attitudes towards English among the Malaysian undergraduates from mentalist point of view.

Methodology

This study is descriptive and non-experimental. The data of the study were collected through a questionnaire survey administered to a sample of three hundred UPM undergraduates. The sample was selected through "multistage cluster sampling". The questionnaire comprised three parts: Part I-the demographic profile of the respondents; Part II- their level of proficiency in English language; and Part III- their attitudes towards English. Upon the completion of data collection, these were coded and tabulated for computation and analysis. Seventy two questionnaires were found to be incomplete and therefore these were excluded from the final analysis. The analysis was carried out using SPSS.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Respondents were categorized as male and female according to gender, and Malay, Chinese, Indian and Others as per ethnicity (Others include all the ethnic respondents except Malay, Chinese and Indian). Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents as per ethnicity and gender. This table shows that the majority of respondents were Malay (60.7%) followed by Chinese (29.5%), Indian (8%), and Others (1.8%). Of the total respondents, the gender distribution (M=male and F=female) is as follows (see Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents as per Ethnicity and Gender

Ethnicity	Total Respondents	%	Male	%	Female	%
Malay	136	60.7	30	69.7	106	58.6
Chinese	66	29.5	10	23.3	56	30.9
Indian	18	8.0	2	4.7	16	8.8
Others	4	1.8	1	2.3	3	1.7
Total	224	100	43	100	181	100

As can be seen from the table, the percentage of males was comparatively higher than that of females among the Malays and the Others ethnic groups whereas the percentage of females was comparatively higher than males among the Chinese and Indians.

Respondents' Level of Proficiency in English Language

Respondents' proficiency in English language were obtained through the use of a five-point Likert scale questionnaire with 5= very fluent, 4= fluent, 3= satisfactory, 2= unsatisfactory, and 1= cannot use. Respondents were then categorized as having a low level of proficiency (1-6.7 points), mid (6.71-13.4 points) and high (13.41-20 points). Their levels of proficiency in English language as per ethnicity are presented in figure 1. The figure shows the pattern of proficiency in English language among the respondents as follows: Malay and Chinese respondents had high 40% and mid 60% levels respectively. The Indians were placed in the highest percentage of high proficient users (94.4%). Among the Indians, the percentage of those in the mid proficient level was very less (5.6). None of the respondents reported to have low proficiency in English.

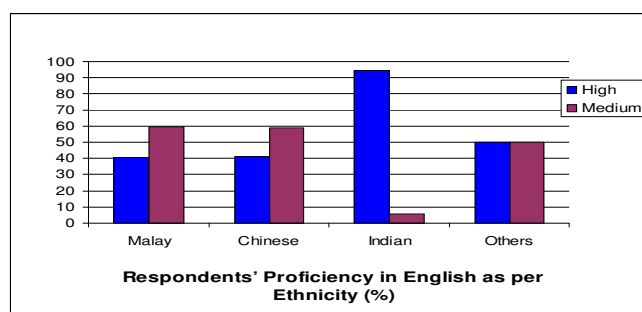


Figure 1: Respondents' Proficiency in English as per Ethnicity %

Respondents' Attitudes towards English

Respondents' attitudes towards use of English language were obtained through the use of a five-point Likert scale questionnaire with 5= strongly agree (SA), 4= agree (A), 3= neutral (N), 2= disagree (DA), and 1= strongly disagree (SDA). The respondents were asked to provide their opinion on fifteen statements regarding the use of English. Among the statements, first five statements elicited responses about the instrumental value, importance and perspectives of knowing English, next five statements (6 to 10) obtained information regarding the use of English in education and the last five statements (11 to 15) obtained responses regarding the use of English in media and office. Respondents' responses are presented in Table 2, 3 and 4. Table

2 shows that respondents positively recognized the instrumental value and importance of knowing English. 84.0 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 13.4 % of them agreed with the statement that knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs. Majority of the respondents were also of the opinion that they need to increase the use of English in this era of globalization (59.4 % SA and 26.3 % A). Although BM is the constitutionally designated official language of Malaysia, respondents realized that knowledge of English offers advantages in this era of globalization when getting a good job, securing a better social position and personal establishment is very competitive.

While responding to statement 3, 19.2 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 38.8 % of them agreed that when someone speaks English they think he or she is educated. Though 30.4 % of the respondents reported neutral opinion, a very few percentages of them showed their disagreement with the statement. Similarly, while responding to statement 4 that when someone speaks English it creates a good impression for him, 31.3 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 36.0 % of them agreed. Though percentage of the neutral opinion with this statement was 24.6, percentages of the respondents who showed disagreement were very negligible. Responses to statement 3 and 4 indicate that respondents bear positive attitudes for those who speak English.

This was counterchecked by responses to statement 5 where 35.6 % of the respondents disagreed and 34.4 % of them strongly disagreed. Only 21 % of the respondents reported neutral opinion while a very few percentages of them agreed with the statement. The data indicates that respondents like those who speak English. As can be seen from table 2 that respondents showed positive attitudes towards them who speak English. It can also be seen that respondents recognized instrumental value of English. This finding is found to be consistent with the previous studies (e.g. Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2000; Hohenthal, 2003 and Hogan-Brun and Ramoniene, 2004). These studies also found that in multilingual context people show positive attitudes towards those languages which are instrumentally motivated.

Table 2: Respondents' Attitudes towards Instrumental value and Perspectives of knowing English (%)

	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	Knowledge of English offers advantages in seeking good jobs	84.0	13.4	1.8	0.4	0.4
2	We need to increase the use of English in this era of globalization	59.4	26.3	11.2	2.2	0.9
3	When someone speaks English I think he is educated	19.2	38.8	30.4	8.5	3.1
4	When someone speaks English it creates a good impression for him	31.3	36.0	24.6	5.4	2.7
5	I dislike people who speak to me in English	3.6	5.4	21.0	35.6	34.4

Table 3 presents respondents' attitudes towards use of English in education. The table shows that while responding to statement 6 that all children should be required to learn English at school right from primary one, 62.9 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 28.1 % agreed. Similarly, majority of the respondents reported that English should be the medium of instruction in undergraduate and post-graduate studies (54 % SA and 32.1 % A). Respondents also supported government's language policy that teaching of math and sciences should be in English (47.6 %

SA and 27.7 % A). Though only 15.7 % of the respondents reported neutral opinion, a very few of them showed their disagreement with the statement. While an option between English and BM is available, about 60 % of the respondents (24.6 % SA and 35.7 % A) opted for English and 30 % of them reported neutral opinion. But there is a clear indication of respondents' positive attitudes towards English while about 86 % of the respondents (58 % SA and 28.1 % A) stated that they like to study more English. It can be seen from the data in the table that respondents preferred the use of English in education domain.

Being undergraduate students, the respondents not only felt like to study more English but also gave opinion that English should be the medium of instruction in undergraduate and post-graduate studies. The respondents not only supported that teaching of math and sciences should be in English, but also emphasized that all children should be required to learn English at school right from primary one. Even in a choice between BM and English, majority of the respondents favoured English. In short, respondents showed their positive attitudes towards the use of English in education. This finding is found to be consistent with the previous studies especially Hohenthal (2003). She found that in India English is perceived as a useful language to know mostly for education.

Table 3: Respondents' Attitudes towards use of English in Education (%)

	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
6	All children should be required to learn English at school right from primary one	62.9	28.1	6.3	0.9	1.8
7	English should be the medium of instruction in undergraduate and post-graduate studies	54.0	32.1	9.4	3.6	0.9
8	Teaching math and sciences in English should be continued	47.6	27.7	15.7	6.3	2.7
9	If an academic text is available in English and in BM, I will read the text in English	24.6	35.7	30.7	6.3	2.7
10	I would like to study more English	58.0	28.1	12.1	0.9	0.9

Table 4 presents respondents' attitudes towards use of English in media and office. The table shows that 82.6 % of the respondents felt that there should be more newspapers and magazines in English (51.3 % SA and 31.3 % A) and they equally reported their opinion that there should be more TV and radio programmes in English. Respondents' responses to the statement 11 and 12 indicate that they were in favour of an increase use of English in print and electronic media. They felt like to read more English newspapers and magazines as well as to watch more TV and radio programmes in English. Their responses to the statement that only English must be used in advertisements, public signs, map etc gave a different pattern of attitudes.

The pattern suggests that percentages of respondents who agreed with the statement are almost equal to the percentages of respondents who disagreed with the statement and a good number of respondents (37.1 %) reported neutral opinion. The data suggests that respondents were not of the opinion of the exclusive use of English in media rather they suggested a parallel use between English and BM. It indicates that respondents want an increase in the use of English at one hand; on the other hand they show their loyalty to their national and official language. In fact, this was clearly indicated while the respondents responded to the statement that English should be used in

advertisements, public signs, map etc besides BM. About 66 % of the respondents gave their consent with the statement though about 26 % of them were found to be neutral in their opinion while a very few of them showed their disagreement. The opinion of the parallel use of English and BM was found further strengthen in the responses to the statement that all official documents should be in both BM and English. Among the respondents, 56.3 % strongly agreed and 26.3 % agreed that both BM and English should be used in all official documents.

The findings suggest that respondents want an increase use of English in media and office. It is also found that though the respondents reported an increase use of English but they did not support the exclusive use of English rather they felt that use of English and BM should go hand in hand in media and official use. This finding is found to be consistent with the previous studies especially Ting (2003). Ting found that people in Sarawak still like English besides BM.

Table 4: Respondents' Attitudes towards use of English in Media and Office (%)

	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
11	There should be more newspapers and magazines in English	51.3	31.3	16.1	0.4	0.9
12	There should be more TV and radio programmes in English	51.8	30.8	16.1	0.4	0.9
13	Only English must be used in advertisements, public signs, map etc.	12.1	19.2	37.1	19.6	12.1
14	English should be used in advertisements, public signs, map etc besides BM	30.4	35.7	25.9	4.9	3.1
15	All official documents should be in both BM and English	56.3	26.3	14.3	2.7	0.4

Respondents' attitudes towards the Malaysian variety of English

Respondents' attitudes towards Malaysian variety of English language were also obtained through the use of a five-point Likert scale questionnaire with 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, and 1= strongly disagree. Figure 2 displays the percentage of responses of the respondents towards Malaysian variety of English. 45.1percent of the respondents strongly agreed that Malaysian variety of English should be standardized. Besides this, 34.4 percent respondents also agreed for standardization of the Malaysian variety of English. It can be said that 79.5 percent of the respondents gave opinion in favour of the standardization of the Malaysian variety of English. 17.9 percent of the respondents were found to report neutral position whereas only 0.9 percent disagreed and 1.8 percent strongly disagreed in connection with standardization of the Malaysian variety of English.

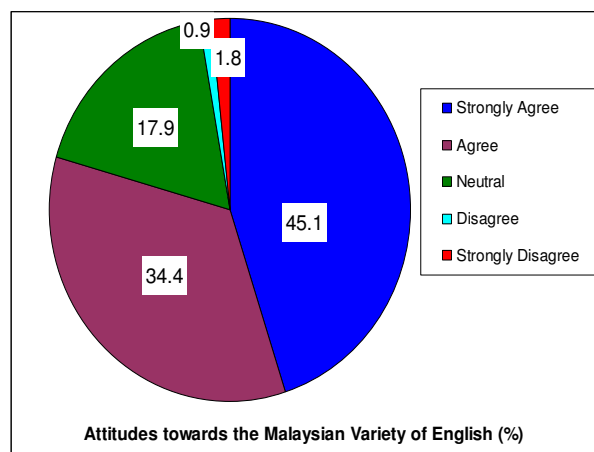


Figure 2: Respondents' attitudes towards the Malaysian variety of English

It can be understood from this discussion that Malaysian undergraduates recognize the importance of English in global communication. They feel that they need to know English. But when the issue of variety of English rises, they want that Malaysian variety of English should be standardized. This could be attributed to Malaysia's economic growth and development and their attitudes towards English.

Decades before Malaysians believed in *Majula Bahasa, Majula Bangsa*, i.e., if language of a nation becomes rich and standard, the nation itself will develop, but now they believe in *Majula Bangsa, Majula Bahasa*, i.e., if a nation develops, the language will become rich and standard naturally.

The later statement indicates that as Malaysia is a developed nation now, it can take its language policy as per necessity and attitude of the people. The practice of MUET (Malaysian University English Test), which seems similar to IELTS or TOEFL among the Malaysian is an instance of the fact that Malaysia has already set a standard of English for its nation. The finding of this study with reference to Malaysian variety of English suggests that respondents want standardization of Malaysian variety of English, i.e. as there are British English, American English, Australian English, Canadian English, and Singaporean English, Malaysians want Malaysian English.

Effects of Gender, Ethnicity and Proficiency on Attitudes towards English

Effects of gender, ethnicity and English language proficiency of the respondents on attitude construction and change towards English language were investigated. Chi-Square tests were used to identify whether there was any effect of gender, ethnicity and English language proficiency on attitudes towards English language. If there was found any effect, the strengths of effect were measured by Contingency Coefficient (C) and the strengths were interpreted with reference to Guilford's rule of thumb (C < 0.20 indicates almost negligible correlation; 0.20-0.40 indicates low correlation; 0.40-0.70 indicates moderate correlation, 0.70-0.90 indicates high correlation, and 0.90-1 indicates very high correlation). It was found that attitudes towards English among the respondents were not found to be varied with the variation of gender ($p > 0.05$). It indicates

that respondents irrespective of gender preferred more use of English. Though they did not favour exclusive use of English, they showed their positive attitudes towards an increase use of English. Even, respondents irrespective of gender expressed their views that Malaysian variety of English should be standardized. This finding is found to be contrary to W. R. Jones (1949, 1950), Sharp et al. (1973) and E.P. Jones (1982).

These studies recognized influence of gender in constructing and changing attitudes to Welsh whereas the present study found no gender influence on attitudes towards English among the Malaysian undergraduates. Ethnicity was also found to have no effect on respondents' attitude construction and change towards English language. Respondents irrespective of ethnicity supported increase use of English. But there was an exception with only one specific case. Attitude towards English was found to vary with the variation of ethnicity when respondents were asked to choose an academic text in English over an academic text in BM (Chi-square value = 29.576, df =12, $p = 0.003$ and $C = 0.342$).

It was found that among the respondents Indians preferred academic text in English more than Malays, Chinese and Others ethnic groups. This could be attributed to the fact that Indians were reported to be more proficient in English. Respondents irrespective of ethnicity also felt that Malaysian variety of English should be standardized. Proficiency in English language was, however, found to have effect on attitudes towards English ($p < 0.05$). Variation of proficiency in English was found to contribute in causing variation on attitudes towards English among the respondents. Respondents who considered themselves as high proficient in English showed more positive attitudes towards English than those who considered themselves as mid proficient. This finding is found to be consistent with the previous studies especially Hakuta (1991). She found a relationship among the variables such as proficiency, choice and attitude.

Conclusion

Malaysian being multilingual use different languages for different purposes and this can be explained with reference to their attitudes they show to different languages. As Bahasa Malaysia is constitutionally designated national and official language, Malaysian irrespective of ethnicity show particular attitude towards this language. Besides this, they also have their own perception and attitudes towards their respective ethnic languages. Amidst this, their attitude towards English is noteworthy.

Majority of the respondents realized the necessity of learning English in this era of globalization and they reported their strong positive attitude towards English. They were of the opinion that those who speak English create good impression and get advantages in seeking good jobs. They felt that all children should learn English right from primary one. They also felt that English should be the medium of instruction at undergraduate and postgraduate studies. As a whole they wanted an increase use of English in education. The respondents showed a very positive outlook in the use of English in office and media.

Though they did not want exclusive use of English, they supported an increase in the use of English. The findings indicate that respondents were found to be loyal to their national and official language at one hand; on the other hand they showed the positive attitudes towards

English. This could be attributed to the fact that respondents were instrumentally motivated. Their motivation is so positive that a sizeable majority of the respondents desired standardization of the Malaysian variety of English. It indicates that Malaysians want to increase their linguistic repertoire adding English to the list of commonly used languages in Malaysia.

Though respondents with high proficiency in English showed more preference for English, in fact a positive attitude towards English as a whole was found among the respondents irrespective of gender and ethnicity. Findings of this study can be concluded saying that when government showed positive attitudes towards English introducing MUET and declaring that math and sciences should be taught in English, the respondents of this study felt and desired an increase use of English in different domains of life which marks their positive attitudes towards English.

Considering the scope of its own, the study suggests a further investigation into the issue with wider scope. It also suggests that findings of this study could be incorporated in language policy and planning of the country.

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